

WEDNESDAY SERMON

Willow, Alaska

Date: July 17, 2019

Scripture Reading: Romans 14:1-3; 1Co. 8:1-9

Text: Multiple

Subject: CONFESSION OF FAITH SERIES – Differences in Understanding among members, Article 47.

47. Differences in Understanding among Members*

While the church continues in obedience to the commandments of Christ, none of us should separate for faults and corruptions until those issues have been addressed. Since the church consists of men subject to failing there will be differences.

Revelation chapters 2 and 3; Ac.15:1-3; 1Co.1:10; He.10:25; Re.2:20, 21; Ro.14:1, 15:1-3.

**Formerly Article 46 of 1644 COF*

READ REVELATION CHAPTERS 2 & 3 – These chapters teach us that both individuals and churches are at different stages of understanding – and therefore, may have different views of the practice of the church. Both collectively and individually, there were (and are) differences in the churches. It may be that these who were very new in the faith had not yet been grounded because the New Testament had not been completed.

- The **Church of Ephesus** was a church which –
 - Cannot bear them which are evil,
 - Have tried them which say they are apostles, and are not and has found them liars,
 - Hast borne, and hast patience, and for Jesus' sake has labored and has not fainted.
 - Hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans,
 - Had left their first love.

- Were exhorted to repent and do the first works else the LORD would come unto the church quickly, and would remove her candlestick out of his place.
- The **Church in Smyrna** was a church which –
 - Were exhorted to fear none of those things which they should suffer,
 - Would be tried and suffer tribulation 10 days,
 - Was a working, tribulation suffering church, who were blasphemed of others.
- The **Church in Pergamos** was a church which –
 - Dwelt where Satan’s seat was,
 - Had held Christ’s name and not denied his faith,
 - Did so when Antipas was the Lord’s faithful martyr slain among them,
 - Had them in the church who held the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication,
 - Had them also that held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans,
- The **Church in Thyatira** was a church which –
 - Suffered that woman Jezebel, which called herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce the Lord’s servants to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.
 - Had some in Thyatira, who have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan.
- The **Church in Sardis** was a church which –
 - Had a name that they lived, and art dead,
 - Had things remaining that are ready to die,
 - Had works which the LORD found imperfect before God,
 - Had a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with the LORD in white: for they are worthy.

- The **Church in Philadelphia** was a church which –
 - The Lord had set before them an open door which no man could shut,
 - Had a little strength, and had kept God’s word, and had not denied the Lord’s name,
 - Would have those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, to come and worship before their feet, and to know that the Lord has loved themA,
 - Because they had kept the word of His patience, He would also keep them from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.
 - Are encouraged to hold fast that which they have, that no man take their crown,
- The **Church in Laodicea** was a church which –
 - Were neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm and the LORD would spue them out of his mouth,
 - Said they were rich, increased with goods, and had need of nothing and knew not that they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked,
 - Were counseled of the LORD to buy of him gold tried in the fire, that they may be rich; and white raiment, that they may be clothed and that the shame of their nakedness do not appear, and anoint their eyes with eyesalve that they may see,
 - Are exhorted to be zealous and repent, because the LORD rebukes and chastens those he loves,

Acts 15:1-3 (KJV) *And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto*

the apostles and elders about this question. 3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

- It is clear that there are those among the churches who hold doctrines opposed to grace, but who are brethren. These are obviously those
 - Cannot hear many of the words of grace and exhortation when it is preached because they are “dull of hearing.”
 - who have not “grown in the grace of the LORD” and who are unskillful in the word of righteousness: for they are babes.
 - Who cannot take in strong meat because they are not of full age (not mature) and their senses have not been exercised to discern both good and evil.
 - **Hebrews 5:11-14 (KJV)** *Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. 12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*
- Beloved, take note of this exhorting companion scripture to Hebrews 5:11-14. In this section, we can see the lack of growth results in short sightedness – unable to see afar off – and to remember that one’s sins were purged.
 - **2 Peter 1:1-11 (KJV)** *Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God*

and our Saviour Jesus Christ: **2** Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, **3** According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: **4** Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. **5** And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; **6** And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; **7** And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. **8** For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. **10** Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: **11** For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:10 (KJV) 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.

Why did Paul exhort the Corinthians to “all speak the same thing – and that there be no divisions among them – and that they be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment? Was it not because they were yet carnal? And were divided over “favorite preachers?” To come to this state would require them to exercise some spiritual knowledge and discipline in their lives. Some in the church of God at Corinth had serious faults in their understanding of scripture. Examples:

- **1 Corinthians 6:5-7 (KJV)** *I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? 6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. 7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?*
- **1 Corinthians 8:5-7 (KJV)** *For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) 6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. 7 Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.*
- **1 Corinthians 15:12 (KJV)** *Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?*
- **2 Timothy 2:15-19 (KJV)** *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16 But shun profane and vain*

babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. 17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; 18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. 19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Hebrews 10:23-25 (KJV) *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) 24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

Here is an exhortation to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering and to consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. Here is an exhortation to NOT FORSAKE THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER, AS THE MANNER OF SOME IS: Those who are holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering are the ones who know that forsaking the assembly is a way of hurting their own spiritual lives. Babies in Christ – those unskillful in the word of righteousness, do not clearly see the day approaching. These need the exhortation of the ones who do clearly see that day approaching.

Revelation 2:20-21 (KJV) *Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. 21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.*

We have to ask ourselves: “Why would a church allow a woman called Jezebel which calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce the Lord’s servants to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed unto idols? Is not because of ignorance of the word? Or worse – that they have no understanding at all because they are spiritually blind and yet in their sins. This preacher believes that some who are truly God’s children could conceivably allow something like this in the church because of their lack of growth and use of the scriptures. They are babes – weak in the faith – unable to discern between good and evil.

Romans 14:1-3 (KJV) *Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. 2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. 3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.*

Certainly, this is clear enough. All of us ought to receive those who are weak in the faith about days, food, and drink. Consider what is before us:

- One believes that he may eat all things.
- One, who is weak (in the faith) eats herbs only.
- Let not us who know that we can eat all things judge him who eats herbs only. Why? Because God has received this one who is weak in the faith. What does he need? He needs nurturing and encouragement from those who are stronger in the faith – and he needs growth. He needs to be constantly in the scriptures reading, reading, and reading prayerfully. By this, he will grow up in the LORD.

Romans 15:1-3 (KJV) *We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. 3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.*

Here is more of the same. Consider it. Some are strong in the faith because, by reason of use of the Word of God, their senses are exercised to discern both good and evil. Some are not – they are infirm. Let us not please ourselves, but bear the infirmities of the weak. Let us purpose that in order to edify or build up the other. We have an example, do we now? Even Christ pleased not himself. It is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

Brothers and sisters, we are not all at the same level of grown in the church any more than we are at the same level of growth and maturity physically. It takes food – spiritual food, which is the Word of God to make us grow.

When one is born of God, he is a babe. He needs milk. That is, he needs the basic teachings of the word regarding his salvation and initial obedience of baptism and church membership. He needs to hear how to be separated from the world and unto His God. He needs to hear about creation, about the world-wide flood, about the tower of Babel and the confusion of languages. He needs to hear about the overspreading of the earth and of God's picking the nation of Israel to the exclusion of all others. He needs to hear how that God used that nation to bring the Savior into the world. How we he was virgin born, raised subject to his parents, and was baptized of heaven's authority – then went about in the power of the Spirit doing good. We need to hear that he was crucified, buried, raised from the dead the third day – and that all who believe in Him have everlasting life. That new-born one needs to hear the elements

of baptism – the Lord’s Supper – the church, its officers, its ordinances, and its operation. He needs to hear of the second coming of Christ and his kingdom. All this helps him to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.