

Ever been personally scolded by your pastor? Ever heard a sermon that seemed to speak right at the sin in your life? Like it or not, one of the purposes for preachers and other church leaders is to bring about correction in the lives of its members and it's been that way since the conception of the Christian Church. Paul, in his letters to the church at Corinth, does just that. Even though he is cordial in his opening sentences and thanks God for them; it doesn't take very long for him to get right to the point of his letters.

He lets them know about the things he has heard about them and how disappointed he is in their lack of any spiritual growth. He tells them they are a spiritually immature, quarreling bunch of sexually immoral babies. A sermon like this would not be very popular today even if it's probably what the church in America needs to hear.

One of the things that we talked about in our ABF [Adult Bible Fellowship] this past week was how Paul scolds the Corinthian church because of the different divisions that were arising there. Some claimed to be followers of Paul and some followers of Apollos. Others probably claimed Peter or another apostle. Paul reprimands them for this division and tells them that they are all supposed to be followers of Jesus and no one else. As we were discussing this, it got us to thinking and realizing that we are very much the same today if we put more of an emphasis on our denomination that we do our salvation. How many of us today are Baptists, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Catholic, Presbyterians, Methodists, etc....The list goes on and on. Paul said that Christ should not be divided but perfectly unified. He didn't want anyone to describe themselves as a "follower of Paul" and it greatly distressed him to think that this was happening. Dean Asche spoke up and said, "I bet Martin Luther would say the same thing if he were here today." I couldn't agree more.

I'm pretty sure that there will always be division's in the church (this side of heaven anyway) and that there are many reasons, traditions and convictions that make us choose one denomination over another, but at the end of the day we should describe ourselves as bible believing, saved by the blood, followers of Jesus Christ over anything else.

Read 1 & 2 Corinthians. There are some very deep statements made by Paul in these letters and some are hard to understand, but very much worthy of a deeper investigation.