

The Parish of Wellow

Be united in the same mind and the same judgment.' 1 Corinthians 1:10

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Passage, Sermon Notes and Questions

Please feel free to take these sermon notes home with you and you may wish to find some time during this week to consider the questions below.

1. Passage

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

10 Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose.

11 For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters.

12 What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ."

13 Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,

15 so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name.

16 (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.)

17 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

18 For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

2. Sermon Notes

2.1 Paul urges the Corinthian Church to unite (verse 10)

- The Church in Corinth is divided into four distinct groups who are competing one against the other
- Paul challenges the Corinthians to be united in Christ – to put aside their differences and to see that what they have in common is Jesus.
- A divided church he argues not only gives the Church a bad name but also offers no distinctiveness versus the world around it.
- Paul realises that their disagreements are not over faith or doctrine but about conflicting personal desires.
- The Corinthian Church is made up of groups of individuals who want to do things in their own way rather come under spiritual authority of Jesus.
- How we would describe St Julian's? Would we say that we are 'united in the same mind and the same judgment' or would an unbiased casual observer from the village say that we are divided with individuals in the church insisting on having their own way?

Paul now goes on to show three traps that can destroy unity in the Church:

- i. To lose our COMPOSURE (verses 11 and 12)
- ii. To lose our COMPREHENSION (verses 13 to 16)
- iii. To lose our COMMISSION (verses 17)

2.2 The Corinthian Church has lost its COMPOSURE (verses 11 and 12)

- Paul describes the church in Corinth, from information supplied to him by Chloe, as a church that was spiralling out of control because of the factionalism that was so active.
- The church is split around four characters:
 - i.* "I belong to Paul." The 'loyalists' see Paul the founder of the Corinthian Church as their leader
 - ii.* "I belong to Apollos." The 'intellectuals' see Apollos as their leader because of his excellent teaching and preaching.
 - iii.* "I belong to Cephas." The 'traditionalists' see Peter as their leader because he was the original founder of the church.
 - iv.* "I belong to Christ." The 'religionists' use the name of Jesus but are clearly not seeking unity within the body of the church.
- What would Paul say about the Christian Churches in and around Wellow if he came to visit today. Would he hear as he spoke to the people of this area 'I belong to the church in Wellow' or 'I belong to the church in Peasedown' or 'I belong to the Seven Lamps Group' or 'I belong to the Catholics' or 'I belong to the Methodists' or would he hear and see a genuine desire for the churches to work together? Paul would be working towards promoting unity amongst the Christians in this part of North East Somerset

2.3 The Corinthian Church has lost its COMPREHENSION (verses 13 to 16)

- When we lose our unity, it is so often because we have lost sight of the big picture.
- Paul challenges us and the Corinthians by asking: "Is Christ divided?" Has Christ designed His body, the church, to work in a divided manner or to work in unity? Paul's answer is to work in unity because of what Jesus has done for us on the Cross
- "Was PAUL crucified for you?" he asks the Corinthian Church.. Of course not! It was Jesus! Well then says Paul our allegiance must be to Jesus not Paul, not Apollos or Cephas, but Jesus.
- When we comprehend the big picture, we remember that the church is about Jesus not about us!

2.4 The Corinthian Church has lost its COMMISSION (verse 17)

- God didn't send Paul or us out to collect a following for ourselves. God sent us out to preach the Message of what he has done, to collect a following for him. This is our COMMISSION. It is the high calling of proclaiming Christ. We must never forget this.
- Paul states that as important as baptism is, it takes a back seat to the proclamation of the gospel.

3. Questions to consider

3.1 How would you describe yourself? Would you say that you are someone who seeks to promote unity with your fellow Christians or are you an individual who likes to have things done in your own particular way?

3.2 A close friend asks you one day, why is the church so divided? Why are there so many different factions? How would you respond?

3.3 If our COMMISSION is to proclaim Christ and spread the message of what Jesus has done for us. What precisely will we do this week in order to fulfil this COMMISSION?

If you would like to discuss these questions further please feel free to call me on 01761 432293.