

And Doing it Deliberately

1 Corinthians 1:9 – 12



⁹ God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

~ Our Spiritual Safari has much to learn about the modern church; and the church in Corinth is a perfect example for us to begin with. We saw the wonderful salutation of grace and thanksgiving in our last report, but let's not miss verse nine. Paul says the Lord Jesus Christ is the answer to all of the churches current problems, and all of their personal problems, too. It's almost ironic that the problems in the Corinthian church are the same problems in the church today. Of course, the solution has always been the same — but most Christians totally miss the point of this epistle.

The Lord Jesus Christ has been mentioned in every verse thus far in Corinthians. It should be obvious Who Paul is speaking of. Our safari seeks to find Christ on every page of Scripture; so this Christ-centered epistle is a great part of our expedition; we might be able to really get up close to Him now. Maybe we can touch the hem of His garment. Jesus Christ, God's Son, is our Lord; and there is no way of misunderstanding Who Paul is talking about in his letter to the Corinthians.

God is *always* faithful, friends. Men, however – including believers – are not always faithful. That brings up the word Paul uses again and again here for "*fellowship*" – koinonian. That means anything believers share together concerning the things of the Lord Jesus Christ. Fellowship has several different meanings, including contribution, communion with the Lord's Supper, and partnership. Koinonian means communion; and it can also mean dispensation; but "*partnership*" would be the best use of the word "*fellowship*" in verse nine.

There are several different types of partnerships, of course. Business relationships between the saved and the unsaved rarely bode well. To

married people, the Bible says don't be unequally yoked. Specifically, don't hitch an ox and an ass to plow together. Well, there's plenty of oxen and asses hooked up today, you may be sure. They ought not to be — but they are. The question is never "should we get divorced?" The question must always be: "should we get married?" I never seem to hear that question asked. Marriage is the type of "partnership" verse nine speaks of.

The type of partnership we've entered into with the Lord Jesus Christ is one in which He owns everything of ours. Christ is the Chief Financial Officer — period. He has an inventory of and makes me account for everything I own. His partnership with me doesn't exactly put Him in big business, though — let's be clear. Even so, everything I have is His. Christ says He is interested in me — and I know I am interested in Him.

We also have a mutual commitment from God — His resources are ours to appropriate for His glory. Christ is committed to us, so we are committed to Him. We have mutual compassion. Christ accommodates Himself to our weaknesses, and He makes His power our power. I stumble and fall, but Christ never stumbles or falls. Friends, be real: do you know anything about stumbling and falling *AND DOING IT DELIBERATELY*? God never let me down in those times of my weakness — and there have been more than one. God is always faithful, even when we are unfaithful. The Lord Jesus Christ is the *ONLY* solution to our problems in this life. Because He is faithful, we can depend Him in our time of need.

Our Spiritual Safari moves forward with the Lord Jesus Christ as our partner and our Holy Guide. All of these problems I am facing personally today are going to have to be solved by Him. I know I can count on Him and look to Him; He's in control of all of it. That's the solution to our problems, and there is no other solution for the frustrations and complications of this life. Well, they had real problems in this Corinthian church. As a result, we have a deeply divided church as we begin reading....

¹⁰ Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

~ *“Speaking the same thing”* in verse ten means professing the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The first ten verses each mentioned Him by Name. Our safari study has just come from second Chronicles where the emphasis was upon the Word of God. Here, obviously, the emphasis is on the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. This epistle will emphasize His Lordship; and we hear so much about calling Christ *“Lord”* — but we see very little practice of it — and I mean *VERY* little.

Because there is such little practice of the Lordship of Christ over the lives of believers today, there aren't many genuine churches that don't have big problems; problems to the point of almost nonexistent attendance; even when the Gospel is taught properly, correctly and completely. Most Christians have very big personal problems in their family, business, and personal life, too, quite frankly. See, God isn't just lip service to the genuine child of God. Is He your Lord? Is He your Master? Have you made Him that way? Are you His willing servant? Chronicles showed us clearly we can never have revival until these issues are straightened out in our hearts.

We have too much beating each other down amongst Christians today; and I'm just as guilty as the next person. We shouldn't be fighting each other and hating each other; but we should be speaking the same things about Christ! There shouldn't be myriad schism's and open breaks happening in the church; it is the gossip, criticism, hatred, bitterness and, most damaging, a total departure from the Word of God that has fractured the churches of this world as we know them.

There were many allegations being made in Corinth, and the *“house of Chloe”* signed their name to the charges. If you're going to make certain statements, friends, be sure to attach your name to them. Chloe stood up and said, *“we have trouble!”* And they had trouble in Corinth alright. We

learned in Romans there are gray areas where we need to leave the problem between the Lord and the other individual — and get out of the way; but there are some things that are very wrong, and they must be dealt with. Remember, Chronicles revealed many different levels of idolatry, such as burning your children in the fire; as opposed to gathering some grass in the groves and burning it or something comparatively harmless such as that. There are some problems for which the church will suffer to the breaking point if not addressed. Sexual sins are typically the heart of most spiritually fatal problems. Money sins are a close second; and they're usually intertwined.

Well, there were a whole bunch of baby Christians in Corinth at the time in which we are studying; and it's always the babies who do the crying and wailing. The babies in the nurseries are cute; but the babies in the sanctuary — not so much. This church had people following three men first — and Christ last, according to verse twelve. Cephas, of course, is Simon Peter. Those who loved the Word of God in Corinth at this time in which we are studying loved and followed Christ; and they're always last on any list.

We have three men in verse twelve who genuinely love the Lord; yet, one church is divided because of them. You really need to make some mental notes here, friends. We're going to learn all about this matter and we're going to examine very carefully the centrality of Christ in this Corinthian study. We have no other answer and no other solution in the church today outside of the Lord Jesus Christ as He is presented in the Word of God. Until men and women are willing to come to a saving knowledge of Him, there will be no answers to the problems in their lives. We're going to begin to see that in detail in our next report ~

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