

## I. Introduction to 1 Corinthians and Personal Ministry Philosophy

Memorial Day is always my best holiday. I enjoy it for a number of reasons. First, I really enjoy doing for you tomorrow what we are going to do. If you have any add-ons to the list, I know there are always people at the last minute you want to bring or whatever. That is fine. Just tell my wife or Kelly this morning so I can get some extra meat this afternoon when we pick it up. I want it to be your day tomorrow. I just want it to be a fun time for you, where you can come and just relax. We will have a lot of fun things we do, just a time of fellowship. So I am looking forward to that.

I just enjoy it. It is a time when you get a long weekend and families get to do things together. I love to come out at night and smell the barbecue grills drifting down through the air. What else can I say? They have unlimited war movies, one after the other on television.

If you have your Bibles this morning, let us turn to the book of 1 Corinthians. As you know, we have been coming through the Bible book by book, really focusing on how for you to learn your Bible. We have tied this in with what we did before we started studying the books. Then, Thursday night in our Bible study, we have kind of taken a specialized little session here where we are showing you how to catalog all your notes, build your own reference Bible, and put it all together so that you can have a Bible at your fingertips. You can really begin to understand as you grow in the Word of God, begin to deal with people, whether it is at work, or people that you are working with here, or somebody you meet, that you have the ability to really open up the Scriptures and to show them what the Bible says without fumbling around trying to find all the verses.

Now we come to the book of 1 Corinthians. Last week we looked at Romans, and we talked about how when Paul wrote Romans, he wrote it differently than he writes all of his other books. When we saw the book of Romans, we saw him not dealing directly with just a church or Christians in the city of Rome, but all of the aspect of the Roman Empire running the world. He writes it from a perspective that is an incredible perspective, showing us that, according to Daniel chapter 2 and Daniel's image, even today we are in the Roman Empire, laying that thing out for the doctrine of the church.

In the book of 1 Corinthians, we have our first book that is written directly to a church. This is a group of believers, and he writes two letters to them, 1 and 2 Corinthians. To me, the book of 1 Corinthians is a book that shows us really what kind of church not to be.

As I was growing up, I first got my life right with God back in about 1971, maybe the end of 1970, somewhere in there. My life began a new journey then. I will never forget, I was working in a factory back then, and I was just like all the other guys there. One night I came to the place where I made a deal with God, and I showed up the next morning with a New Testament in my

pocket, a bunch of tracts in my pocket, and I have been making people mad ever since. It is a great job. You ought to try it sometime.

All through my journey, and the ins and outs of learning the ministry, I have learned as much from people who showed me what to do as I have from people who showed me what not to do. In my life, I can trace my ministry back through three men. Two of those men had a direct impact on my life that probably shaped everything I do and understand about the ministry. Through those two men, I learned everything I know today. There was one other man that really focused me into the deeper aspects of the Word of God, but there were two men in my life that absolutely shaped my concept of ministry.

The first man in my life was my father in the Lord. He was a man that God put in my life after my father died, that God put into my life that really got me on course. Once I got focused on where I needed to go, what I needed to do, God put a man in my life that I am eternally grateful for. He is the Apostle Paul of my life. Everything I know that is good about ministry or people, I learned from this man. I learned my love for the Word of God. I think the greatest thing he taught me was a passion for the Word of God. I think I saw in his life and his ministry a man, when every time he preached, you just saw the passion that he had for God in such a way that was infectious to people.

I grew up under his ministry and I grew up working with him. I will never forget one time when I used to drive with him when he would preach revivals, and I would lead singing for him. I played the trumpet back then, and I would play the trumpet and lead singing. It was a great little deal, and I learned a lot from him. I got to travel around with him, and I will never forget those long rides. I began to ask him questions about the Bible, much like you guys do me now, and talk with him.

I asked him one time, or I told him one time, "You know what? I think God has called me to preach." I said, "I want you to teach me to preach." That was the greatest request I ever made of anybody. But, boy, I will tell you what, it is one of those things like, "Be careful what you wish for." I am privileged in a lot of ways. I grew up in the last aspect of seeing the last of the old Philadelphia preachers before they died off. When J. Frank Norris split with the Southern Baptist Convention back in the 1930s and 1940s and started a world fellowship, he trained the men that were the pastors that I grew up under. He trained men like Harold Henniger. He trained men like Dallas Billington. He trained men like John Rawlings. He trained men like Beecham Vick. He trained all the men that are now either dead or dying or very old in age.

I got to see those men. Many of those men, I got to see them start out believing a book, and wind up not believing a book. But I had the privilege of being trained by the son of one of those men, spiritually speaking. He was an old school guy. When I asked him to teach me how to preach, boy, I will tell you what, that was, I never forgot that day. I never forgot that moment. It is a good thing. He taught you, I mean, he taught you.

The first time I ever preached, you guys go down to a mission down there and we preach down there, and there are a lot of guys down there. The first time I ever preached in my life, I preached at the Brown Street Mission. Probably 250 people were down there. I was all hot and ready to

go. This was my first thing, and I was going to get up there and preach to them. Just like most guys, I got up there and let her rip. I got going down through there, and I do not even remember what my text was, but I misquoted a verse. In front of 200 people, in the middle of that thing, he stopped me and told me that if I was going to preach the Word of God, I needed to quote the Word of God correctly. Then he said, "Go ahead and finish your message." Try that sometime in your life.

He did that four times. The last time he did it, I was in front of 2,500 people. We preached in a Bible conference together. He stopped me flat dead in the middle of that thing and corrected me on something I said that was not exactly right. Afterwards, I will never forget this. Afterwards, he came over to me, and it was like one of those moments that you see in Clash of the Titans, or Remember the Titans, or Rudy, or something like that. It was one of those moments that I will never forget. When I walked over there, and I was all hot and sweaty, he was all hot and sweaty. He finished preaching before I did. He came over there and he got me by the tie and he kind of pulled me head to head. He said to me, "Did I just embarrass you?" I said, "Well, a little bit." And he said, "Well, son, better now than at the judgment seat of Christ." Then he slapped me like that. That is his way of saying, "Get it right." I got it right. That old boy taught me the good things.

You cannot train them like that today. Try to train them like that today, and they would be running out on the ACW or something like that. You cannot do it. That was the old days. That was the old school. That is probably why we do not have many preachers today that can peel the paint off the wall. A lot of teachers, not many preachers. The old boys are gone with that, when a great art, the art of taking the Word of God and peeling the paint off the wall, whatever, getting a scraper. You do not see it much anymore. You do not see it in young people anymore. We have a lot of good teachers. You guys get up and lay out a lot of good stuff, but it is hard to find somebody that can just take the paint off the walls when it needs to be taken off and then revert back to the ability to teach. That is the way these old boys were.

Everything I learned good about the ministry I learned from him. I told him that he had the right to correct me anytime, any place. I knew, even today, he is still alive. Even today, I know that he has forgotten more about the Bible than I ever learned. He has forgotten more about the ministry than I ever learned. I told him years ago, he had the right to change me, correct me, or do anything in my life that he wanted to because I knew that God had put him in my life and I knew that I could learn from him. Every good thing I learned about God and the Word of God and the ministry, I learned from him.

Then there was another man that God put in my life. This man taught me everything not to do about the ministry. I learned some tremendous things from this guy of what not to do. In this guy, I saw every political move that could be made. In this guy, I saw everything that every big-time preacher does to pull it off. I learned, and I am indebted to both of them. I would never really speak ill of either one of them because I understand that the bottom line, even though there were a lot of things wrong with one, Mel was not perfect, there were a lot of things wrong with him. But the bottom line was, I knew where they were coming from. I understood, even to this day, I have deep respect for both of them simply because of what they taught me.

I am saying all that to say this: as you grow up in the Word of God, and as you grow up in ministry, learn from people who do it right, learn from people who do it wrong. Do not ever get so antagonistic towards somebody because what they believe is not lined up with where you are at, that you ever lose the blessings of learning from them what not to do.

## II. The Corinthian Church: A Model of What Not To Be

The church at Corinth is a model for us in the New Testament of what not to do. You are going to find that this is how God teaches you the Bible. He will take somebody, some thing, some church, and he will show you everything bad about it, and you will learn what not to do, and you will get some tremendous insight spiritually from it.

The name Corinthian means "ornaments." I do not know of another church that fits into the worldly, fleshly, 20th century, 21st century now, churches that we live in as the church at Corinth. A church that is worldly, a church that is fleshly, a church that is out of touch with the reality of where God is, the Bible is, and the ministry is. It is a church that focuses on things. Of course, we find in Revelation 3:17 that that is the Laodicean church. The church that says, "Look at us, we have great buildings, we have stained glass windows, we have a 6,000-foot steeple, we have this, we have that, we have all of the stuff, all of the things."

Of course, the reason why they do that, I do not know if you have figured it out yet or not, the reason why you find churches now with Starbucks, pretty soon you will find them with Taco Bell, because they all have a Spanish ministry. Then they will have chicken, that will be for all the ex-Methodists. But they will walk down the line. The reason why they have to build them so big and so beautiful, put in \$5 million worth of sound system, and everything, and reach out to you, is because when you do not have a Bible anymore, those are the things you have to resort to get people to come.

We do not have a multimedia presentation. We do not have anything, we do not have any of those things. We have one thing here, it is not a Christian smorgasbord where you come in and get whatever you want to eat. We have one thing we serve, in a lot of ways, just like the City Union Mission. This is a soup kitchen for a bunch of bums that are hungry. Are you hungry bums? Okay. I am a hungry bum too. I looked a long time ago that soul winning and the ministry is nothing more than one beggar telling another beggar where you found some bread to eat. Of course, that is what a church ought to be, and that is what this church is. That is why you learn so much from the church at Corinth. A church which means "ornaments." All the little things that glitter. All the little things that seem spectacular. All the little things you have to do because it is like fishing. The shinier lure you have, the more you attract the fish, and the more they come. The problem is you do not have anything to give them when you get there.

The church at Corinth is a picture of the 20th, 21st century body of Christ. A church that has left the Bible and its doctrine, and now it has left it for a fleshly, sensual, worldly encounter with God. I was driving down the street the other day going somewhere, and I saw this sign on this church that said, "Come try our alternative worship service." Now that got my attention. What would you think an alternative worship service would be? I did not know there was an alternative to

worship. So I called the church. I got some poor hapless secretary who probably did not know anything, and I said, "I saw your sign, and I am really interested. Can you explain to me what is an alternative worship service?" And she said, "Well, some people," she said, "it is more of a conventional style of worship." And she says, "It is more convenient style of worship." I said, "Convenient for who? God or the people?" She did not understand my question, so I backed off a little bit. She could never figure it out. I can never figure it out. As far as I know, the Bible only gives one definition of worship in the book of John, and it says true worshipers have to worship God in spirit and truth. Now I do not know what alternative there is to that. But anyway, we canceled our alternative worship service this morning, as you can imagine. But that is the church at Corinth.

Paul addresses this church, and he calls them in 1 Corinthians 3:1 a bunch of spiritual babies, and you are going to see this. Each chapter he deals with issues, or more than one issue, that they are totally out of line on. In doing so, we get a tremendous insight, as I said earlier, how not to do some things. The book of 1 Corinthians is not a how-to book. The book of 1 Corinthians is a how-not-to book. But in learning it, boy, there are some tremendous things that you are going to see this morning, and obviously we are going to point them out as we go through as best we can. In this book, Paul deals with them, and you see that he uses the principles in dealing with people that we talked about last week in the book of Romans, chapter 14 and 15. You will see these intertwining here, because the book of 1 Corinthians is written about the same time as the book of Romans, 57 AD, somewhere between Acts chapter 19 and 20. So you begin seeing him use those principles that he lays down in the book of Romans, which forms for us the doctrine of Christian doctrine, the handbook of Christian doctrine for us.

Now we are going to start to come through these. Let us have a word of prayer here, and then we are going to start to take it apart chapter by chapter, and we will see what we come up with.

Father, we thank and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We love You. We thank You for all that You do for us. We thank You for the folks that You brought today. We thank You for Penny and Alice being here today, Lord, and what a joy it is of how dear they are in our hearts and how many memories it flooded back to hear Penny sing and to see Alice and how many selfless years, Lord, that they gave to the ministry for You, that there are men in the ministry today that do not even remember who they are, but how because of their faithfulness, they were just a little part of doing and putting into their lives what needed to be done. Thank You for that. We pray, Father, that You will bless us today as we come to Your Word. We love You. We honor You, honor this book, and Lord, never let us deny it, but always let us stand on it. Let it be the only book that we proclaim and the only thing we preach. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name for His sake we ask it. Amen.

### III. Divisions and False Doctrine (Chapters 1-2)

In chapter 1, you see that this church has violated the number one principle of building a church, and that is that there are divisions in this church. Look at 1 Corinthians 1:10.

*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.*

Of course, this is not happening here. There are divisions among them, and you are going to find as we come through this chapter that the church at Corinth has violated the number one rule, and that is the rule of unity. Once your unity breaks down in any church, any organization, but especially the church, once you break down the unity, and the unity is based on the mindset, the mindset is based on "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," which is the Word of God. So that is the mind we are to have, and that joins us together as the body perfectly, and that is why the body of Christ is disjointed today.

Here is what they are arguing about in chapter 1, down through verses 11 through 17. I know this is going to be hard for you to believe, but it says, "I am of Paul," somebody else is. They are arguing about who baptized whom. Here is what they are doing here, and this is why Paul calls them a bunch of spiritual babies. This is what they are doing: they are taking baptism, and because, let us say, Pam here was baptized by the Apostle Paul, and let us say that Steve here was baptized by me, well, they are saying, "Paul was greater than Bob Alexander, he is the chief apostle, so therefore, you must be more spiritual than Steve because the one who baptized you was more spiritual." They are putting a pecking order or a social class in the church based on the spirituality or the notoriety or the popularity of the person that baptized you. Where you were baptized by Paul, and Steve was baptized by me, because Paul is a greater Christian, that gives some greater spiritual significance to your walk with Christ than being baptized by a nobody, as Steve was, when I baptized him. Of course, he says down through here, "You guys have got some real problems here," and he deals with them on that issue.

But this is what I want to give you, and in answering that, we get one of the greatest teachings on how you know that baptism will not, cannot, never has been able to save you. This is what you get in 1 Corinthians. He will deal with the issue, but then he will give you an answer that will surpass the issue, and he will teach us by what somebody said or did or is doing that is wrong, the great spiritual impact lesson to teach us as the body of Christ in something by what they are doing wrong.

In Paul's answer, as I said, we get one of the greatest teachings on how you know that baptism cannot save you. When you come down through here, you will find, we talked about this last week in the book of Acts. I told you how there are more people who died and went to hell in the book of Acts than all the sins, all the vices of the world combined. Why? Because it is the book of Acts where men take the doctrine of what we call baptismal regeneration. The first time you find it showing up in the Bible is in the book of Acts. You find it there in Acts chapter 19 with a professional Christian college where they are disputing with Paul over baptism for salvation. After three or four weeks or months, Paul just says, "Forget it. I cannot do anything here," and off he goes.

When you start to look at that school there in Acts chapter 19, you will see that they got their roots, and you guessed it, Alexandria, Egypt. You are going to find that every major cult in the

world, Roman Catholicism, the Orthodox branch of it, the Anglican church, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the Lutherans, the Christian church, Church of Christ, the Mormons, and the Jehovah's Witnesses, and a host of others, all teach the same doctrine: you have to be baptized in water to be saved. Where do they base it? Acts 2:38, Mark 16:16, and a number of other places found in the book of Acts. Every one of those false churches teach that you have to be baptized to go to heaven. Some of them baptize you when you are a baby, some of them baptize you when you are an adult. They all think that their own baptism is the only baptism. In other words, they do not recognize each other's baptisms. The Church of Christ would never recognize a Roman Catholic baptism. A Roman Catholic would never look at a Mormon and say that is good, or a Jehovah's Witness; they do not recognize anybody. But it is all inclusive to themselves. In that, they are much the same.

Let me show you. Notice how one simple passage clearly clears up bad doctrine. Now look at 1 Corinthians 1:14. Follow along with me and watch how easy this is. This is on the issue of baptism.

*1 Corinthians 1:14-17*

*I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;*

*Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.*

*And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.*

*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.*

The first thing he does is downplay the concept of who baptizes whom, which puts some spiritual significance to it. Then in 1 Corinthians 1:17, he lays the bombshell. This bombshell bombs out every Roman Catholic, every Orthodox, every Anglican, every Church of Christ, every Mormon, every Jehovah's Witness, and anybody. This thing just says it so clearly and plainly you would have to be demon possessed to see anything else. Here is what it says in 1 Corinthians 1:17, the greatest Christian who ever lived's doctrinal statement on baptism: "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel."

He shows you the difference between baptism and the gospel. Now 1 Corinthians 15 says that you and I were saved by the gospel. The gospel, by the Bible's definition, is that Jesus Christ was buried according to the Scriptures, rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and based on that, that is how you and I get saved. He just told you that Christ did not send him to baptize anybody but sent him to preach the gospel. Well, if baptism is part of salvation, then why did not God send him to baptize just like He sent him to preach the gospel? You know why? Because they are not the same. They are not the same. Baptism cannot save you, and Paul tells you right here that it cannot. He shows you right here that there is a difference between the two, and it is one little passage. Christ did not send him to baptize. Well, wait a minute. If baptism is the mode of salvation, you tell me that God did not send Paul to save anybody? Certainly, you find scores and scores and scores and scores of churches and people that are won to Christ by the Apostle

Paul. He makes a clear difference between baptizing them and preaching the gospel, and he says, "Christ never sent me to baptize, He sent me to preach what saved people." Clearly showing you that baptism does not do anything for you except get you wet. There is no salvation in baptism.

Then we look at chapter 2, and in chapter 2, Paul starts to deal with them on the fact that they have worldly wisdom in the church versus godly wisdom. I guess this is the number one curse of the body of Christ today. The church at Corinth had stopped using the Bible and moved into the realm of Christian worldly wisdom. That is what you have today. You find it in 1 Corinthians 2:5 where he says that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. You see, the church at Corinth had come to the place, like most Baptist churches today, where the Word of God was not any good anymore. It was not enough.

You are going to find that all the big churches today, when they want to reach out and branch out, they put on all their staff members, and everybody has this, and then they create, and they will get what they call a Christian psychologist. You know why they will put on a Christian psychologist? Because they do not believe the Bible has the answers anymore to solve everybody's problem. I have sat out and talked with those Christian psychologists. I have talked to them. You know what one of them told me one time? We were down there, and we were saying, "Well," he said, "I believe the Bible is a great book, and I believe the Bible is an important book." He says, "Well, you and I have a problem, Bob." He says, "You say that the Word of God is all truth." He says, "I just simply think that the Bible is a great book, but there is other truth outside the Bible." You know where you wind up when you start with that? You wind up building a church on man's wisdom instead of God's wisdom.

I will say it for you very clearly, just in case you are not sure where my position on it is. There is not anything in this world that goes up against that Bible. That Bible, found in the English translation of the 1611 King James Version of the Bible, is the absolute standard. There is not one problem that you can think about, have not gotten into, ever wanted to get into, that you cannot find detailed, laid out, show you how a man got in it, show you why he got in it, and show you how to get out of it. That is the book. That is the book.

I remember one time down in Springfield, there was a big Baptist church down there that really presides over all the Baptist churches. Years ago, they asked me to come down, and they had looked at our ministry and saw some things that were going on, and they said, "Can you come down and meet with our pastors and try to tell them what you are doing?" Well, I do not really have any answers, and I used to get a lot of, it is just like I still get them every once in a while, I will get letters in the mail, and somebody will say, "Well, can you tell me the secret to your ministry?" And I just sent them a copy of the Bible back. I mean, I do not know what else to do. There is no secret to it.

I was down there, and they had like 20 guys down there in a conference room table. Nice place. I mean, beautiful church, beautiful conference room, teak wood, the whole nine yards, little coffee, little silver things where you had to hold your little thumb out when you drank it. It was great stuff. We were sitting down there, and the pastor opens up and he says, "Now, I invited you down here because I want you to share with these guys and help them because we are having trouble in

our ministry, and we just cannot seem to get things going. Can you just tell us what you are doing?" I began to go into a talk about some things, and I said, "The number one thing you have got to do is that you have got to get your people where they absolutely believe that they have the truth of God in their life that they can depend on every day of their life." Now I am already seeing I am in trouble because they are looking up at the sky, and one of the guys is clipping his fingernails. There is a guy down here on the end who I found out later was their staff psychologist. He looks at me and he says, "I have a question for you." And I said, "What is that?" He looks at me and he says, "What is truth?" I said, "There is somebody in the Bible who asked that question." He did not know what it was in the Word of God either than John 17:17, "Thy word is truth." I said, "Do you remember the Bible? It is a black book about that big. It has gilt pages on it. Sometimes the letters are red." I knew right there I was in the wrong place at the right time, and it did not work out very well from then on. It was one of them things that starts out on top of the hill and then goes down very quickly. The Titanic did not sink as fast as my relationship did in that church. But that is okay. That is okay.

The church at Corinth had got into the fact where they did not think the Bible was enough anymore. The churches today are into the fact where they really believe, and I do not care what they preach and I do not care what they say. I do not go by what a man says. I go by what he does when he is pushed to the matter of believing that book is the Word of God or not. The whole Christian world today simply comes down to this. When you put on a psychologist, Christian psychologist, whatever that is, and that was not an actual term, a contradiction of terms, I do not know what is. But when you put on a Christian psychologist, what he does is he takes Bible principles and, like making some of them little sprinkled donuts or cookies, he sprinkles and dabbles front-end psychology all through the thing and then brings it up and tells you, "Well, the bottom line is at the end of the day," he does exactly what the Bible says we cannot do. He allows you and I, and we love to do this, blame our problems on something or somebody else. Boy, we love that. You give somebody, whether he is saved or lost, an alibi not to take personal responsibility for their own sin, they will fill your church faster than you know what to do with them. You know why? Because nobody wants to be accountable today. Nobody.

#### IV. Internal Church Problems and Discipline (Chapters 3-6)

In chapter 2, we see that they have entered into worldly wisdom versus godly wisdom. In chapter 3, we see one of the greatest chapters in the Bible on the judgment seat of Christ. In this chapter, 1 Corinthians 3:4-6, here is what they are arguing over. In chapter 1, they were arguing over who won whom to Christ or who baptized whom. Now, in this chapter, chapter 3, they are doing the same thing with who won whom to Christ. They are saying, "Well, I am of Paul." Somebody else says, "Well, I am of Apollos." Somebody else says, "Well, I am of this guy," that means who won you to Christ. What they are basically saying is that because, again, somebody of great spiritual notoriety, like the pastor of the church or somebody up in the hierarchy of the church, won you to Christ, and Ralph Schwartz out here, a factory worker down at the Jerusalem Tire Factory, won you to Christ, that your spirituality is based on who won you to the Lord.

Of course, this is where, again, he takes the problem and he teaches us one of the greatest places in all the Bible on the coming day that we are all going to stand before, which is called the day of Jesus Christ in the Bible, the judgment seat of Christ. What a great little outline.

*1 Corinthians 3:9*

*For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.*

*1 Corinthians 3:10*

*According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.*

*1 Corinthians 3:11-12*

*For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

*Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;*

Then he goes down and he says that the day is coming, the day of Jesus Christ, when every man's work is going to be sorted out and the fire is going to try every man's work. He says, when the fire hits the gold, silver, and precious stone, what fire does to those things is purify it. When it hits the dead wood, hay, and stubble, it burns it up. Your and my millennial reward and inheritance is going to be built and based on what you and I have built on that foundation.

Of course, we have talked about it before:

*Gold: the deity of Christ, learning to know more about God.*

*Silver: the price of redemption, understanding more and more what Christ did for you.*

*Precious stones: people, Malachi chapter 3.*

You see, the more you learn about God, the more you cannot learn about God without learning what He did for you. The more you learn about what God is, the more you learn about what God did for you, the more you cannot keep your mouth shut and you have got to tell somebody about it. Gold, silver, precious stones. That is what he is talking about. He is showing us there that, "Hey, you guys are arguing about who won whom to Christ and building some significance. Do you not know that we are laborers together? You need to be building on the foundation. You are building the wrong things." Boy, he just lays it into them.

Then chapter 4. Chapter 4 is a great chapter. Chapter 4 kind of goes along with chapter 3. In 1 Corinthians 4:1-2, he says this:

*1 Corinthians 4:1-2*

*Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.*

*Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*

He says in chapter 4, the job of every pastor, the job of every teacher, the job of every Christian is to be a steward. In this case, he talks about stewards of the mysteries of God. I do not know if you know it or not, but in the New Testament, there are seven mysteries given to the church. Those seven mysteries will help you when you know them and learn them and understand them. They open up a whole series of a systematic study through the Bible because in the Bible, you not only have seven mysteries, you have seven resurrections. You have seven different baptisms. You have seven times seven of the times coming through the Word of God. You have seven judgments in the Bible. Everything is a systematic study of sevens. The key to opening up that systematic study is understanding the seven mysteries. That is why the church would not have the heresy it has in it. The church would not be confused on a doctrine that it has today if pastors and teachers were just stewards of the mysteries of God. You ask the next pastor you see what the seven mysteries are to the church in the Bible and watch him look at you like a frog in a hailstorm. He does not have a clue.

On top of that, there are 12 mysteries given in the New Testament to the nation of Israel. Those 12 deal with the nation of Israel, and the seven deal with the body of Christ. They deal with keeping your doctrine pure and opening up the scriptures to giving you the systematic, Biblical New Testament, Holy Ghost way of laying out and studying your Bible. If every pastor was as faithful to the mysteries of God as he is his own denomination and his own political skills, Christianity would be a lot better off.

I will tell you one of the things that does not make for good preachers today. I talked earlier about the fact that you find a lot of guys that can teach and teach well. You do not find many preachers today. You do not find many men who can just get in there and rip it up. You know why? Because to be a really good preacher, you have got to be mad about something. At any given time you find me, I am mad about four or five things really bad. Yes, I do have an anger problem. Yes, I am looking at you. I have an anger problem about four or five things all the time.

How many ever saw the Challenger blow up? Remember that thing back there in the eighties? That was a terrible thing. But I remember sitting down there watching that, and I remember them going up there, and I will never forget it to this day. That old thing took off, and all those people in there, eight or nine people, I do not know if it was in there. They got there, and I will never forget that thing took off, and there was fire blowing, going, and just roar. It was just coming out of there, and that thing was moving up there. When a space shuttle back then went off, it kind of laid over on its side. At a certain point, right before you went to full throttle, you rotated about 20 degrees, and then you hit full throttle, and then you really blew off. Well, that is when it blew up. If you know anything about the Challenger deal, it had a little hole, a little leak in it, and the hydrogen and the stuff mixed together. When he went to full throttle, it blew the hole bigger and mixed with the stuff, and you do not want to do that in a rocket. You know why? Because a rocket is just a big explosion under control. If you want a great example of that, watch that footage. You can see it all the time. When he put that thing to full forward, it exploded. Then you had the rocket, power, gas, hydrogen, and all the other stuff out of control. Up to that point, it was under control. What you got in rocketry is nothing more than taking an absolute explosion

that will destroy everything in a two-mile radius and keep it under the control that this explosion does not explode. It just explodes in a controlled fashion.

You know what preaching is? It is exploding in a controlled fashion. It is being mad about some things and just cannot stand it in some things. But you know you cannot go to full throttle and explode all everybody because they look at you like an idiot. So every time you get up to preach, you are like a controlled rocket blast. You have so much energy because you are so mad about some stupid things in this world and stupid God's people, and the way it is going, and how dumb the whole thing is, and how they are so blinded to this, that every time you get up and preach, you are like a rocket being launched down there at Cape Canaveral. You just explode, but in a controlled way. You know why? Because there is no passion today. Nobody is mad about anything. Christianity has become such a lullaby land. Christianity is such about us. Christianity is about our comfort.

You understand that down through history, there were men and women. You want to get me up over something, and I do very well with it. You want to get me up over something, get me into a discussion on the issue of the King James Bible with somebody, and I will tell you, it happens to me all the time. I just have to keep the explosion under control because, boy, I will tell you what, you want something to get me off. You know why? Because I am telling you what, 120 years ago, the guys who now are called heretics for believing the Bible, 120 years ago, they were the good guys, and anybody who did not believe it was a heretic back then. But times have changed. You know why? Because people are stupid. That is why. I can feel it right now. My booster rockets have a leak in it. Look out. That is the problem. You see? That upsets me. There is nothing worse than I hate in this world. I do not like to use the word hate, but if anything, I cannot stand in this world is not talking to somebody who has not got a clue.

I have said it before, I do not care what you believe. I do not care what you believe. But what I want to find out is, do you know why you believe what you believe? A guy said to me one time, he says, "Well, the King James Bible could not be the Word of God." And he said, "It has all kinds of errors in it." I said, "Why is that?" He said, "Because the men translated the word very good men." I said, "Let me ask you a question. How many men translated it?" He did not know. I said, "Give me two names." I do not want. There were 47. I do not want two names of two men that translated. He did not know squat. You know why? It was a pickup line. He heard it from somebody else. He did not know. He did not have a clue. There is nothing that infuriates me today. It is the fact that the body of Christ is going to stand at the judgment seat of Christ naked, losing it.

I told a guy last night, a guy called me on the phone last night. He says, "I just pulled over on the road down here." He says, "And I just wanted to call and see how you are doing." And I said, "I am doing fine." He says, "Can you give me something to tell my church tomorrow that would bless them?" I said, "Sure." He says, "Give me something." I said, "I am firmly convinced that the only thing that is going to keep the body of Christ from lining up with the Antichrist and going hook, line, and sinker, the rapture church, give them that tomorrow." He said, "Well, that is going to make them mad." I said, "I sure hope that God, somebody gets mad about something." That is the problem with passive. That is why across this country, when men get up to preach,

there is no fire. There is no passion. It is nice teaching. I am saying, they say great things. They give great. But give me a man who, when the need to turn the fire up, can, without a scraper, without any kind of painter's tool, rip the paint off the walls and send you out with your tail on fire. We do not have that today. You know why? Because you do that once, nobody comes back to church. We are not living in the day and age.

Now, you know why this thing about the ministry of God upsets me? Because it can be seen at a glance by a blind man. The blood of every nation stains the hands of every preacher and every Bible teacher because it is the unfaithfulness of these men as the stewards of God over the mysteries of God that are ultimately responsible for the demise of every nation on this planet. You say, "How is that?" Because no nation in the history of the world ever went Catholic, communist, atheistic, liberal until the spiritual leader dumped this book. There are not five people in this city that understand that. Out of the five, you could not find none of them care. That is why there is no passion. That is why there is no passion.

Back in the old days, you know what they said? Somebody said, "How do you pastor a church?" You know what they tell you? They tell you all kinds of things. In my day growing up, when somebody asked one of those old boys how to build a church, you know what the answer was? "Go into a town, son. Get on fire for God. And everybody in town will watch and come to watch your burn." No passion. Nice stuff. Good stuff. No passion. Nobody is mad about anything today. Nobody cares about anything today. We are just drifting along here, having a great time. Nobody cares that the world is in apostasy, that the body of Christ is shocked. So I get upset about, I am mad all the time you see me. I have an anger problem. I get down, Barbie, I have an anger problem. Every time I get up to preach, I hear about the dumb, stupid stuff.

When Pope Paul died, I will tell you what. If I had a chainsaw with a cut-through metal, I would have cut down a lot of flagpoles. How dare a body of Christ run up a flag that has passed for a drunken, fornicating leader of the church of the devil himself that you are going to have to stand next to for all of eternity with the Waldensians and the Albigensians and the Huguenots who paid for their life in blood by that church. God, have mercy on my soul. Then I will tell you what. Billy Graham. Getting up on national television and saying that the Pope was the greatest Christian leader in the 20th century. Nobody cares. Next year when he shows up down at Arrowhead Stadium, all the stupid Baptist churches will line right up. Be right with him. You know why? Nobody cares. No big deal. He is a kind man. He is a nice man. He is an old man. He has been around for a long time. What would your advice be to him? I would tell him to lose 20 pounds and get some tanning salon coupons. So when he stands there at the judgment seat of Christ naked, he does not look too bad. I am mad. They say in the black churches, they do that because they are mad, they do not want to cuss. They go, "What I am doing."

Now we come to chapter 5. We see that in this church, it is an unclean church. A man is having fornication with his father's wife. Here again, the church fails to respond. Paul takes it, rebukes it, lays out a great tool in dealing with people and dealing with people and problems. As I said earlier, the church has the wherewithal to solve any problem in any family. There is never a time that the Bible does not cover what to do. The problem is getting people to do it. Sometimes when you are dealing with people, whether it is parents with rebellious kids or a wife with a husband

or whatever, or somebody who just gets into sin and will not do what is right, sometimes the only thing to do is the radical move. The radical move is found in 1 Corinthians 5:4-5. This is what he tells them to do here. It is a radical move, but sometimes you have to do it.

*1 Corinthians 5:4-5*

*In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

*To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

He says his spirit, he says what I have written you, what I have taught you, what I have given you, and then you have got the Holy Spirit of God to lead and guide you too. He says you take this man who will not do what is right and you deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. Most people do not know what to do with that verse. They do not understand that there are two condemnations in the Bible. One is eternal condemnation, going to hell. The other one is a physical condemnation. That is your flesh on this earth. What he is saying here in giving the churches this, there are some times, mom and dad, when you have a daughter or son that will not do what is right, refuse to do what is right, continue will not do what is right, live their own lifestyle and do what has to do and will not do what is right, will not come to church, will not do what is right, do their own thing, come home drunk, come home this, come home that. And you just keep letting them live in your house. After a while, it is all right to help them to a point, but after a while you start supporting whatever habit they are in. There comes a point when you have got to say, "Son, I love you. We have tried everything in the world to help you to get right with God. But this is God's house that is in my house, and I am not going to allow you to live here and bring the devil home with you every night. So if you are going to live like the world, you are going to live like the devil, and you want to serve him so well, then you go let the devil take care of you."

So maybe the kid lives on I-435 under the overpass in a cardboard box for a while. So maybe he goes two or three days without eating. Parents cannot do that today because, again, we are way outside the Word of God. That is a radical move. I am not saying it is something you do all the time, but I am saying this: there is some time in somebody's life that all you can do is let him get out there and get a good taste of the world. That is what the prodigal son did. When he got out there and he started leaving his father's house where he had all the good stuff to eat, the servants looking out for him, now he is eating pig stew down there in a slop. He comes to himself. But you see, we want to deny our children that. We want to deny somebody that today. We do not want them getting out there because they might get hurt. We do not want them getting out there because of who they might be around. Well, probably the people who are going to be around under 435 are going to be better people than who he is hanging out with now. At least they are all in the same boat. They can sit around and talk about each other's misery. Chapter 5 is a great tool in dealing with people when they come to a point where they just refuse to do what is right. You simply have got to turn them over to Satan and say this: "Basically, Satan, God cannot do anything. I love this boy. I love this girl. I love this person. But we have tried everything we

know how to do. You are going to have to just let his flesh get so torn up by the devil that that is the last chance that he may come to his senses and then come back to God." Sometimes that is all you have got, but there is always something you can do.

Then in chapter 6, a great chapter on the church not getting involved in taking your squabbles before a civil court. In 1 Corinthians 6:5-8, he says:

*1 Corinthians 6:5-8*

*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?*

*But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.*

*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?*

*Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.*

*1 Corinthians 6:9*

*Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,*

He comes down through here, and here is the problem you have got. This baby-fied church is messed up on everything, and you have got two Christians now, they are having a fight over something. It does not matter what it is, Christians fight about things all the time. Again, the church has every means within itself as a governing structure and body based on the Word of God and the New Testament principle to solve any problem that somebody gets into. But here is a situation where they cannot. They will not. So now they are taking their fights and they are suing each other in a civil court.

He says down there in 1 Corinthians 6:3, "Do you not know that someday the body of Christ is going to judge angels?" Great white throne judgment. He says, "How in the world, if you are going to stand someday and you are going to judge angels by the principles of the Word of God, why can you not solve little squabbles you have got right now in life?" He says, "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, to go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?" You see, and here is where Romans 14:1 comes in. He finally says, if he will not do what is right, "Okay. Let him defraud you." Romans 14:1, take the hit. Let him defraud you. Why would you take him to court? Somebody says, "Lend me a hundred dollars, and I will pay it back to you." And then he decides they are not going to pay it back to you, and you get in a squabble over it. Or somebody does this and borrows your car and goes out there and dents it back up and then comes back and says, "Well, I was on there before." You start to have all kinds of problems and those things like that. You know what he says? He says, "Why are you going to court? If you cannot solve the thing within the church body," he says, "then take the hit. Let the guy defraud you. What is your big deal? You think God is not keeping the record?" He said, "So the guy stiffed you for 200 bucks. He just lost his millennial inheritance. So the guy stiffed you for a

banged up fender. So the guy stiffed you for this or for that. So the guy will not make it right. What is the deal? God has got the record, and God is keeping the books, and no unrighteous man is going to inherit the kingdom of God." The key word there is "inherit." That is your inheritance in the millennium. So he says to the church, "What are you fighting about? You have the wherewithal within the body to solve these problems. When it is unsolvable, let it go. Take the hit. You either are strong, or bear the infirmities of the weak. Let him go. Let him rip you off. Do not get in a big deal about it. God is keeping the record. God will take care of you, and God will take care of him." He is talking about the fact that that is the way we operate. There we revert back to those principles in the great book of Romans that we saw.

## V. Christian Liberty and Relationships (Chapters 7-10)

Then we come to chapter 7. Chapter 7 is the New Testament teaching on divorce, marriage, and remarriage. We go to 99.9999999 percent of the Baptist churches today and 100 percent of their books and writings and teachings. You will find that they always base their teaching on divorce, marriage, and remarriage on Deuteronomy chapter 24 and Matthew chapter 19. In case you have not seen it yet, both those books are in the Old Testament, have nothing to do with the New Testament. The key structure for the New Testament body of Christ on divorce, marriage, and remarriage is found in 1 Corinthians chapter 7. There are 20 biblical principles in this chapter on the church's stand or what the church should stand on. Well, forget that. What Christ's stand is on marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

I honestly, I have come down through here sometimes, and I have watched people come to this thing. I watched a pastor one time get into 1 Corinthians chapter 7. I thought to myself, "What an idiot." He gets down here in 1 Corinthians 7:6, did not have a clue.

*1 Corinthians 7:6*

*But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.*

*1 Corinthians 7:10*

*And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:*

Then 1 Corinthians 7:12 he says:

*1 Corinthians 7:12*

*But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.*

Somebody asked a preacher one time, "What is he talking about there? What does Paul mean in 1 Corinthians 7:6 when he says he speaks this by permission but not by commandment? Is Paul saying something that he should not say? And what does he mean in 1 Corinthians 7:12 when he says, 'But to the rest speak I, not the Lord'? Is Paul talking out of context here and he does not have the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God?" You know what the preacher said? He said, "This is obviously a place where Paul, without a fellowship with God, was speaking when he

should not have been speaking." Oh yeah, so that is why God put it in the Bible for all inspiration given by God even to stop this wrong.

No, you see what they do not understand is simply this. 1 Corinthians chapter 7 is the New Testament doctrinal teaching to the church on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, and basically female-male relationships in general. It is the standard teaching. It is different in the Old Testament. You have got new doctrine in this chapter for the church under grace that the Old Testament nation of Israel did not have under law. So when you come down to 1 Corinthians 7:6, he says, "But I speak this by permission." Paul is saying, "The Holy Spirit of God has given me this to say by permission, not by commandment." There is no commandment in the Old Testament on this. This is something new to the church that was not in the Old Testament under the law. When he says in 1 Corinthians 7:10, "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord," he is now saying, "Here is a place that is commanded in the Old Testament, and it lines up with what God wants the church to do." When he comes to 1 Corinthians 7:12 and he says, "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord," he is saying, "Now I have got some new things to give you that God has given me to go to the church that is not found in the Old Testament when the Lord spoke to the nation of Israel." The difference, my friend, is you cannot go to Deuteronomy chapter 24. You cannot go to Matthew chapter 19 because they were written in an Old Testament context in the nation of Israel. If you want to find out what the Word of God says as far as the church and the issue of marriage, divorce, and remarriage, you have got to go to 1 Corinthians chapter 7, and there you will find some things that are not given under the law in the Old Testament but are given to the church under grace in the New Testament. It is as simple as that.

Now we have chapter 8. This is my favorite chapter. This is where most Christians are today. Chapter 8, meat offered to idols. The great dilemma of Bible Christianity. I love it. This sets up a great teaching for the body of Christ. Here is the problem. Down at the market on Monday morning, we can go down there and we can buy strip steaks for \$2.95 a pound. Right next to them are strip steaks for \$4.95 a pound. The difference is quite big. Being on the budget that we all are, it is the same meat. It looks the same. It is just as good. This one is \$2.95. This one is \$4.95. Well, being the thrifty shopper that I am, I am going to obviously buy the \$2.95 a pound versus the \$4.95 a pound. But here is the problem. As I am having them weigh that up, a Christian brother comes over and he says, "Brother, do you not know that that meat up there has been offered in the temple to all the pagan gods down there at Baal and all that stuff? That meat you are buying down there was offered up to them stupid idols down there. That demon possession down there, that meat has got demons in it. You eat that meat down there, you are buying devil's meat right there. You cannot be buying that kind of stuff. What kind of Christian would buy meat from the temple?" See the dilemma? They are fighting about this now because you have some of the brethren over here that are the sanctimonious type, and they are saying, "I will never eat meat offered before pagan gods. I am a Christian." You have somebody over there saying, "Yeah, you are a Christian, you have not got any money. I have \$2.95 in my pocket because I bought the other meat." See the problem?

Now Paul comes down through here and he says this. This is a great study. He says in 1 Corinthians 8:4-6, meat offered to stupid idols, and you get it at a cheap price, save some money.

Absolutely okay. He says, "It does not mean anything." He says, "You are smarter than they are. You know that the meat offered to idols is not, you do not buy into their dumb, stupid religion. You do not give any credence whatsoever." They have this big pot-belly Buddha down there that they are running the meat by saying, "Bless the Buddha, bless the Buddha." You are saying, "Hey, bless that big one, Buddha, because that is the one I wanted on my grill tomorrow for \$2.95 a pound." See, there is no difference. The meat offered to idols means absolutely nothing to a born-again child of God. You know why? Because when you know the book and you know the Word of God, you know that "greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." Stuff does not bother a child of God, but you might have some brother that has not got the light on it yet. You might have a, here again, either the strong or the bear the infirmities of the weak. You might have a Christian brother that is not there yet, and he still sees that as a pagan thing. So he says, "You have got to be careful. You have got to be careful. You have got to be careful. You do not want to hurt the brother for the fact that you can get a good price on the meat." He said, "There is nothing wrong with buying the meat and go ahead and buy the meat. Just do not go back to church and tell everybody, "There is a great deal on demon meat down the market.'" In other words, do not hurt a younger Christian. How many times have older Christians with their liberty or knowing what they can do hurt a younger Christian who did not know what they could do? It is just a problem. It is a problem.

It is one of those things where we see it in Christianity all the time. I remember when a big deal was Cabbage Patch dolls, and the secret was that when Cabbage Patch dolls were made, they put a demon name in it, and you give your kid a demon Cabbage Patch with a demon name in it, you have a demon cat. Your kids have a demon to play with. Believe me, folks, I know how that works, but that is not why your kids are demons today. Do not come to that excuse with me. The same guys are up there. It was on the radio. There were books being bought and sold on it. They are saying everybody was doing it. Everybody that was doing it and saying it. But at the same time, you would ask them what day it is. They say it is Tuesday. It is Monday. It is Wednesday. It is Thursday. It is Friday. Do you not know their names of pagan gods? Do you not know there is not much in this world that is not pagan and loves the devil? Do you not know that right now as we speak, he is the god of this world? He runs it all in any house where everything is going to be with him. What are you thinking about? You think you go to McDonald's? You are somebody in there. You have Christian burgers. You think you go to Burger King? The king up there is in Revelation chapter 19 flipping them burgers back there. You think they are saved cows? What are you, Buddhist or something? You think they are saved cows and unsaved cows? People do not understand this whole world belongs to him. I have got a book that tells me all of those things. I do not have to worry about them. But at the same time, I am not going to do something stupid that is going to hurt a younger Christian. I am just not going to do it.

You find it in all kinds of areas. You have some Baptist churches that, if you do not have a suit and tie on, you are lost. I think when you come to church, you have got to look as nice as you can look, but there is nothing in the way you dress. You dress to please the Lord. I do not know what else to tell you. Do I like what everybody wears all the time? No, but that is me. When I wear the same thing, why do I wear a suit and tie? Because my wife tells me to. I do not know why. I just assume not. Some people say, if I get up here without one, some of you would say,

"Well, Bob, why does he like him in that suit? Why does he not wear that?" Some of the other women are sitting there right now saying, "What is that idiot? He is the only one here with a tie on with a suit. What is his problem?" I understand. But here I am. I do not care either way. You go to some churches, and if you wear slacks on, you are terrible. You are just terrible. I learned a long time ago, you cannot legislate morals. You just cannot. I have known guys where he said, "Well, a woman has to wear a dress." So when a woman puts on a dress and does not wear slacks because now she is, that dress is so thin a mosquito can fly through without breaking his wings. So now it has got to be a dress, but it has got to be thick. Then I have seen some of them wear them so tight, look like a skin diver suit. You cannot legislate morals. You just cannot.

I knew a pastor one time, a good friend of mine. He was such a hang-up on wearing a suit and tie all the time that he went skiing out in Colorado on his vacation. He wore a suit and tie under his snowmobile suit. You think I am kidding you? Well, you guys told me about the time they went snowmobiling. The girls had snowmobile suits on, and they had to wear culottes over the snowmobile suit because if they did not, the girls were wearing slacks. I have been to church camp where they said, "Girls cannot wear slacks at camp. You have got to wear, you have got to be modest. Wear culottes." Did you ever see a girl sliding into second base with culottes on? There is not much modest about it.

I do not get hung up on those things. I preach at your heart. That is where I aim. I do not preach at your conscience. That is between you and God. I figure this: you preach at a man's heart, a woman's heart. You preach the Word of God. You teach them to dress, be the best they can be for the Lord. And you try to, whenever they do, they do it. They dress for the inside man instead of somebody else, then what they will be fine when they come up here or wherever they go. I do not know what else to do. You cannot run around, but some of them think they can. It is the same thing with the meat offered to idols. He said, "If you have a younger brother and he has not got the light you have, back off. Go ahead and get the meat. Just do not walk to church and say, 'Hey man, I got a great deal. Down at the market, under the big demon sign back there, you can get a great deal.'" Some of God's people are going to have a tough time with that. You have got to understand. He said, "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." There is the balance. I have the knowledge that I know it is okay, but I have the charity not to flaunt it in somebody's face. It is the balance. Knowledge without charity equals Phariseeism. You become a Pharisee. That is why you have got to balance the thing.

Chapter 9 is going right along with it. A great chapter on liberty in Christ. It connects to chapter 8. You know what he says in chapter 9? Paul says this, and you want to hear this. He says, "As a New Testament Christian, I am not under the law. I can do anything I want that is not specifically said, 'cannot do this.'" So there is all kinds of liberty I have as a Christian. I can do what I want, go where I want, be with who I want to be with, whatever the case, as long as it does not violate some clear New Testament principle. But you know what he says? "I will not. I will not do it." You know why? Because the number one thing in my life is not my liberty to do what I want to do, but my ministry for the Lord. He said, "I am not going to let my liberty jeopardize my ministry for Christ." You see, liberty was not given so you could do whatever you wanted to do.

This is where Christians do not understand it. Liberty was given so you could do whatever God wanted you to do in your life. It was not given for you to do what you want to do.

He says in 1 Corinthians 10:23:

*1 Corinthians 10:23*

*All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.*

You ever see this, 1 Corinthians 6:12? He says the same verse, except he changes one word, and by changing one word, he defines expedient for you.

*1 Corinthians 6:12*

*All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*

He says, "All things are lawful, but not all things are edifying." You see, that is my job. My job is to edify you, not to hurt you. My job is to lift you up, not hurt you. If I get to deal with you on an issue in your life, I do not do it in such a way that I am going to hurt you. I am going to deal with it in a way that I am going to help you. Now, you may not see it that way, but that is the way it has to be. The bottom line is, it does not do me any good to flaunt my liberty in your life and say, "Look at me, I can do whatever I want to do." Because the Bible says, going back to Romans chapter 14, we talked last week, Romans 14:7 says:

*Romans 14:7*

*For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.*

It is always somebody watching your life. What you think you can do and you can get away with may send somebody else to hell. It is as simple as that. Romans 14:16 says:

*Romans 14:16*

*Let not then your good be evil spoken of.*

A lot of things I can do that I simply will not do. A lot of things. Romans 12:1 says:

*Romans 12:1*

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

This is where it becomes a living sacrifice, knowing that there are things that you are under liberty that you can do, but restraining yourself from doing it because of the fact that you do not want to be a stumbling block to somebody else. I understand in my life what I can do and what I cannot do. I understand my limitations on what I will do publicly. I understand where I can go and where I cannot go because I understand that the most important thing in my life has nothing to do with what I can or what I cannot do. It is my ministry, and I know that even though legally

by the Bible, I can do it, I know that socially, it will hurt my testimony to the fact of being effective, reaching people. The most important thing to me is building a work for God, not building something for me. So it just comes to understanding these things. The Church of Corinth could not get it.

## VI. Worship, Authority, and Spiritual Gifts (Chapters 11-14)

Then chapter 10, one of the greatest chapters in the Bible, shows you how to pull the Old Testament and New Testament together. The chapter clearly shows the Old Testament filled with New Testament principles. He comes down there and gives a short historical synopsis of the nation of Israel, and he says this in 1 Corinthians 10:6 and 10:11.

*1 Corinthians 10:6*

*Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.*

*1 Corinthians 10:11*

*Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.*

In 1 Corinthians 10:6, he says, "Now these things were for our examples." An example is what you do. In 1 Corinthians 10:11, he says, "These things were for our ensamples." An ensample is not what you do, it is what you are. Then he ties the whole thing together by saying, "These things were for our admonition." When you admonish somebody, you encourage them strongly. He says in 1 Corinthians 10:11, "It is for us, on whom the end of the world cometh." Then he says, "Take heed lest you fall." Somebody thinks you stand, check it out. You may not be as sure as you think you are. So that is a great chapter.

Then he gives chapter 11. All these are just what, when you read through here, this is what you look for in these chapters. We are just breaking it down. In chapter 11, we have two issues. First, there is a breakdown on the authority of the church with the women. So he goes through 1 Corinthians 11:3, and he talks about the order of authority in the church.

*1 Corinthians 11:3*

*But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.*

To make a long story short, the women in the church here are rebelling against the male authority in the church. You find a lot the same thing today that is going on with women becoming pastors and a big argument over that. The church is splitting over ordaining women and deaconesses. Then you have the book, you know, that Mary was an apostle. Then you have The Da Vinci Code and all that stuff, that everybody gets in it, and it just becomes a mess. The church is having the same problem. They have broken the authority, the women have. They are exerting themselves outside the authority that they have. That is why he goes through the whole thing

with long hair, how long hair in a woman is pictured here. Her submission, her attitude, her heart, and all of that stuff.

Then the last part of that chapter, 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, they are messed up on the Lord's Supper and communion. This is where we take our doctrine from the way we do the Lord's Supper. Because in the New Testament church at Corinth, the Lord's Supper and communion are two different things. He goes here, he gives the breakdown of it, he gives the rules, he tells who should take it, what you better do before you take it. Here again, the church at Corinth lost that viewpoint. In the New Testament church, they met together for a meal, a literal food supper. They sat down and they ate that meal. That time was a time of fellowship among themselves. Everybody brought food in, everybody sat down and ate together. During that time, they looked toward each other, and they got into a spiritual mode of fellowship together. That forced maybe some of the brethren or the sisters to make amends with some of the other brethren and whatever they may have little odds over. Then they got it right. Then they go and they take communion. Communion is when they actually take the grape juice and the bread and they break it and take it as the picture of the body and the blood. That is where they enter into that communion time, and that is between them and God. So it breaks down into two facets, and that is the way we do it. We always have a meal together, and then we sit down and we go through the communion, and we take it as you do it in the book of 1 Corinthians.

All right, then we have chapters 12, 13, and 14, moving along here. Three great chapters on how screwed up they are on spiritual gifts. Nowhere in the Bible do you get this laid out better than here. Boy, if there is any confusion in the body of Christ today, it is on the confusion of spiritual gifts. We do not have time to get into all of it today. At some point we will. But let me lay it out for you. The church at Corinth has taken the spiritual gifts, and they have done with the spiritual gifts much like they have done with who baptized whom and who won whom to Christ. They have got it all messed up. They have taken tongues, and tongues is a legitimate thing. We saw Acts last two weeks ago. We saw tongues defined in the book of Acts as another language which is spoken by people from other countries. The languages in the countries are mentioned in Acts chapter 2, clearly defining it for you. We saw that tongues were for other countries, the Jews in those countries, and they were audible languages. What they have done is they have circumvented that, and they have made tongues an unknown heavenly language. They are doing this just what they are doing with the other stuff. Somebody is getting up, ranting and raving in some unknown tongue that nobody knows anything about, claiming some great power with God. Everybody, all the younger Christians, are sitting around in awe wanting to have that same kind of power. They are getting up there and they are rattling off, "Fee-fi-fo-fum," everything they are saying, and they are talking about some great power and experience with God that I have got. Every young Christian out there secretly wants that experience and thinks there is something wrong with them because they cannot have it. Of course, this is ludicrous. When you got saved, you got all of the Holy Spirit of God there is. There is no more to get. I have said it many times. It is not how much of the Holy Spirit of God you have, but how much He has of you. That is what you are dealing with here.

Now tongues have been defined. He shows them that tongues are not for the Gentiles but for the nation of Israel. He lays out in 1 Corinthians 14:22 and 1 Corinthians 1:22 that they are the sign gifts given to the nation of Israel. Then he lays out the concept of the church. He tells them that the church's job is to edify clearly, teaching the Word of God, laying out the scriptures. The church is not to be the author of confusion in 1 Corinthians 14:33, which the church at Corinth has become.

#### *1 Corinthians 14:33*

*For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.*

Because you have all these people standing up here, and it is absolute confusion hearing everybody, four, five, ten, fifteen, twenty people in a congregation of 100 screaming and yelling at the top of their voice in some jibber-jabber that nobody can understand in this utter confusion. He tells them biblically, systematically, he begins to lay out the ground rules for the church speaking in tongues. Now you have got to remember, tongues is a temporary gift given to the church. It is given to the early church to reach the Jews of the dispersion that are still around. When the church of Corinth was in office working, doing its thing around Acts chapter 19 and 20, there were still Jews being around, and they were still using tongues. A period of time later, tongues, as with all the sign spiritual gifts, ceased. He tells them that a little bit later on in chapter 14.

What you have here is that the church at Corinth is taking those tongues, which were audible languages given to the Jews, making it in some form of jibber-jabber that nobody can understand, tagging some spiritual significance, that when you have the power of God like me, you will speak in the language of the tongues of angels, and nobody else can understand it because I am so spiritual that I can only communicate this way to God. "No, you do not understand what I am saying. God knows what I am saying." That is what you are dealing with. All through these chapters, he biblically, systematically lays down the rules for the church speaking in tongues, and by doing so, takes the modern 20th-century charismatic and just blows them right out of the water. The greatest of these is in 1 Corinthians 14:34, where he says that no women are allowed to speak in tongues.

#### *1 Corinthians 14:34*

*Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.*

Let me just say this to you. If you took the women out of the tongues movement, you would not have a tongue movement. In fact, anybody who knows anything about history knows that when the church got speaking in tongues was in 1900, the Azusa Street Mission with Amy Pearson, McSimpson, who was a woman, and then it moved to Topeka, Kansas, with Temple Bethel Bible College down there. That is where it started. In other words, what I am saying is this: you here today with all the guys on there and all the guys speaking in tongues and all the women preaching speaking in tongues, you think alike was the greatest thing in the world. From 1600 to 1900, the greatest religious movement in the world were three-quarters of the world were won to

Christ, and he had great missionaries and everybody out there around the world, there was not one of them who spoke with tongues. When Martin Luther broke the Roman Catholic Church, he never uttered anything in spiritual tongues. When Billy Sunday turned this world upside down, one from the other, he never spoke in tongues. When Adoniram Judson went to Burma and spent the rest of his life, and Livingston went to Africa, they were all medical doctors. You know why? Because healing did not work for them. The greatest men, in other words, if you want to find somebody speaking in tongues in history, you cannot find them before 1900, and it starts with a woman. No offense, ladies.

Four characteristics of Charismatics: I have fought them all my life.1.) Total disregard for the authority of the Word of God.2.) Complete total ignorance of church history.3.) No Charismatic movement knows his Bible, only his experience.4.) The concept of God is his flesh and his feeling.

You know what they do? They try to take 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14 and make it a how-to chapter. How many times I have heard them go to that chapter or one of those chapters to show you how to do tongues? Look down in your Bible in 1 Corinthians 14. You see the word there, "unknown"? I do not know if you know it or not, but that word "unknown" is in italics. There is not a Charismatic on the face of this planet that knows why the italicized words are in your Bible. You know why the King James translators put some words in italics and others? Because when they translated from the Greek that they went to to the English, not everything matched up. So they put the words that make the things make sense in italics. By doing so, they were honest enough. You will not find it in NIV. You will not find it in any other translation because they are dishonest. When the King James translators put that book together, they were so honest, they wanted you to know the word that they put in. They did not go in, so they put them in italics. So when you read it, you know that it was their word that they put in to make the thing flow. Now, God was over the whole thing, preserved the whole thing, no question about it. But the bottom line is this. The reason why they put "unknown" tongues in here is because the translators knew in Acts chapter 2, there was no such thing as unknown tongues, that they were real languages. So they put "unknown" in there, so you know that was the phony tongue and not the real tongue. Every stupid Charismatic in the world talks about, "I got an unknown tongue, I got an unknown tongue." You have an unknown brain, go right along with it. I am mad about six things now, that was another thing I forgot I was mad about.

## VII. Core Doctrines and Practical Application (Chapters 15-16)

Got to get along here, chapter 15. A great chapter on defining the gospel and showing that the crucifixion of Christ is absolutely worthless without the resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 defines the gospel for you.

*1 Corinthians 15:1-4*

*Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;*

*By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.*

*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;*

*And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:*

We are going to go through this on Thursday night, and I am going to show you how there are six gospels in the Bible, in the Old Testament and the New Testament. We will lay those out for you. We will go through that when we go through it here, either this week or next week. But as you come down through that chapter, those verses define what the gospel is. Notice it is all according to the scripture.

Then 1 Corinthians 15:29, you have the great Mormon verse about somebody baptizing for the dead that they take out of context and try to get you baptized for somebody that is already dead so you can get them into heaven. Of course, that is not what he is talking about here. Then in 1 Corinthians 15:50-51, you have the great verses on the rapture of the church.

*1 Corinthians 15:50-51*

*Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.*

*Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,*

All this stuff in this chapter goes back to the concept of this, that without the resurrection, everything that you and I have is absolutely worthless. Because if Christ did not come out of that tomb, he is no better than any other religious leader that ever walked this planet. The thing that sets him apart is the fact that yes, he died, but no, he did not stay dead.

Chapter 16, ending of the book, with a great concept we saw in Romans 15:2, and that is the fact that they are ministering not only spiritually but carnally. They are ministering the Word of God to people, but they are also ministering to people's needs. He says in 1 Corinthians 16:1:

*1 Corinthians 16:1*

*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.*

Of course, what you have got here is a church of Jerusalem going through some tough times. All the other churches are taking up offerings for them, much like what we are doing with the shoes, and they are taking up the offering for them, and they are sending that money to Jerusalem that the saints can be relieved of the burden that they are under. But in doing so, he lays out for us the concept of New Testament giving.

Let me tell you where I stand on this, and I make it a video, I have never preached a message on giving since we started out here, do not plan to. But here is where I am standing on it, and it is based on here, because what Paul teaches. He talks about here now that they take up the offering,

the collection, the first day of the week. You know, I hear people all the time that want to argue about whether you are tithing, out of tithes of the New Testament, tithes of the Old Testament, let me tell you something. You find tithing before the law is even in. Bottom line, as far as I am concerned, in the New Testament time you and I live, tithing is the place where the minimum where somebody starts. But here is what it is. I do not even care about that. Here is the bottom line: you find three things in your Bible. You find tithing, you find offering, and you find sacrificial giving.

My job as a preacher is not to tell you how much to give. I do not even care if you give. This is your church. My position is on it. The day we cannot pay the bills is the day we will close the building. My responsibility, I am not going to take that responsibility. Probably three or four months, we are getting ready to bust a hundred here, and we get everybody together. A couple more months, we are going to have to double up our occupancy for our kids, going to double our rent here. We will do it when we can pay for it. You know why? Because it is my responsibility. It is our responsibility. Your kids, my kids, not mine by myself, I follow a very simple, political pattern. I teach that somebody needs to start with a tithe, 10 percent of what they make. But from that, as you grow spiritually, you realize that at a point in your life, as you learn to love God, you realize what He did for you. You build upon that foundation, gold, silver, precious stones. The Bible says if any man loved God, the same is known to him. People give things to people they love. It is as simple as that. I do not have to tell you to do it. If you are growing right and you are growing spiritually and you are loving God more every day in your life, then you will just want to give Him more because of the fact that you realized all that He did for you. What else is there to say? Think I am going to run around and preach a message on tithing or your giving? I do not care. If we do not make it here, we will close the doors and we will do something else. I do not care. It is not my responsibility.