

THE BOOK OF CORINTHIANS: THE SPIRITUAL CHURCH WITH STICKY SITUATIONS

December 7, 2014

14. The Use of Freedom and Need for Self-Discipline

1Cori. 9:19-27

A Spiritual Church is the body of believers who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the indwelling Holy Spirit in-charge of their affairs. Yet, every Spiritual Church has Sticky Situations arising from the pagan society from which it has been called. Self-pride always make people look down on others. Church members sometimes have the audacity to look down and disrespect others by sitting in judgment of them and still expect to win them to Christ. Simply because you are free does not give you the right to disrespect others and sit in judgment of them.

Freedom and self-indulgence do not auger well for any church, community, society or nation. All things may be lawful but everything is not beneficial. Where there is freedom but lack of self-discipline there is self-indulgence and a poor attitude towards in need of help. This creates sticky situations in the church. So our discussion today will focus on “The Use of Freedom and Need for Self-Discipline”.

Freedom is a great thing to have. This is why I don’t micro-manage those in leadership positions. However, I do expect everyone in leadership position at Mt Traveler to keep me posted on the decisions being made because the use of freedom without self-discipline leads to self-indulgence, confusion and lack of focus in ministry in the Church. The consequence is that the building of God’s kingdom is hindered because souls will not be won to Christ. Self-discipline is essential for exercising your freedom. For when your freedom infringes into another person’s freedom it is no longer freedom. Self-discipline requires strict training because it does not come easy when you have freedom. Therefore be careful how you exercise your freedom because there are always going to be critiques of your leadership decisions. Paul in his defense and response to his critiques, who said he was not an apostle, said he was not free from the law of God but was under the law of Christ that provides self-control. For God has NOT given us the spirit of fear, but of power, love and self-control. Therefore he exercised his freedom with self-discipline. Self-discipline requires that you become a slave to others so that you can win some of them to Christ!

Thus our text for today begins, “Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel that I may share in its blessings. 24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. 25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. 26 Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. 27 No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize” (1 Corinthians 9:19-27).

Mt Traveler members, as we conclude the following are some main points to remember about the

Spiritual church. It is:

- The church of God
- The body of believers in Christ Jesus
- Enriched with grace in speech and knowledge
- Not lacking any spiritual gift
- Waiting eagerly for our Lord Jesus to be revealed
- Kept firm to the end so that it will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ
- Called by a faithful God into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- Individuals whose conduct, character and calling reflect a relationship with God Almighty!
- Where there is agreement in what the brethren say
- Where there be no divisions among brethren, but perfect unity in mind and thought
- Where there are no quarrels
- Where everyone follows Jesus Christ because they were baptized in His Name
- Where the gospel is preached—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power
- Believers that understand the roles of followers; know the foundations that has already be laid and are building on it; and know that fundamentals of faith to avoid foolishness.
- Where there are no lawsuits among believers; but Shepherds direct the affairs of the church towards great relationships through forgiveness and reconciliation as led by the Holy Spirit.
- Members of Christ who cannot practice sexual immorality but remain faithful to Christ and their spouses if they have any.
- Where keeping God's commands is what counts.
- Where you sacrifice for the sake of the weak
- Where the ministers are respected and provided for
- Where the use of Freedom is exercised with self-discipline
- And let the church say, "Amen!"

To become part of the Spiritual Church as a believer, and be saved, have peace and happiness; and to do the work of the church with hope to cause healthy church growth, you must first know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and savior and then allow the Holy Spirit to empower you. If you have not, we invite you to come, repent, and humbly accept Jesus Christ into your heart and life by faith. I hope you will make room in your heart for Him today! Then confess with your mouth your faith in Him that He died and rose again to save you from your sin through the shedding of His blood on Calvary, and you will be saved and become part of God's family and kingdom. Then ask Him in prayers to empower you through the Holy Spirit with wisdom, courage and boldness to do the work of the Church to cause its continual growth that God may commend you ultimately. May God bless you as you humbly open your heart to provide room for Him as the choir leads us in a song!

If you are reading this on the Internet why don't you pray asking Jesus Christ to be your Lord and savior, then write us at pastordatiri@mttraveler.org? If you are a child of God and this message has blessed or helped to you, please write and tell us also.

Mt. Traveler Missionary Baptist Church, Waverly, Alabama
Synopsis of Sermon Preached by Evangelist R. D. Jacobs

The Book of Corinthians

The Spiritual Church with Sticky Situations

December 14, 2014 15. Failure to Learn from the Past 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

As we look at Chapter 9, we find the Apostle Paul discussing his work and rights as an Apostle. We should consider that he is discussing it to show the seriousness of his God given task. We can then see why he did not want to preach to others and then be castaway himself. (1 Cor. 9:27) So this may be why he desired to be all things to all people in the hopes that some might be saved. (1 Cor. 9: 19-23) The Apostle saw himself in light of the Children of Israel and he knew that some of them were castaway in the end. (1 Cor. 10:1-4) The Apostle Paul saw in them a useful example for the Church in Corinth. Paul places an emphasis on the past so that the Church of today and of Corinth could learn from them and avoid sticky situations. (1 Cor. 10:6)

Paul begins by addressing the Children of Israel and how after being delivered from Egypt how they lusted after evil things. (Numbers 11:4) The second example that Paul gives is about the Golden Calf at Mt. Sinai - Exodus 32. (1 Cor. 10:7) The people began by lusting after evil things, then that lead to worshipping other gods, beside the Only True God, YHWH. The next example given in Numbers 25, is of the Israelite's worship and sacrifice to the Moabite gods, and their sexually immorality with their women. (1 Cor. 10:8) So, not only are the examples about lusting after evil, then worshipping some other gods, but also about becoming immoral. The next example is given from Numbers 21, and how the children of Israel grew impatient and discouraged about their journey and spoke against God and Moses. (1 Cor. 10:9) So added to their sin, was that they spoke against God. The final example given is of the final state of Sin, which is death. (1 Cor. 10:10) The example is from Numbers 16 dealing with the insolent of Korah, Dathan and Abiram and how the Earth swallowed them up.

The examples were given by Paul to the Church, so that we might learn from the past and not face these tough and sticky situations due to sin. (1 Cor. 10:11) Paul concludes with the great hope that no sin comes except that is common to man but in all sin God provides a way of escape! (1 Cor. 10: 13) The truth is that our escape from our Sin and its progressive effect is in the Salvation of Jesus Christ. Just as he forgave at Mt Sinai, and just as His anger was calmed in Moab, and as He healed after the serpent bites, and just as He promised to love the people after rebelling, God through Jesus provided us a way of escape from sin. Thank God for Jesus who took the penalty of sin, which is death, but was raised from the dead and Glorified that we may put our Faith in Him and be saved!

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The Book of Corinthians

The Spiritual Church with Sticky Situations

December 21, 2014 16. Idol feasts and the Lord's Supper 1 Corinthians 10:14-22

In the 8th chapter of his first epistle to the Church in Corinth, the Apostle Paul began his dealing with Food offered to idols and eating that food. His discussion continued through the 9th, and 10th chapters until we reach his solution to this sticky situation in verse 14: "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry". Idolatry is part of the dangerous progression of sin which leads to death. Also Idolatry takes what belongs to God and offers it to another. As Christians our Knowledge of God is the bases for all that we do. We, who are the Church, like others, do have feast and celebrations as others, but the difference is that we Know to Who we do all things to. (1 Cor. 8:4-14)

With the issue of feasts, the Apostle Paul's uses the Jewish festival of Passover to indicate that we do it unto Christ. (1 Cor. 10:15-18) We do so as the Bread is His body and the Wine His blood and as often as we do this we do it in Remembrance of Him (Christ). To Who we do it is the difference as Pagans do all that they do unto idols. The true essence of WHO you do things unto truly determines how you live, walk and talk. Those who know not God, do all unto to Satan. But, we as Christians walk a walk worthy of our repentance. (1 Cor. 18; 19) We talk the talk that resembles our savior's voice. Our good works are to be seen by the world so that they can worship our Father in Heaven.

We must choose who we will serve, whether it is Christ or the Devil. We can not have fellowship with Christ and with Satan. We have to decide who we will serve and all that we do will be based on our answer. If we choose God, than we must worship, praise, love and have fellowship with God only. We dare not provoke God to jealousy as we know He is jealous about His glory and the Love of His people and He will not share it with another. In fact we each should come to the understanding that it is God who has done everything for us. When we come to this knowledge we are able to accept the Lord Jesus as our Lord and Savior, and we can be saved by faith in Him. (1 Cor. 10:20-22)

The Book of Corinthians

CHRISTMAS MORNING

The Spiritual Church with Sticky Situations

December 25, 2014 17. The Believer's freedom is all for the Glory of God
10:23 – 11:1

1 Corinthians

The Church in Corinth was a fairly new church and we see its formation in the 18th chapter of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. Started by the Apostle Paul's ministry, this church soon began to face sticky situations that caused them to write unto Paul (I Corinthians 7:1). 1st Corinthians is Paul's first replying letter or Epistle that he wrote to confront and give godly solutions to their sticky situations.

In the 8th chapter Paul begins dealing with an issue of Food offered to Idols and eating that food. This topic spans from the 8th chapter to the 10th chapter. The issue arose because Corinth was a place where many gods were worshiped and sacrificed to and at the panicle of it the Emperor was seen and worshiped as a god. This made everyday life quite difficult for the Christians as it affected their day to day life and even what they ate. In addressing this issue, the Apostle Paul has stated that idols are nothing and that food is nothing. But, the Knowledge of Christ and of the true God is what makes the difference in all that we do. It is to Who we do things unto that matter. (1 Cor. 8:4 -13) Paul has asserted the dangerous of idolatry and how it is the worship of satan and how we are to flee from it. (1 Cor. 10: 14; 20) He also includes examples from the past about the dangers and progressiveness of sin. (1 Cor. 10: 1-6) Paul calls for a devotion from us as we can not have fellowship with God and with devils. (1 Cor. 10:21)

So in his concluding remarks about food offered to idols the Apostle Paul ends as he began. 1 Corinthians 8:1 says, "Now touching things offered to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but charity edifieth". And, 1 Corinthian 10:23 says, "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not". Love allows us not to seek our own good but another's. Love allows us to build up and not cause another to stumble. Concerning the food Paul explains that when you go buy, just buy and when someone says that the food is offered to idols do not eat it for THEIR sake but know that the Earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein. The basic idea is to do all things for the Glory of God without offending any and seeking others profit and not your own so that they might be saved. We have to consider the one that might be saved as well as the one's who salvation may be hindered. We have a freedom in Christ to eat and drink but we have to think of our Brethren first. (1 Cor. 10: 24-32)

Paul closes by letting us know to look to him as an example as he looks not after his own profit but the profit of others - for their salvation! Although we may look to Paul as an example he quickly points to his example and the one he is following, which is Christ. (1 Cor. 10:33, 11:1) Paul was simply imitating Christ who looked after our welfare first and by bearing the sins of the world, through him we all might be sanctified. This is the Good News that the Apostle had in mind when he thought of this situation concerning food offered to idols and the eating of it.

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The Book of Corinthians

The Spiritual Church with Sticky Situations

December 28, 2014 18. Covering the Head in Worship 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

The Eleventh chapter of Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, deals with another issue at the time of the Church of Corinth concerning the covering of women and submission to men during worship service. It may have been an issue that arose as some women with either their hair shaven or heads unveiled were praying and/or prophesying. Partly a cultural issue, the covering or not covering of the head was disturbing the worship service. During the time of Corinth, a man with long hair or his head being veiled was quite shameful. But, a woman with her head uncovered during worship was shameful but added to that shame was if her head was shaven.

Though this was partly a cultural issue, it also was a spiritual issue as it was a seen effect of some indecent behavior in the worship that dealt with the worshiper's moral attitude. So it's no surprise that the Apostle Paul, in his solution to this sticky situation, corrects it by re-establishing the Order set by God. The order is Set by Creator God, who placed His only begotten son Christ as Head of all creation. (1 Cor. 11:3) For by Him (the Living Word – Logos), all things that were made – were made. (John 1) Then God made from the dust that He created, Man. He made man in his image and likeness and gave him the task to keep and have dominion over all the Earth. (Genesis 1:26-28) Then from Man, God made Wo-man, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh and brought her to him to be a suitable help-meet. (Genesis 2: 21-25) In this order it is God, Christ, Man, Woman. The head of woman is Man. The head of man is Christ. And, the head of Christ is Father God. Christ submits his life to God. Man submits his life to Christ. And woman submits her life to Man (husband).

God's spiritual order is similar to our natural gender expression! For the woman who hair naturally is glory to her and who doing the time of the Corinthian Church wore a veil during worship to show her submission to her husband. Her husband is her covering, as she desires to be a suitable help-meet and not dominate him. Likewise a man who God created as the Head of woman is to be not like her, in submission but is to be one who exercises dominion over all of Creation including the wife who God gave to him. (1 Cor. 11:4-12) So for a man to play the woman rule is error, and for the woman to play the man role is error, each has a specific God given role in His order.

Paul concludes by asking the Corinthian church this question; Judge in yourselves. Is it comely (fitting) that a woman pray unto God uncovered? (1 Cor. 11:13) We can conclude for the Corinthian church that it is fitting for a woman, with her hair as her glory, to be covered in worship with a veil. And, that man should be uncovered from a veil or long hair in the position God has given him. (1 Cor. 11:14-15) For us today we ought to remember that Christ is our covering and our veil and as the Church we are to submit to Him. His is His Bride's covering and Glory before the Father!! Christ is the only way that we can go to the Father. It is by Faith in him and through him that we can see God.