

Curbs for an Enthusiastic Church

1 & 2 Corinthians

Detailed Outline from the Sermon on May 18, 2008

All about Corinth:

1. Strategic commercial importance near the sea and on the main highway from east to west.
2. Wealthiest, most important city in Greece.
3. Natural stopping point for captains and merchants.
4. Acrocorinth – “steep hill overlooking, housed temples to Isis, and other pagan gods.” Most famous temple to Aphrodite with a steady flow of worshippers in Corinth among the prostitute/priestesses of that religion.

The problems at play:

1. Displaced loyalty and factions – Paul? Apollos? Cephas (Peter)? “Is Christ divided? Were you baptized into the name of Paul?”
 - a. Paul spent 18 months her, first in synagogues, then among gentiles, planting the Corinthian Church.
 - b. Apollos came and evangelized successfully.
 - c. Peter had visited or Palestinian Christians had landed here.
2. Clashing cultures – “Things permissible may not be things beneficial.”
3. Marriage –hard questions on marriage, remarriage, divorce, what about when who leaves who? (7)
4. Meat sacrificed to idols.
5. Sin in the church – a relationship between a young man and his stepmother. (5)
6. Legal disputes – work it out in the church (6)
7. Disorder in worship. (11-14)
8. Denial of the resurrection. (15)

9. Paul's authority challenged. (9)
10. The troubles in Jerusalem.
11. People yoked with unbelievers. (2 Corinthians 6)

The first letter is an ardent rebuke with some very helpful solutions. (13)

The big answer to every problem:

L O V E

More solutions to hard issues:

1. Some sow, some water, some reap. (1 Corinthians 3)
2. The Body of Christ image. (1 Corinthians 12 and 14)
3. A celebration of the new covenant (2 Corinthians 3)
4. The ministry of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5)
5. Renewal – Though outwardly we are wasting away...(2 Corinthians 4:16)

Some helpful words on giving (2 Corinthians 8-9):

1. Generosity can flow from poverty. (8:2)
2. Give yourself first to the Lord, then to the need. (8:5)
3. We can excel in the grace of giving. (8:7)
4. Follow the model of Christ. (8:9)
5. We give according to what we have, not according to what we don't have. (8:12)
6. He who gathers much should not have too much, or he who gathers little too little. (8:15)
7. Our giving is proof of our love. (8:24)
8. Sow sparingly and reap sparingly; sow bountifully and reap bountifully. (9:6)
There is a connection between giving and personal fulfillment in life.
9. Give as the heart leads, not grudgingly or under compulsion. (9:7a)
10. God loves a cheerful giver. (9:7b)

11. When God gives generously it is so that we can give generously. (9:8, 11) Blessed to be a blessing.
12. By giving our “harvest of righteousness” is enlarged. (9:10) Interesting notion – who we are becoming? Who we are affecting?
13. Giving is a way of thanking God. (9:12)
14. Others praise God when they see our generosity. (9:13a)
15. Giving is obedience that validates our confession of faith. (9:13b)
16. Giving leads to a return in love from others.