

How to Guard against Division (1 Cor 3:18-23)

- Sin which goes unchecked within the church, which we loathe in others, is pride
- Paul's concern: guard against division; he continues here to address a party spirit
- Typical of Paul's solution to any matter is to have correct Biblical thinking
- To regain/maintain unity within the church, we must have a right view on things
- Proper view of 1) ourselves, 2) others, 3) what is ours 4) our possessor

I. A Right View of Ourselves (3:18-20)

- Most division will vanish if Christians are not impressed with their own wisdom
- A person who thinks he is wise in this age (world's wisdom) deceives himself
- Human wisdom is moronic before God: even God's foolishness is wiser (1:25)
- Christians don't have a right to their own opinions about what God has revealed

II. A Right View of Others (3: 21-22a)

- Divisions developed in Corinth based on people's attraction to different servants
- Human wisdom: they boasted about the gifts of men: Apollos, Cephas, Paul
- Each of these men were gifted & had special abilities which the church needed
- God's wisdom: all of God's leaders (variety of leaders) blessing to the church
- If Corinthians followed what three leaders said, not how they spoke:- no division

III. A Right View about What Is Ours (3:22b)

- If we are to guard against division, must have a right view of what belongs to us
- Not only all God's leaders ours, vs.22b says all things that are from God are ours
- We have even inherited Jesus glory bequeathed to us by Jesus himself: All life
- God's life is ours: through Jesus God abides in us and we in Him (2 Pet 1:3-4)
- Even death is ours: Jesus conquered death, we have conquered death through Him
- Things present: everything we have / experiences we have in this life (Rom 8:28)
- Things to come: heavenly blessings in store for us, no eye seen... God prepared
- If all these things are ours, why should we divide ourselves into factions

IV. A Right View of the One Who Owns Us (3:23)

- Key in guarding against division is having a right view of our possessor- Jesus
- Jesus is the source of spiritual unity & source for healing division in the church
- Taking our eyes off Jesus: division; turning our eyes back on Him brings recovery
- Our oneness with Christ is the heart of our oneness with each other (Jn 17 21-23)