

1 CORINTHIANS

Lesson Two: Divisions and the Gospel

First Baptist Church Chappell Hill, June 13, 2021

Divisions

1 Corinthians 1:10 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**.

- Divisions — the condition of being divided because of conflicting aims or objectives
- Perfectly joined together — to cause to be in a condition to function well
- Mind — **way of thinking, *mind, attitude***, as the sum total of the whole mental and moral state of being
- Judgement — that which is purposed or intended
- Do we have to agree on everything? Is that possible?

Divisions

- Are we supposed to agree on all doctrinal matters?
- What about core or central doctrinal matters?
- What are the core or central doctrines of New Testament Christianity?
- Why is there so much disagreement?
 - Possible for reasonable people to see obscure matters differently
 - Pride — leads people who have little skill with the Word to think they have it all figured out
 - Worldliness or carnality — incapacitates us (1 Cor. 3)
 - Theological commitments
 - Deficient hermeneutics

Divisions and Personalities

1 Corinthians 1:11 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. **13** Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

- Paul received word from Chloe about the severe divisions
- Demonstrated in how they claim to be follows of Paul, Apollos (see Acts 18:24-28), Peter (Cephas)
- We have a “hero” mentality in the church today where certain personalities have tremendous / nearly exclusive influence
- These Christians were not really followers of Paul, Apollos, or Peter in doctrine
- A NOTE ON STRUCTURE — see 1 Corinthians 3:4-6
- RABBIT: what is hyper dispensationalism?

Divisions and Baptism

1 Corinthians 1:14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; **15** Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. **16** And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

- Apparently they were dividing over who baptized them — a matter that should have no particular importance
- That they divide over who baptized them shows the level of immaturity among them, and in particular that they do not understand the implications of the gospel
- Reads as if while Paul is writing and remembering back to who he baptized the “household of Stephanas” comes to mind
- Crispus — “the chief ruler of the synagogue” in Corinth (Acts 18:8)

Unity and the Gospel

1 Corinthians 1:17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

- I want to focus today on **CONTENT** of the gospel and when we get to 1 Cor. 15 we will focus on **EVIDENCE**
- What does “gospel” mean?
 - Here “preach the gospel” is the verb euangelizō
 - The noun “gospel” is euangelion and means “good news”
 - Can be used in a technical or non-technical sense like many other words (apostle, angel, etc.)
- From 1 Cor. 1:17 alone, what **IS NOT** part of the gospel?
- Bible books usually answer the questions they raise

Unity and the Gospel

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- Turn to 1 Cor. 15:1-4 for the historical content of the gospel, and note especially 1 Cor. 15:11
- Are we free to change / alter the gospel? Galatians 1:6-8
- What must we believe to be “saved”? What must we do to be saved?
- What about the “cross-less gospel” that says you only have to believe Jesus’ promise of eternal life? (John 5:24)
- Do I have to believe in the virgin birth to become a Christian?
- Do I have to repent of my sins to become a Christian?
- Do I have to make Jesus the Lord of my life to become a Christian?

Unity and the Gospel

- Read John 20:31 — what is the purpose of John's Gospel?
- Can we agree that if some belief is NECESSARY to becoming a Christian then NECESSARILY that must be taught in John's Gospel? (baptism, virgin birth, repent of sins, join church, commitment of future obedience)
- But what about sermons in the book of Acts? (Acts 2, Acts 3:12-19, 13:14-42)
- What does it mean to “believe”? It is the Greek *pisteuō* and means “to consider someth. to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust, *believe*”
- But MANY today redefine faith to include a commitment to 100% obedience to the commands of Christ
- Well over 100 times in the NT eternal salvation is linked to faith alone (e.g., John 1:12, 3:16; Romans 1:16; Galatians 3:2, 26)

Unity and the Gospel

- Is faith a work? (Romans 3:27-28)
- Do I need works to obtain, retain, or validate my salvation?
- Should I try to determine whether other people are really Christians by their works? (where does the Bible tell me to do that?)
- Is it possible for me to determine whether other people are really Christians by their works? (does the Bible say that is possible?)
- Can you lose, forfeit, or throw away your salvation?
 - What passage says you can lose, forfeit, or throw it away?
 - What passage says how you can get it back?
 - Can we have assurance today about our eternal destiny?