

# Fighting Division

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, all right. So let me point out to you, I believe that on your handout, you've got kind of a list of the, this is basically the list of the Bible studies up through chapter four that we're going to cover.

And I just wanted to show you this because if you weren't here last week, let me just give you a quick rundown. Paul is dealing with a church that is subtly rejecting the gospel. And the effect of that is that there's disunity, there's depravity, there's wrong devotion, and there's wrong doctrine.

And so through the book of first Corinthians, he deals with those four things. And the first thing up is division. And that covers chapter one through chapter four. And today, what we will look at is we will look at the nature of that division.

This will be kind of where we just sort of peel back the layers and get to really see the heart and the problem that's going on and sort of the foundational truths we need to fight it. But then from there, through the end of chapter four, because what happens is it's pitting against man's wisdom and God's wisdom.

[ 1 : 22 ] We have all of these sections where we will deal with things that will, these are the things that we need to be able to stay united. These are the truths that they need in order to have a church that's functioning the way it ought to function.

In other words, what you can look at this as is you can say, these are the things that God wants every church to know and have, believe, and follow after. And so that will help us to stay united. Today ends up being a little bit of an introduction to these things. But by and large, you know, we're just going to hit this week after week for several weeks here.

So that's just, I'm just giving that to you so you can kind of know where we're headed as we're going through this. Any questions about that before I move on? Okay. Well, then let me ask you a question.

You've probably had the experience where you've had somebody come to you, probably a child or grandchild or nephew or niece or somebody who comes to you and say they've got a problem or they've got an issue and they want some advice and they come to talk to you about a thing.

[ 2 : 36 ] And the thing that they come to talk to you about, they sort of present the problem. But the more that you talk to them, the more you sort of hear what they're saying, the more you begin to see that there's actually an underlying problem that they don't see.

You haven't had that experience before? Maybe it's a co-worker, maybe it's even a spouse. But I've had that experience a lot where somebody will tell me that this is their problem. But the more I talk to them, the more that I begin to realize that's really not their problem.

Their problem is something deeper that they don't see. And then I've got to help them try to see it, which is difficult. I had an experience like that at a church one time.

My very first full-time ministry was in Lufkin, Texas. And I had been there for one month and the pastor comes into my office, angry, and he says, well, you're on your own.

And I said, what? He said, I just got fired. And I was like, what? It turns out he'd been there for about eight to nine years and the church had decreased in attendance.

[ 3 : 47 ] There was kind of a lack of morale in the church and the deacons went to him to ask him to resign. Three deacons showed up and they said, we just feel like it would be good for you to resign and step down.

I feel like we feel like it would be better for the church so we can get a young pastor and, you know, make things a little bit more exciting and build the church back up. Well, he refused. So they fired him on the spot.

Now, I'm telling you what, these were some fun days. So they finally get an interim pastor in. Now, the interim pastor, he was a fireball, okay? I mean, he was preaching. He was a fireball, but he was also 85, okay? So he was older than the pastor had, but he was a fireball. And the deacons started getting on my case because they could tell that even though this guy was a fireball, the church was still not growing.

[ 4 : 49 ] So their solution was that at deacons meeting, they kept coercing me that as I'm listening to Brother Sherry preach the sermons, we need you to sit up front.

We need you to start giving a really loud, hearty amen. I was like, no.

Because, one, I'm just not a vocal person. I'm not, I mean, I'll preach, but, like, I'm super nervous every time I do because I don't like being in front of people.

But, like, this is what the Lord's called me to do, so I do it. But, like, yeah, no, when I'm, if I'm not in charge of something, I'm always sitting in the back. I'm like you.

I'm always sitting in the back. Well, not you, Benny. Benny, you're the perfect child. So, anyway.

But, you know, I just don't like to call attention to myself.

[ 5 : 52 ] So, anyway, we struggled with this for a long time. I hope you can see that there's a problem with them asking me to do that. Now, there could probably be a lot of foundational problems that they've got.

I don't know exactly what all of them would be. I've got in my mind what I think the problem is. But what would you think? If you had to say, okay, the problem is more excitement in worship will grow our church.

Therefore, the pastor needs to, or the youth minister needs to say amen. If that's the presenting problem, what are some of the foundational problems underneath that that you could think of?

Well, that's a solution. But what's an underlying problem with those deacons? They're not doing anything. Yeah.

Now, that's an interesting thing. I hadn't thought about that. But do you mean to say that if they were encouraging people to come with them, that maybe then, yeah, that's really good.

[ 7 : 11 ] That's really good. Yeah. Okay. Okay. That's a good one. What's another possible? Okay. So maybe their underlying problem is that they are very...

One thing is the problem instead of other things. Yeah. No, that's good. That's good. Yeah. There's a little bit of a blame on the pastor that it rises or falls upon him.

Yeah. Maybe. Maybe. And there's people who think that.

There are people who think that. Yeah, that's good. That's a good point. That's a good point.

Anybody else another thought? My thought was this. You don't trust the gospel.

You don't trust God to be powerful enough to do this. Now, I don't know what their underlying problem was. But what we have in Corinth is we've got this other issue where we've got a presenting problem but an underlying foundational problem.

[ 8 : 29 ] And in order to get to that, we need to do two things because we don't want division in our own church. So how do we keep that division from happening?

Well, we've got to know some foundational truths to hang on to. And then we have to see how this division develops so that we can walk away from that kind of a thing. So that's what we're going to look at.

We're going to look at some foundational truths that we need to believe. And then we're going to look at the levels of division in order to know how to avoid those things. So let's take a look at this. 1 Corinthians 1.

We're going to read verses 1 through 17 today. And I'll tell you what. I'm just going to read the whole thing first. And then we'll just go back and hit the different parts as we go.

Paul called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus and our brother Sosthenes. To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours.

[ 9 : 36 ] Grace to you and peace from God and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech, in all knowledge, even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you, so that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of the Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the end guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God is faithful by whom you were called into the fellowship of his son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. What I mean is that each one of you says, I follow Paul, or I follow Apollos, or I follow Cephas, or I follow Christ.

Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name.

I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

[11:30] Now, what we see from verses 1 through verse 9 are three foundational truths that Paul sort of weaves into his introduction, right?

This is a standard way that letters were written, okay? This is an epistle. It's a letter. And it always starts with the person who's writing the letter. And it's Paul writing this letter to the Corinthians. Now, Sosthenes is probably the actual letter writer, and Paul is dictating it to him. And so, as he's doing this, Sosthenes is writing it down.

And the greeting, verse 1 through 3, and sort of the thanksgiving or sort of that personal connection, in there he weaves three big truths about the Corinthians, that they were called by grace, saved by grace, and kept by grace.

I want to show you those three, and we'll talk about them. The first one is in verses 1 through 3. Tells them, he says, Now, called to be saints there is this idea that they have been called to be holy. [12:49] They've been called to a life that's different from the life that they were living. God is the one who's called them. As a matter of fact, what you see here is he talks to them about being the church God.

God. Nowhere in Paul's letters does he say to a church, this is the church of God. In the book of Romans, he says to the saints who are at Rome.

He doesn't call them the church of God. To the Thessalonians, he says to the church that's in Thessalonica. And one of the reasons is, is that Paul, as he's writing about them and writing to them, he is accentuating anything about their character and their faithfulness, because that is a bunch of bad stuff.

He's talking about what God has done. He's accentuating not their nature and character, but he's accentuating the work of God in their lives, because they have nothing that's commendable about them.

That's what the Corinthians are. There's nothing commendable about this church. So he has to focus on the work of God that he's been doing in them. And the first part is that they are called to be saints.

[14:05] This word call, Paul uses it in verse 1, where he talks about being called to be an apostle. Now, do you remember the story of when Paul was called to be an apostle?

Anybody remember any of the details of what happened in that call to be an apostle? He was headed to go arrest a bunch of Christians.

He was a persecutor of the church. He's on a horse riding to, does anybody remember the town? Damascus, that's right. And what happens to him while he's on that horse?

Bright light knocks him off his horse, blinds him. Jesus speaks to him and says, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?

And now Paul tells this story three times in the book of Acts, right? But that was both his call to salvation and his call to the apostleship. Both happened at the same time for Paul, right?

[15:13] And one of the things that we then learn about this idea of being called is that the call comes from God, and the call is an arresting, powerful thing.

If God calls a person salvation, we're talking about something that is arresting and gets a hold of them. As a matter of fact, in Romans chapter 8, Romans chapter 8, verse 30, there's a lot in this verse.

We'll just look at a couple of things. Paul writes this. He says, Here's the thing.

Salvation is like a diamond, okay? It's like a diamond, and it has a lot of facets to it, right? So what you and I experienced when we were saved is that we all repented of our sin and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

That right there is called conversion, okay? That's conversion. When we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, God declared us righteous, right?

[16:40] He credited to our account the righteousness of Jesus. That's what we call justification, right? There's also other blessings, other facets to our salvation that are things like adoption, regeneration, glorification, sanctification.

Now, all of these are all a part of the one salvation, but they are different facets. And as a matter of fact, there's kind of a logical order to these things.

Glorification. Let's talk about that for a second. Anybody know what glorification is? Glorification is going to happen to you one day. Like if you've trusted Christ, one day you're going to be glorified, which means that you go on to live with the Lord and the second coming and all the end time stuff has happened and your body is going to be raised incorruptible and you will be rejoined with your physical body.

It will be eternal and glorified and you will live with the Lord forever in a corporeal existence. No more of these canes, no more of these ear things, no more of these silly things, right?

No more doctors and tests. It's all gone, right? Now, that's already ours because of salvation.

[18:15] It's a facet of the diamond of salvation. Now, I'm saying this because there's also other parts of salvation that are before we're saved and one of those is being called.

No one can just walk up to God and go like, okay, I'm ready. I'll be saved. No. It's only as God calls a person then they respond in faith and repentance that a person can be saved.

But that call doesn't come because God looks at us and says, oh, this is a good person. I like this person. No, it comes by grace.

There's nothing about me that deserves to be called. And so that's what he's saying about these Corinthians that they were called to be saints like everybody else, right?

Who's ever called upon the name of the Lord. He's called them by grace. Romans 8.30. Romans 8.30.

[19:23] Now, second thing is, yes, somebody say something? Okay. The second thing is not just being called by grace but being saved by grace. Now, I use the term saved here and this is what happens with crazy preachers.

Oftentimes when we say the word saved or salvation, it's that umbrella term or that big diamond. Sometimes they say to mean the moment of conversion because that's what we remember.

If I ask you to tell me when you got saved, you're going to tell me about the day that you trusted the Lord Jesus Christ and he justified you. That's what you're going to tell me about because that's what we remember in our experience.

So when I say saved here, that's what I'm saying. So I know it's confusing to use the word in a couple of ways but I'm just crazy and you just have to keep it up with me, okay? But the second thing is that you're saved by grace.

Look at verses four through six. He says, I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given to you in Christ Jesus. So there's a part of that idea of the grace that in every way you were enriched in him and all speech and knowledge which we're going to talk about it another day.

[20:39] Even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed in you, the testimony of Christ. What's that? There's one word that rephrases that.

The gospel, right? The gospel. So the gospel's confirmed among you so that you're not lacking in any gift. So that you're not lacking in any gift.

Okay, I went too far. But we see it. That the grace of God was given to you in Christ Jesus in every way and it has been confirmed among you. So what he's saying is this, is that they've received grace as they are in Christ Jesus.

So they've trusted Christ. So they were called, they trusted, and their salvation comes by grace.

There's a way we see this theologically.

This has been found for longer than any of us have been alive. And it is that we're saved by grace through faith. We're saved by grace through faith.

[ 21 : 47 ] And that's what he's saying. He says, the grace of God that was given to you. And then he says, the testimony of Christ was confirmed among you. In other words, we know that you were saved because it's been confirmed.

The gospel being in you has been confirmed because other people see that you are truly Christians. Now this is the amazing thing about the whole thing to me is that this is a church that's not commendable, but he's saying that they're saved.

You can have a messed up church full of a bunch of messed up people with a lot of messed up problems, and they can be considered Christians because their hope is in Christ. But they're called by grace.

They're saved by grace. And verse seven through nine, they're kept by grace, right? So that you're lacking in any gift. Now that word gift, we're gonna come back to that word because that's gonna be our word for grace there here in just a little bit, and I'll show you why.

As you wait, so you've got these gifts for while you wait for the revealing of the Lord Jesus Christ. What do you think the revealing of the Lord Jesus Christ is? Second coming at the end, right?

[ 22 : 59 ] Who will sustain you to the end guiltless in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ? So they have all of these gifts that help them to wait until the end when Jesus presents them guiltless.

So they're called by grace, saved by grace, and kept by grace because the gifts, here's the interesting thing about this. Paul's doing a play on words. The base word is the word chiro.

I think I'm saying that right. And it's joy. From the word joy come two different words that are tied together. One is charis, grace.

The other is charisma, charisma, which is gift, which is gift. So you think of it this way. Grace is sort of the attitude and the gift-giving attitude, and charisma is the gift from that grace.

Does that make sense? You can have grace that gives you a gift, and those are two different things, but their words are very similar. And the reason Paul's using charisma here is because this church has a problem with the charismatic gifts in chapter 12, 13, and 14.

[ 24 : 19 ] They're so focused on being sure that the most important people, the tongue speakers, are the most spiritual people that Paul is saying, no, the most spiritual people are those who've been given a grace gift that God uses to keep them saved.

And so that's why he's using that word and doing this play on words. So the point is this, is that you're called by grace, saved by grace, and kept by grace.

As Baptists, okay, as Baptists, we are Baptists because we believe in what we call eternal security, or once saved, always saved.

Now, there is a problem with the popular way of saying once saved, always saved, because it is, it can be misunderstood as a license to sin.

Exactly. So what some people will say and believe, some people who are not Baptists and some people who are Baptists, they will think to themselves, well, if I prayed the sinner's prayer and I was sincere, then I'm saved, or you're saved, no matter what else you do.

[ 25 : 40 ] And so I have sat there across from grandparents who've looked me in the eyes and talked about a grandchild who has abandoned the faith, accepted atheism, accepted all kinds of worldly ideas and said that never will I return again to the Bible, to the church, and all of that should just go away.

And they will tell me, oh, no, but they're a Christian because they prayed and once saved, always saved. You see, that's a problem.

That's a problem. And the problem comes in this, that God is the one who calls us by grace, saves us by grace, and he is the one who keeps us saved.

He is the one who keeps us saved. And what that means is not that we could lose our salvation, but what it means is that the power to keep the salvation, the ability to keep that, is not just based upon God says, we made it in so we can't do anything now, but it's built upon that God says, I started your salvation and I finished your salvation.

You're my work, my masterpiece from beginning to end. He works on us the whole time. What that means then is that as I'm going through life and I find as a Christian myself sinning and I think to myself, how could I do this?

[ 27 : 17 ] I mean, I've been a Christian for 40 years. How can I sin against the Lord? You know, maybe I'm not really a Christian. That's where I would say to myself, counseling myself, it's like, do you believe the truths?

Yes. And do you commit yourself to Christ? Yes. Then you're saved. And he's just working on you to sanctify you to get you to that point.

And so what does it mean about somebody who's prayed and then they walk away? It probably means that they were never really saved. Yes. Yes. Absolutely.

and all of a sudden they realize you don't hear that absolutely yeah yeah so here's what I would say first of all what I'm trying to describe is not necessarily the internal reality of the person but what our perspective about that person should be if that makes sense so for example you might have a kid who's done that and they walk away and 20 years later they go like I was wrong and they say you know Jesus is real and I love Jesus and they can't all of their recanting right well the question will be asked well when were they really saved and my answer is what's it matter if they are right here right now trusting the Lord Jesus Christ then knowing the day or hour is immaterial so if they get to their at the end and and like it's like it's like Michelle's grandfather you know didn't go to church all of his life and you know I sought to try to share the gospel with him and other people came into his life and began to share the gospel with him and I never could tell if he was really saved till one day and I'm fully convinced of this as best as I can be right because I can't see his heart he always asked me to pray for the meal and this man he is at this point he's 88 years old he's never prayed a day in his life and one day he's well I'm gonna pray for the meal today okay all right Dub let me go right ahead and he starts off this way he says Lord you know I love you like how how can you be someone who never gives Jesus an ounce of your time and attention for all of your life and then all of a sudden say

I love you and a man like that a Creole Cajun crazy man whose heart is all get out like no no that doesn't happen except God gets a hold of that heart right so like he didn't tell me all the theological things and all the jargon I needed to see but I but I looked at that and I go like that's that's enough for me I think that he's a believer he got baptized just you know a year later so yes ma'am well he was never a Christian because he never went to church nothing he if you were to ask him he would have been like no I'm not a Christian I mean it was very clear he was not but I use him as an example to say that there comes a time sometimes in people's lives even you know I had a brother I got a brother and he walked away from the church for a long time

[ 31 : 10 ] I mean just not gonna be a part of it anything and and I believe firmly that if he had died in that state he would have busted hell wide open but in the last six years the Lord has gotten a hold of his heart he allowed me to go through and read scripture and other things with him together and we talked about it and he began to read his Bible he is going to church now and he has he is just about taken his entire neighborhood to church because he loves the Lord and he sees it so now I have I have confidence yeah I believe he is saved I mean I'm looking at the fruit right and so the point point of all this is that that these these Corinthians so divided so split up because part of it is that they didn't grasp how they're saved they didn't understand that this that salvation is a work of God from beginning to end

Paul says this in Philippians is that he who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus Jonah says in the belly of the well salvation belongs to the Lord this is not our this is his salvation this is his work in us and the Corinthians didn't understand that more that we understand our salvation we understand all the details of what it means to be saved ask these hard questions like that and try to really get our minds around it what will happen is the more that we understand that the more that we grow as a Christian and the more we grow as Christians more humble we'll become and that right there is how we get rid of division by growing in humility but here's the other thing believing these truths believing that we're called by grace saved by grace and kept by grace if we all believe that except for me if I believe that we're kept by works we're kept by what we do not by what God does then we have a problem working together don't we the unity of the church is built upon the gospel it's built upon the gospel on the truths of the gospel and what God has done and that's why

Paul starts there before he gets into the division right okay so with that being said let's jump into this division part okay and we're going to see three levels of it we're going to see a surface a deeper and then the deepest level verse 10 where he says this I appeal to you brothers by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that all of you agree and that there be no divisions among you but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment for it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you my brothers what I mean is that each one of you says I follow Paul or I follow Apollos or I follow I follow Christ now let me ask you the presenting problem right

what seems to be the surface level problem not speaking the same thing because what are they speaking about what is it that they are boasting in huh works and they're boasting of people that's why they say

I follow Paul I follow Apollos I follow Cephas I follow Christ right it's all about who their spiritual father is right these this is my favorite preacher that's the division that's the presenting problem all right let's just let's just be sure we know this everybody know who Paul is does everybody know who Apollos is does anybody know who Apollos is okay so Apollos is in the book of Acts and he is a gentleman who is we're told that he was very eloquent in speaking and that's going to be key to the book of Corinthians he followed Paul to the church at Ephesus okay so Paul planted the church at Ephesus he taught them for a season he left Apollos came by but Apollos even though he was a great speaker did not have his theology very well developed so there's a couple in the Bible named Aquila and

Priscilla how many of you heard their names before Aquila and Priscilla they took Apollos aside and they disciplined him so that he would have better theology so that when he preached he was speaking the truth so Apollos followed Paul to Corinth right so he's gone to Corinth now and so you've got people who've been following Paul you've got people following Apollos now does anybody know who Cephas is Peter that's right Simon Peter who walked on the water his disciple his name is Peter right so this is another person right and then does everybody know who Christ is okay so this is the surface problem the surface problem is that they are dividing up into these groups now the deeper problem the deeper problem is this let me let me read that that again what I mean is that each of you says and look how this is written

[ 36 : 49 ] I follow Paul I follow Apollos I follow Cephas or I follow Christ Paul does not say and by the way the last group is getting it right okay because he says is Christ divided and what do you think the expected answer is no that's right and then he asked another question was Paul crucified for you and the answer is no and another question or were you baptized in the name of Paul and the answer is no so he knows the answers are going to be no that's why he's asking these questions and he's saying is Christ divided so whatever's happening here the deeper problem is not about that this is just my favorite preacher but the word means that you're taking whatever's whole and you're parsing it out so that it's not about that this one has as much as this one but it's that they have two different sides of things it's a word that's used in chapter 7 when

Paul talks about husbands whose attentions are divided between God and their wife they both can't have the whole of him because and that's why Paul is like trying to encourage people to be single right that's one of his things is that you can you your attention is divided so what he said here is that part of the truth is divided out to Paul Apollos Cephas and Christ none of them have the full truth none of these groups that are lining up under a particular spiritual leader have the full truth because they're ignoring the revelation of God now Paul Apollos Cephas and Christ didn't do this okay they're not to blame people are to blame because of what they're doing and Apollos is the problem because as you read through chapter four Cephas and Christ they fall off and the only other person that's ever mentioned again is

Apollos because Apollos eloquent! in speech okay now we get to the deeper problem look at verse 17 for Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel not with words of eloquent wisdom with words of eloquent wisdom now this is a very specific idea and here we go let's talk some history the city of Corinth I told you it's a cosmopolitan place it's got a diversity of religion diversity of philosophy but they have no entertainment except for speech making orations you could be a slave in Corinth learn how to give a good speech and you could rise in the ranks be set free and become what's called a man get a patron who will support you like a patron of the arch that kind of a thing a patron who will support you and increase in your ability and you could become a celebrity from a slave in

Corinth because learned how to give good speeches because it's built upon the works of Aristotle now if you know Aristotle and you know anything about him he wrote a book called The Art of Rhetoric The Art of Rhetoric has this idea of three key ingredients to a good speech pathos and ethos not three musketeers but three aspects of rhetoric logos is the content of what you're saying it's the argumentation it's the proof it's that kind of a thing pathos is the way you say it you could kind of think emotion right you could kind of think emotion and passion but it's a little bit more than that but it's not less than that and ethos is the idea of your ethics or your credibility okay so one of the ways this works is that if your logos if the content of what you're going to say is like for example

if we talk about somebody who's not a

Christian and if they die in that state they're going to suffer under the wrath of God if your pathos pathos! if it does not match the logos then you lose ethos you lose credibility so if you talk about people suffering under the wrath of God in a glib way and you know what you're just going to die under the wrath of God okay that doesn't match right they don't match together and a lot of times when you hear pastors preach and you feel like the two don't!

[ 42 : 04 ] go together that's the problem is that they're not putting these things together the way that they should so here's what Corinth was doing Corinth really as a didn't care too much about what was said all they really cared about the way it was said and they would begin to believe whatever was said because of the way it was said in other words the credibility of something had to do with the way it was said rather than what was said and so many of these Christians in this church believed Paul trusted in that but when Apollos comes along and teaches something that might not be exactly right because Apollos is not an apostle they're going to believe it because of the way that it was said and since Paul you're not very good at this we're just not going to believe you anymore we've graduated from you to a better speaker in other words who they are aligning under said more about them than anything else and it's for it's their mindset then that they want to take kind of how the world does things and mix it with the gospel and they're good with that but like it really doesn't matter too much because it's really about the way things are spoken now that is troubling because

I feel like that's where a lot of churches are today because it's all about how we say it rather than the content of what we're saying now I will say this this does mean that Paul would say don't get rhetoric okay he would not tell us not to tell us to be thoughtful about it and make sure that we tell people focus on the content let's get to the content all right let me ask you if you got any questions before I wrap this up with some application any questions about any of that thoughts so here's what this means for us okay we take this and we try to apply it to our life here it means things number one it means that we've got to be careful not to let our church take the way the world does things with the gospel without great care without great care it's not that we can't learn anything from the world we can there are things we can learn from the world let me give you a couple examples like it's quite clear that the

Bible does not give a lot of instructions about how to administer a church that is paying our bills what electric company that we use when should we replace flooring how should we have the place cleaned how many buildings should we own how much land should we have what should we do with excess money should we buy CDs or not buy CDs should we do things that help us to increase the amount of money we have or not like there's a lot of things there that it's like I mean I could just go on and on and on the kinds of administrative things that you have to deal with that the Bible doesn't give a very explicit word about the Bible does teach us wisdom about some of these things but the world also has a bit of things to say about some of these things for example what's the best way to keep the facilities well maintained and up to date the world out there has got systems for that why would we need to redo that but we can't just grab that and adopt it willy nilly we got to look at it and say okay is this going to mess up anything with the gospel no well then maybe we can use this but when the world out there tells us that there is such a maybe this is the way that we can attract more people by well now all of a sudden you see the problem you can't marry that you can't bring that in and so we've got to be careful with that which means which means the church body has a massive responsibility when it comes to guarding the truth in 2nd

Timothy Paul is talking to Timothy about preaching the word and teaching the people properly and he says here's the reason there's coming a day when they will gather for themselves teachers who will tickle their ears you've heard that phrase before right what Paul is assuming is that the church body has the authority to gather their own teachers I believe very strongly that the church body has one of the most important roles in the whole kingdom of God and that is selecting who your teachers will be and by that I mean the pastor the preacher right you have a responsibility as a person a member of the body of Christ to be sure that the person who is teaching is somebody who is sound in the faith you gotta know that they know the truth and their teaching according to scripture which means that a church ought to have a confession of faith to be able to use to examine by without a confession of faith here's the thing you could ask me these questions you could say do you believe the

Bible is inerrant and infallible I tell you yes do you believe that the Bible is authoritative and it is God's word and I tell you yes do you believe the Bible is sufficient capacity and purpose cuity and I say yes all of you are going like what don't worry about it no big deal after we agree on those things and you say wow well he is everything about the Bible that I believe!

[ 48 : 46 ] let's call this guy to be a pastor and I get up the first day and I preach that you can lose your salvation because there are people out there in other denominations that believe you can lose your salvation who would believe everything that I just said about the word of God so a confession of faith helps you to go this is what we believe we as a body have committed these are the truths that we think that we want to be committed to and these are the things we want to be taught and we don't want to be taught stuff that disagrees with this you have a responsibility and the privilege to be able to do that not only that but then to hold me accountable to teaching in line with that that is the only way that you can with being founded upon the gospel the only is to have something that we all come back to to look at to say this is what we believe and so

I just encourage you to be thinking about that and processing that and here's what this also means this also means that because because we just need to understand the truth and we see these gospel truths you don't have to have as a member of the! congregation you don't have to have a seminary education and know all the theological jargon to be able to do this task you just need to know the word and have a confession of faith and you got everything that you need