STOP FUSSIN!

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**DATE: 11/20/2018 Tues. Thanksgiving Week**

**TEXT: I Corinthians 1:10-17**

**INTRODUCTION**

If you’re a parent, you know there’re times when your kids argue and don’t get along

As our kids were growing up, they would squabble just like other kids

I didn't like it when they argued, so it was not unusual for me to tell them, *Stop fussin!*

Paul had the same attitude when it came to the Corinthian church

These folks were not getting along and he tells them here,

*Stop your fussin!*

Fussing seems to be a part of life

Babies Fuss when they don’t get their way

Young children fuss when they don't get their way

We grow up arguing over all kinds of things

Friends fuss, husbands and wives’ fuss, employers and employees’ fuss,

Neighbors fuss, even nations fuss - sometimes to the point of war

And the source of all the fussing seems to be the same issue … our selfishness

Sadly, there are also many Christians in Churches that don't get along

It’s not unusual to hear about trouble down at the Church

It’s estimated that there are 1000’s of court cases brought each year involving Christians, with legal fees reaching into the millions

The Church at Corinth had its share of Problems

If ever a Church had Problems, it was this one

Through-out the letter Paul deals with these Problems

And the First Problem that he Dealt with was the Division in the Church

Let’s pray and look at this thought **“Stop Your Fussin!”**

(Let’s stand to Read **vs. 10-17**)

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, let’s look at …

**I. THE “REPORT” – v. 11**

***“For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you”***

Let’s look at the Report of what was going on

Word had reached Paul about the Problems in the Church

Occasionally as pastor I receive a call or a letter that goes something like this …

*“Pastor, I think you should know that so and so is doing such and such. Please don't tell them I told you”*

Most of the time when people come to me about someone else, they don't want to tell me who’s upset

They say, *“So and so is upset”* (They use those exact words)

I have been in this thing way too long not to know that I’m usually looking at *so and so*

Paul had informants and he doesn't hesitate to tell who they were

He tells us they ***“are of the house of Chloe”***

We don't have any idea of who Chloe was, but they had sent Paul a report about trouble down at the Church

The phrase ***“hath been declared”*** means that their report was *made evident or clear*

This was not gossip … but facts

This was not rumors being spread … but the truth

This was not some disgruntled Church member;

But someone with a love and concern for their Church

Chloe was not trying to Start trouble, she was trying to Stop trouble

Paul had his facts straight

(Which is something we all should do, before we come to a conclusion)

First, let’s look at …

**A. The Church’s Future**

This Strife was Threatening the Future of the Church

It’s from the word ***“division”*** found in **v. 10** that we get our word *schism*

It’s a word that describes *a tear in a garment*, yet the garment is not completely torn apart

The Church was not splitting, but it was near that point

The Schisms and Strife within the Church was like a tear in their fellowship,

And Paul knew, that if it was not healed, it could split the congregation

Internal strife is always a threat to the Future of any Church

The truth is, many Churches today that exist are the result of internal strife that ended in a split

*Some Churches have split so many times, they now have splinters*

**The Church’s Future**

**B. The Church’s Fellowship**

Let’s look at How Divisive this Division was

The word ***“contentions”*** denotes *quarrels and strife*

The strife of the Church had developed to the point of Shouting and Shows of hot-temper

**Humor:** The story is told of 2 porcupines that were huddled together to get warm, but their quills pricked each other, they therefore separated. Before long they were shivering again, so they got up close again. Soon they were pricking each other again. Same story; same ending. They needed each other, but they kept needling each other.

How sad it is when a Church gets to the place that instead of shouting over their Blessings, they are shouting at each other

Notice the word ***“contentions”*** in **v. 11** again

The word is translated as ***“debate”*** in **Romans 1:29** where it’s speaking of lost people

***“Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,”***

Paul is telling them that they are acting like unsaved people

They were not acting like Saints, they were acting like Sinners

The word is also translated ***“strife”*** in **Galatians 5:20,**

Where it’s talking about the works of the flesh

***“Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,”***

Paul was telling them they were letting the flesh control them and not the Holy Spirit

They were not Spirit Filled, they were Self-Willed

**THE “REPORT”**

Now let’s look back one verse at …

**II. THE “REQUEST” – v. 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”***

**A.** **The ‘Plead’**

Paul ***“beseeched”*** these believers to get along with one another

We might say the he *Pleaded* with them

The word ***“beseech”*** means *to call to one's side in order to help, to instruct, admonish, encourage, or comfort*

Paul uses this word a lot

He’ll use it 5 more times in this letter, 18 times in II Corinthians, and 30 other times in his other epistles

This word is from a root word which is translated as ***“Comforter”*** in **John 14:16** and ***“Advocate”*** in **I John 2:1**

These are terms used to describe the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus Christ

The key idea behind this word is that of the active work of assisting a person to get back on track

Paul wanted to call these folks to his side in order to help them, not to Bop them on the head

There was a problem in the church and he wanted to solve it

So, what’s the problem? Let’s talk about it

What I’ve found over the years is most people don’t want to solve the problem, they just want their own way

Yet, if we are to get along, we will have to learn to compromise with each other

Paul’s ‘**Plead’** was to Get Along with each other

**B.** **The ‘Authority’**

The authority for Paul's Plea was ***“by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ”***

Invoking a name was commonly used with the understanding that someone was invoking the presence of the person named,

Appealing to the full authority of that person over those being addressed

It assumes the person invoking that name has the official capacity to function as a representative of the person being named

Paul's appeal was based on the authority of Jesus Christ as he spoke as a chosen Apostle of the Lord

**C.** **The ‘Agreement’**

Paul Pleaded that the people speak the same thing

***“be perfectly joined together in the same mind”***

This was an Appeal for agreement among the people in the church

The phrase was heavily used in politics to refer to people who were ideologically allied

He also Pleaded that there be no Divisions among them

**THE “REPORT”**

**THE “REQUEST”**

**III. THE “REASON” – v. 12**

Most internal strife in a Church is over Minor things

It is not over Spiritual issues but Selfish issues

The Church at Corinth was no exception

Their Problem was not due to Principles but Personalities

**A. The ‘Favoritism that was Displayed’**

We read in **v. 12 – *“Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ”***

There seems to have been four factions within the Church and it all centered around who their favorite preacher was

**1.** There was the **PAUL** crowd

I can imagine this crowd saying …

*“We like Paul the best, he really knows the OT, the doctrines of the Bible, and is a great teacher He really feeds my soul / He's my kind of preacher”*

Since he was the founder of that Church, they probably put a halo around his head

**2.** There was the **APOLLOS** crowd

**Acts 18:24** tells us that Apollos was ***“an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures”***

I can hear this crowd saying … *“You ought to hear Apollos preach. He certainly knows his Bible and his language is ornate. Words flow from his mouth like dewdrops on rose petals. He is the finest expository preacher I have ever heard. He's my kind of preacher”*

**3.** Then, there was the **CEPHAS** (Peter) crowd

I can imagine this crowd saying … *“I appreciate Paul and Apollos, but Peter is my kind of preacher. Peter is not a teacher; he is a preacher. He really gets with it when he preaches. He runs up and down the aisle, and gets in the glory. He skins shines every time he preaches. Nobody stirs me like Peter”*

**4.** Then there was the **CHRIST** crowd

This was the most sanctimonious crowd in the Church

They looked down their *holier-than-thou* noses and squinted their *self-righteous* eyes and said, …

*“We don't follow no man. We only follow Christ.*

*We don't need any man to tell us anything. All we need is Jesus!”*

They were the real spiritual ones

**The ‘Favoritism that was Displayed’**

**B. The ‘Fanaticism that had Developed’**

Each group was not only hanging on the coat-tails of their favorite preacher,

But they had developed the attitude that they were right and everybody else was wrong

Each group had gone to the extremes of believing that if you didn't prefer their preacher, then something was wrong with you

Each group felt that their … likes, tastes, and preferences, were the only right way

The result was four factions within the Church with each one feeling the other was wrong and they were right

Each group had chosen sides

Now let me just say a word about preaching and preachers

Everybody has someone and a style they prefer above others

I have to be honest and say that there are some preachers that I don't care to listen to (at all)

There are styles I prefer above others

But we make a serious mistake when get locked into this thing of only listening to one certain style / man

The style and man need to be forgotten

It’s the Scriptures and Message that needs to be heard,

Regardless of how it’s Delivered or Packaged

God has all kinds and all styles

God uses all kinds of people and their styles to get His Word out

I knew some people who just wouldn’t go to church when certain preachers were there

I can understand not going to some other church to hear someone

But, when they are in your church, you need to be there

When we get to the place where it’s *my way or the highway*, then we’re headed for trouble

There are a lot of things you do, that I would never do

(Now if there is a Division over Doctrine, then we have an issue!)

That's why so many can't get along

And it’s not just about Preachers, …

… there are all kinds of things people can Divide over

Let me given you 5 areas of Contention in Churches

**1.** People

The Corinthians were following men and it created problems in the church family as we see

Some churches are divided because of racial prejudice

Others have Popularity Contests

The Kids on the Bus, kids in general

**2.** Power

There are people today that play politics in the church to gain power

If they gain that power, they tend to create problems in the church and for the pastor

John spoke of a man named Diotrephes that abused his position in the church

**III John 9 – *“I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not”***

**3.** Petty Matters

It’s amazing how many churches are divided over the color of carpet, pews, or paint

**4.** Personal Offenses

Folks that have been offended by others refuse to forgive

They remain bitter and continue to squabble …

… because they did not get their own way, maybe they were not recognized for something they did, or someone hurt their feelings by something they said

**5.** Perversity

Those living in sin create Division

If their sin is dealt with and discipline is exercised in the church, then friends of the sinners tend to get upset

God's Word is clear that matters like immorality must be confronted and addressed

Paul had to deal with perversity in the Corinth church

Perverse doctrine will also create Division in the church

**THE “REPORT”**

**THE “REQUEST”**

**THE “REASON”**

**IV. THE “REMEDY” – vs. 13-17**

Paul Hears about their Division, He Identifies their Division, and also gives them Instructions on how to Heal their Division

Let’s look at the Remedy He Offers

First, we see …

**A. The ‘Control that would Bring’ Them Together**

**1.** In **v.10** Paul tells them to be ***“perfectly joined together”***

The words are a medical term that refers to setting a broken bone

In **Matthew 4:21,** the word is used to speak of ***“mending”*** fishing nets

***“And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, … mending their nets; and he called them”***

It is also translated in **Galatians 6:1** as ***“restore”***

***“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted”***

They were like broken bones that needed Healing

They were like a torn net that needed Mending

They were like a broken fellowship that needed Restoring

**2.** Paul tells them to ***“speak the same thing”***

He was not saying that they all were to use the same words, phrases, etc.

But that they were to agree on the basic fundamental Truths of God’s Word … and let that bring them together

(Our Statement of Faith)

They all had their favorite preacher,

But the bottom line was, each preacher preached the same truths

They may have Preferences, but it was the Precepts & Principles that were to unite them

As believers we are to dwell together in harmony

We are to rally around the blessed Truths of God's Word and lay aside our differences

We are to be ***“perfectly joined together”***

**The ‘Control that would Bring’ Them Together**

**B. The ‘Christ that Bound’ Them Together**

We read in **vs. 13-16 –** ***“Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” “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”***

Paul points them to Jesus Christ

He asks – ***“Is Christ divided?”***

The answer is an obvious No!

Therefore, they are to be one in Him

Paul asks a series of questions that involved himself

He asks –

***“Was I crucified for you? Were you baptized in my name?”***

He states that he had only baptized a couple of them

The point that he is making is that the center of harmony is not a Man, but the Master

Paul wanted them to get their eyes off Everything and Everyone and keep them on Jesus

Paul knew that the closer they got to the Lord, the closer they would get to each other

You can mark this down: anyone who causes trouble in a Church has gotten away from loving Jesus and serving the Lord!

**The ‘Control that would Bring’ Them Together**

**The ‘Christ that Bound’ Them Together**

 **C. The ‘Cause to Band’ Them Together**

We read in **v. 17 – *“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”***

One of the great fears of Paul was that the cross would be made of none effect

The words ***“should be made of none effect”*** are actually only one word meaning ***“empty”***

Paul's passion was the preaching of the Cross

**I Corinthians 2:2 – *“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified”***

He wanted others to be saved and nothing to happen that would make the message of the Cross an empty message

Paul was saying to them, *“this is the great cause for which we should all band together”*

We should forget our petty differences and concentrate on getting others saved

Nothing can hurt the Image, Testimony, and Influence of a Church any more than Trouble

But I have noticed, that those who stir up strife in the Church could care less what it does to the Testimony of Christ or how many people it could hinder from being saved

All they care about is themselves

**Ill.** Many years ago a little girl was lost in one of the large wheat fields of Kansas. 100’s got involved looking for her. The great fear was that she would not be found before dark and would freeze to death during the night. As darkness approached, someone suggested that they all join hands and walk across the field. Shortly thereafter, someone shouted, *“Here she is.”* But it was too late. As the mother held her little girl’s lifeless body, she looked up at the crowd around her, and with tears running down her face said, *“Why didn't we join hands sooner? Oh, why did we not join hands sooner?”*

One day in Heaven, Churches will wonder why they didn’t stand together

There is more than our opinion at stake

There will only be harmony in the Church when we forget ourselves and think of others

**Philippians 2:3 – *“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves”***

**CONCLUSION**

I hope we’ve learned what it is that causes Trouble in Churches

And realize that we aren’t immune to it

Therefore, being aware, we have a responsibility to guard ourselves from allowing the wrong kinds of attitude to enter our hearts

We need to STOP FUSSIN!

**THE “REPORT”**

**THE “REQUEST”**

**THE “REASON”**

**THE “REMEDY”**