

1 Corinthians 1 and Division

04-03-22

Paul's letter to the Corinthians opens on one particular issue: Division. Paul specifically condemns the formation of parties; these Denominations (from the name) were around Paul, Peter, Apollos and Christ. This was terribly ironic, as these were themselves unified in doctrine and purpose. Paul goes on to describe this as being the result of two kinds of wisdom, that from God or from the world. James 3:14-16 makes a similar description as Paul about two kinds of wisdom.

What causes division? First, we see that what Paul described was caused by envy and self-seeking. He says that this envy is based on being Carnal minded in 1 Corinthians 3:3. They are all caught up in our own interests and immature.

Another cause of division is being fault-finders and grumblers as mentioned in Jude 16-19. The issues is that sometimes we cannot differentiate between contending for the faith or contentious. We were looking for error (finding fault instead of fixing fault) we have failed the command of love, which is to "believe all things" (1 Corinthians 13).

Finally, there is the issue of foolish disputes causing division In Titus 3:9-10 Paul warns Titus to reject the man of division. This man was focused on endless debates and unresolvable issues. This person constantly wanted to argue over what were matters of opinion and liberty .

The solution to division is unity (1 Corinthians 12:24-25). But what establishes unity? First, a love for brethren – 1 Corinthians 12:24-25. Putting others above ourselves and being sacrificial in all things is how Scriptures describe our love for each other. We must have patience and longsuffering. Paul told Timothy that we must "in humility correcting those who are in opposition" (2 Tim :25).

We must in equal measure have a love for the Truth – John 17:17-23. Consider that doctrine is Truth; thus we must have a great love of doctrine to have unity. There is NO unity without doctrine, the meaning of the entire letter of 2 John.

If we are pursuing Unity, we need to understand that there is no unity with love alone. Unity must have agreement (Amos 3:3), and there is no unity without agreement. But there is no unity with doctrine alone either. No congregation reaches perfect doctrinal unity; there are always new members joining in that need to be taught.

Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another. Romans 14:19