

Corrupted by False Teaching by James Jennings

by James Malachi Jennings

The sermon emphasizes the danger of false teaching and the importance of being aware of it, in order to avoid being deceived and to live a life that honors God.

Duration: 46:58

Scripture: Proverbs 13:20, Proverbs 22:24-25, 1 Corinthians 15:3-58, 2 Corinthians 7:1-2, Hebrews 12:15

Topics: "False Teaching", "Gospel Truth"

Description

This sermon delves into 1 Corinthians 15, emphasizing the impact of contemplating Christ's sacrifice for our sins on our lives. It warns against false teaching and the corrupting influence of bad company, urging vigilance in discerning and upholding the truth of the Gospel. The speaker highlights the need to reprove error firmly, preach and hold fast to the truth, and surround oneself with companions who pursue holiness and righteousness.

Transcript

Turn to 1 Corinthians 15. The more we think about our Lord Jesus Christ, even as Paul does at the start of this chapter, mentioning what He delivered of first importance, what He preached in regards to the Gospel, and he starts out and says in v. 3 that Christ died for our sins. The more you're thinking about Christ dying as a substitute in your place, bearing the penalty that you deserve for your sins in hell for all of eternity.

The more we think about Christ, it's going to affect our lives. The love of Christ controls me, the Apostle Paul said, because he concluded something that Christ had died for him, and therefore, he died and he no longer lived for himself, but he was living for the purposes of the Lord Jesus Christ. This morning, I want to look at verses 33 and 34.

The name of the sermon is corrupted by false teaching. Obviously, false teaching comes from false teachers. And false teachers are people.

You can have company with them. Let's start in v. 32. The second half.

Paul says, if the dead are not raised. That's been the error he's trying to correct here. Some are saying the dead are not raised.

If the dead are not raised, if this teaching is true, what's the conclusion? Paul says what it is. Then let's just eat and drink for tomorrow we die. Because we're just going to die anyways in Paris, there's no resurrection.

In v. 33, Paul says do not be deceived. You always want to pause when we run into that in the Scriptures. Don't be deceived.

If you pass over that, then you're basically wanting to walk into deception. Don't be deceived. Bad company ruins, corrupts, destroys good morals, good character, good usefulness.

V. 34, wake up from your drunken stupor as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

Do not be deceived. Bad company ruins good morals. Most of us have heard that verse.

This is a fairly well-known verse. Even for the non-Christian. And part of the reason is, you can see Paul here, he's quoting someone.

He's quoting a Greek. And he's quoting a common saying back then. So that's part of the reason it was well-known.

And here Paul is saying this and applying it in this situation that we're going to look at here. Let's pray. Father, Lord, we just ask for help and grace.

Lord, to stand in the pulpit and preach in all of the weaknesses that I have. Pray You would help me to feed the sheep, protect the church. Lord, help Tim and Monterey do the same right now.

Lord, help Tawfiq. Be with Jeff, Aber, and Main. Be with Mack and the brothers in Denton.

Be with Jeremy and Laredo. Be with Craig today as he's in Corpus preaching to the church. Be with Mark Summers as he's in Reynosa.

Lord, our eyes are on You. We're powerless. Help us.

For the sake of Your Son who's worthy. Amen. We read these verses and one of the first questions rightly should be, you ask yourself, do I have any companions who are evil and corrupting me? Are there any companions that I have that are evil and corrupting me? Who are my companions? In person? Through the Internet? Because those companions have an influence on the way you think.

And if they can change the way you think, they'll change the way you live. Either for good, towards truth, or towards error and destruction. Like a rotting apple in a bag that affects the others.

You can either throw it out. You can be deceived and not admit it's there and let it rot you. What are we going to do? So, I have four points.

First point, in the context, the companions who are bad and evil and are ruining and corrupting those within Corinth are people who are misrepresenting God by teaching something false. And let's look at that. Look at v. 12.

Chapter 15. Paul says, now if Christ is raised from the dead, which it seems He was being proclaimed that, Paul then says this, how can some of you? And I would put forward that some in that church. Some

of you are saying something that's not right.

What are they saying? There's no resurrection of the dead. And then Paul, he works out the conclusion if you believe this. But, if there's no resurrection of the dead in v. 13, then Christ hasn't even been raised from the dead.

And then another conclusion, and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching's in vain. And your faith is in vain. And he goes on, he says in v. 15, we'd even be found to be misrepresenting God.

Isn't that what false teaching and false teachers do? They misrepresent God. We have all been misrepresented here. Imagine misrepresenting God.

I don't like it when people misrepresent me. People misrepresent God. We don't want to be one of those people.

So, based on Paul's arguments right here, and the some who say there's no resurrection, and even as we look at it, v. 32 and the second half, if the dead are not raised, that's what he's dealing with right there. We see they had a belief it appears that Christ did raise from the dead, but they did not have a belief that believers would have a resurrection. We would ultimately perish.

That's it. There's no resurrection. And they were blinded to the implications of where that false teaching would end up.

It would end up to even denying the very resurrection of Jesus Christ, which Paul starts this chapter out mentioning this is one of the things of first importance. And he's reminding of them. You can't go wrong on this.

And this distortion led to being deluded in their theology and behavior that followed their bad theology. Bad teaching leads to a sinful lifestyle. So, Paul here, his idea in context of saying v. 33 and 34 is not to give us a couple of verses that we can quote to our kids and tell our kids that bad company corrupts good morals.

Is it true that bad company? Yes, there's truth in that statement. Paul's concern is with a church that has people who are teaching something that's in error. And their false teaching is deceiving some.

And that bad company is actually corrupting them. And he tells them in v. 34 to wake up. They're not waking up.

He's trying to wake them up right now in this letter, in this chapter. They're in a drunken stupor. He says don't go on sinning.

They're going on in sinning in certain ways. He doesn't mention specifically right there. So, Paul's focus is not lost companions corrupting you, though that absolutely can apply.

Why do you think Paul says do not be deceived? It's obvious that people in the world and all of their wickedness can corrupt us. You know what's easier to get deceived on? It's professing Christians who are under the name of Christian and they start distorting truth, teaching error. That's where it's easy to become deceived as Paul says right here.

So this is an attack on the inside. And the person's weapons are primarily their words. His or her words.

You know, there are many empty talkers and deceivers in the professing church. What does Paul say should happen to them in another place in Titus? They should be silenced. Titus 1.11, they must be silenced because they're upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach.

Teaching something with an air can upset a whole family. It can corrupt. 2 Peter 3, Peter says there are some things in Paul's letters that are hard to understand and listen to this, which is the ignorant and unstable.

How unstable have you got to get to start saying there's no resurrection? They twist to their own destruction as they do the other Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the air of lawless people and you lose your own stability. The companions we have among professing Christians, they can cause us to lose our own stability.

They can corrupt us. They can take things to Paul's that are hard to understand, twist them to their own destruction, and they can yank you along for the ride. That's why Paul says don't be deceived.

We should have a healthy fear. I have the possibility of being misled. If you say like Peter arrogantly, I'll never deny the Lord.

I'll never be misled. We better shut our mouths and say, God, keep me, please. I could be in the process of rotting and being corrupted and not even realize it.

That's why Paul says don't be deceived. Don't be misled from the right direction and wander into error. Those at Corinth, they're being corrupted in their character.

They're going on sinning. Verse 34 says they're in a drunken stupor. Now, this is kind of an intro.

So, can another church have some who say, just like v. 12 says, how can some of you say? Don't you ask that sometimes? You hear things people are saying in other churches and you say, how can some of you say that? How did you even get to that point? Now, Paul's not agreeing with what they're saying. But think about it if you got to the point where you hear what they say and you actually say, I agree with that. That's scary.

We could get deceived. We could be deceived. Our thinking could be altered, which would then alter our conduct, which would alter the way of our life.

The end? We don't want to end up in that end. Paul's dealing with this error here. We have our own errors to deal with.

Point number two, what we believe affects how we live. We must wisely see where the false teaching leads and its consequences. Too many people, they look at false teaching and they say, well, you know, it's just a little off.

Granted, is this thing very important to the resurrection? Yes. Because it even deals with the very resurrection of Christ, which is of first importance. So are there going to be other things that aren't as important and as high of degrees of essentials? Absolutely.

I'm not denying that in any way. But what we believe makes a difference. What difference does believing the resurrection make? It makes a big difference.

Look at what Paul's saying their conduct should be in v. 32. Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. If you don't believe there's going to be a resurrection of believers, not only does that mean you're ultimately denying the resurrection of Christ, it basically means the life you should live is you should just eat and drink for tomorrow we die.

But if you conclude the truth, what should your response be? V. 58, Therefore, my beloved brothers, because the resurrection is true, because death is swallowed up in victory, and oh death, where is your victory? Because of that, you should be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. So there you've got the two ways. You might end up just eat and drink, tomorrow we die, or be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work, knowing it's not in vain.

But if you start teaching, believers aren't going to be resurrected. Paul shows all this logic right there. We already looked at some of it.

V. 13, if there's no resurrection, Christ didn't get raised. V. 14, if He's not been raised, then guess what? Our preaching is in vain. Your faith is in vain.

Misrepresenting God. He goes on. V. 17, and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile.

And you are still in your sins. Paul is showing, if you deny this one thing, if some of you say that there is no resurrection, this is where it's going to end up. Too many people, they look at the air, and they don't see the end.

Paul sees the end. That's why he's taking this bull by the horns and not letting it get out of control. There is a snowball effect.

No small teaching from within just stops with its corruption. It corrupts and it continues to corrupt. In the beginning, it might seem that its initial state is of small significance, but it builds up.

It gets bigger, larger, more dangerous. It causes a bigger destruction. That's why we've got to stop it before it even starts.

So, a snowball to where? Where does this snowball lead? Where does believing that there's no resurrection of the dead, as they were saying, where does it end up? Look at our text. Verse 33, Do not be deceived. Bad company ruins good morals.

Some of yours may say corrupts. Do not be deceived. Bad company ruins good morals.

You know what that word in Greek is used in another Scripture? You know how it's rendered? Destroys. This is more than something getting ruined and corrupted. You don't want to picture it as a light little thing.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3, if anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. Here, Paul using that word, bad company destroys good character, morals, that word morals there, usage. It affects your usefulness.

That's one of the ways it could be rendered. Usage. It destroys.

It takes you out of the game. This is severe. This is more than someone having a bad influence on your life and you change your movie standards.

This is more than having a co-worker who's using profanity and you say that corrupts you, that speech like that will corrupt as we saw in Ephesians years ago. It's more than that. This is someone that they're going to influence you in a way that's ultimately going to lead to your destruction.

And Paul, he's trying to wake them up. Verse 34. Wake up! Wake up from your drunken stupor as is right.

Don't go on sinning. Don't go on like this. Wake up.

He's trying to wake them up. Get back to the Bible. Get back to the Word.

Get back to the truth. Wake up! And they might say, I don't need to wake up. Paul's saying you're deceived.

Wake up! No, I'm not deceived. That's the thing. If we get deceived, we don't know it.

We need others on the outside giving us truth, and with humility, we bow to the truth and we recognize you're right. I've been wrong. I see it now.

Lord, forgive me for that wrong. Lord, get me out of any type of delusion. Point 3, in view of the seriousness of where false teaching leads, we need to strongly reprove the error and not deal with it lightly.

And Paul does that here. I mean, look at v. 34. He says, for some have no knowledge of God.

Who are the some? It could either mean two things. First, and this isn't the one I agree with, but still there's truth in it. This is the one people rarely take.

It could read like this, wake up from your drunken stupor as is right. Do not go on sinning because some, the lost world, have no knowledge of God, and you should be ashamed that they've not heard the truth from you because you're just eating and drinking for tomorrow we die and you're not being steadfast in evangelism. That's one way people take that.

They believe that some refers to the lost world who does not have the knowledge of God. And Paul is shaming the church for not reaching that world because of their false teaching that has corrupted their steadfastness. As he says in v. 58, he's telling them your labor's not in vain.

Now look, I don't think that's what that's saying, but that's true. That's true nonetheless. If any false teaching, if any error hinders you in such a way where you lose your evangelistic zeal, we should be ashamed.

If there's people out there without the truth and they don't have it, because we've believed in error that's made us just live like it's all vain. Now, this is the second way you could take this. And this is how I take it.

V. 34, Paul is saying to them, wake up from your drunken stupor as is right and do not go on sinning. And notice he's saying your. Wake up from your to the church.

And then v. 34, he says for some. Well, look back at v. 12. How can some of you say there's no resurrection from the dead? I believe he's referring to the same some.

The some who say there's no resurrection from the dead. He's calling them out in v. 34. For some, those people who yes, are somewhere within the church.

And Paul, he puts them down by saying they have no knowledge of God. It's a put-down. It's a rebuke.

People at Corinth? You know what? A lot of them, did they lack knowledge? They were puffed up with knowledge and pretty proud and arrogant we find in chapter 8. And here Paul is telling these people who've made this air, he's saying you don't have any knowledge of God. Guess what? You're just like that pagan over there who actually has no knowledge of God in the sense that you do. You're just like him because this false teaching you're giving in to and all the implications of where it leads, and Paul's just putting them down.

He's rebuking them. He's saying you have no knowledge of God. And you see this in other places where it doesn't literally mean they have no knowledge of God.

Jesus says in John 14, have I been with you so long and you still do not know Me? That didn't mean they didn't know Him. Just like Jesus wasn't being literal there, I don't think Paul's being literal here in saying these sons literally have no knowledge of God. He's basically saying because this air, this air you have, you some, have no knowledge of God, you're just like the pagans.

It's an ultimate put-down as Gordon Fee said. And he's shaming them. He's shaming them.

In Ephesians 4, we hear that there are people who are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardness of heart. And Paul is saying you're just like them. You're denying the resurrection.

You're ignorant just like that pagan over there. And then, he says, so I believe that in correcting the air? For some have no knowledge of God is a put-down on the false teachers in the church. And the next phrase is a put-down on the church.

A rebuke of the church itself. I say this to your shame. So wake up from your, the church, drunken stupor.

For some, the people false teaching have no knowledge. And then he says, I say this to your, the church as a whole, to their shame. To their shame.

It is to their shame that these some are still in the church uncorrected apparently, and they're corrupting others. Those who believe in the resurrection, they should have known better. They should have been leading those who did not believe in the resurrection to a true knowledge of God rather than allowing their heresy and immorality to mislead and corrupt you.

He's saying you should be ashamed. Why are you not dealing with this? That's why on Wednesday night we're dealing with two things. You know why we're doing it? Because we fear God.

And we don't want someone to write to us and say, I say this to your shame, GCC. How are you letting these corrupting influences no doubt from the outside affect you as a church as a whole? They should be ashamed that they're divergent from the truth. But sadly, people often they don't even blush.

They don't hold fast to the Word preached. And obviously as a church, we have to take action to remove error. Whether it's the person itself or the error from the mind of the person.

Because some of you, myself included, we could have some wrong thought of God that through the teaching of the Word, through the studying of the Scriptures, we start to recognize that thought does not honor God. I'm getting rid of that. It's a wrong conclusion.

We have to take action. Why? Earlier in this letter, Paul said, your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? False teaching is like a little yeast that spreads through the whole batch of dough.

And that's why he said, Titus, they've got to be silenced. They've got to be silenced. And if they're not among us, and we can't silence them among us, and it's people on the outside, they're going to keep talking.

But what we can do is warn the church in order that those who are talking on the outside and could corrupt the church through their erroneous teachings and misunderstandings of the Scripture don't affect the body. Do not be deceived. Titus 3.9 As for those who stir up division after warning them once and then twice, what does Paul say? Have nothing more to do with them.

Knowing that such a person is warped and sinful, he is self-condemned. Paul says nothing more to do with them. Break association.

Silence them. Put them out from among you if they're among you. Point four, in view of the seriousness of where false teaching leads, we need to not only correct it, but we need to actively be preaching the truth and not neglecting the truth.

And if you look at our chapter here, there's so much here I cannot unpack. And we're looking at these verses, but if you look at how Paul started, verse 1, how was Paul even beginning this? I would remind you, brothers of the Gospel, I preach to you which you received and which you stand and by which you are being saved if you hold fast to the Word, the Gospel, I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. You see, we've got to keep preaching truth.

We've got to keep reminding people, as he says in verse 3, what is of first importance, because we've got to get to the end. We've got to keep believing, as Paul says right here. He says, and by which you are being saved.

So we're being saved. We've got to get to the end. We've got to finish the race.

And so here, Paul, he's reminding them of the truth. He's putting their minds on the Gospel. And here at the end, Paul, in these last verses, he reminds them of the triumph that every Christian is going to have.

The triumph of our ultimate resurrection. The victory, verse 57 says, but thanks be to God who gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. When you get a bunch of believers thinking about truth and the victory that's coming for them and this resurrection that's coming for them, it makes them want to be steadfast and movable always abounding in the Lord.

But you know what happens? With this error specifically? Look at verse 32 again. If I don't believe in all this victorious resurrection and victory in Christ, look what Paul says your conclusion's going to be. You're going to say, what do I gain? If humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus.

I mean, why go fight with beasts at Ephesus? Why put myself through that rather than just eat and drink for tomorrow we die? Why do that? Even what he said right in verse 29. One of the interpretations of this. Paul says, otherwise, what do you mean by people being baptized, immersed on behalf of the dead, the lost? What do you mean by people being immersed in suffering on behalf of the lost? If the dead are not raised, why are all the people being immersed in suffering and persecution at the hand of whether it's

physical beasts or beasts meaning evil beasts like Antiochus? Why put yourself through that if there's no resurrection? You see, false teaching, it totally affects how we live.

Paul says in v. 58, brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. You will raise from the dead. So, my four points were this.

One, the some who say and teach something not according to the Scriptures are the bad company who will corrupt you in the context of this chapter. Point two, what we believe about the resurrection affects how we live. False teaching leads somewhere and has consequences, eternal ones.

And again, the scary thing is, the bigger fear is not the outside world's influences, it's those in the professing universal church who can lead us astray. Point three was in view of the corrupting power of false teaching, we need to strongly reprove the error and not deal with it lightly. And the point four, in view of the seriousness of where false teaching leads, we need to preach the truth and not neglect it.

We need to remind people of that which they need to hold fast to. We need to determine it on nothing except for Jesus Christ and Him crucified. So, a prevalent false teaching today from what I'm aware of is not people saying the dead are not raised.

That's not my concern. My concern is that other errors and false teaching, just like this one corrupted these people, they will do the same. Sure, to different degrees, a certain error won't lead you to think it's vain to evangelize.

It might lead you to do other things. So this is obviously not the false teaching that we're going to discuss on Wednesday night. But in our day and age, we have our own errors that are being propagated and put forward out there, and they will corrupt in their own ways as the false teaching at Corinth did then.

Now, one other place to look at this is Hebrews 12. Turn to Hebrews 12. Let's turn there.

Hebrews 12.14 Paul says to strive... or not Paul, the writer of Hebrews. If you believe that's Paul, then it's Paul. Or could be.

Strive for peace with everyone and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. Now, if you think about those in that previous chapter, he said they were going on and sinning. He said they were in a drunken stupor.

They were not sober-minded. They were not thinking right. Here the writer says, strive for peace with everyone and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

He's talking about holiness, and then look at v. 15. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God. Persevere to the end.

True salvation. The truth of the Gospel. The effecting change of the Gospel in a person's life.

That no one fails to obtain the grace of God. And then, the writer has a concern. What will prevent people from obtaining the grace of God? And he says that no root of bitterness spring up and cause trouble, and by it, many become defiled.

So he says there's a root of bitterness that could spring up. And how does it affect others? Defiles. What's he referring to? The ESV, I believe rightly, puts this in quotes.

Turn to Deuteronomy 29. Deuteronomy 29. Obviously, we don't want bitterness to grow in our heart.

The sin of bitterness. But this word bitterness here, it's referring to a poisonous root. It's not referring to that sin specifically.

That would not make sense there. V. 18, Deuteronomy 29. This is another example of how some teaching of error will affect and defile us and corrupt us.

V. 18, Deuteronomy. Beware lest there be among you a man or woman or clan or tribe whose heart is turning away today from the Lord our God to go and serve the gods of those nations. Beware lest there be among you a root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit.

And I believe that's what the writer in Hebrews is referring to. A root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit. And what is that root of bitterness? V. 19, it's one.

Who? It's a person. What does that person do? It's a person that when he hears the words of this sworn covenant, how does that person respond? He blesses himself in his heart, saying, I'm safe. I'm eternally secure.

Though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart. Though I walk in my sin, and he's saying, I'm safe. And he goes on here, this will lead to the sweeping away of the moist and dry alike, or as the Holman says, this will lead to the destruction of the well-watered land as well as the dry land.

I'll tell you what we don't want is root of bitterness rising up in this church or those on the outside affecting this church. Because if a root of bitterness comes up, a poisonous person with their teaching, it will defile many. And he went on in Hebrews to talk about Esau and his sexual immorality, and he no longer found forgiveness.

And here we have, there is a person, there is one who says everything's okay even though he's living in sin. And that person will sweep away the well-watered land as well as the dry land. It will defile and affect the church.

So this is not just people who say there's no resurrection or bad company that corrupts good morals. Any false teaching and person who teaches that, it will lead you to sin. It will lead you to dishonor God.

And so one of the questions we're asking ourselves, is there any companions? Whether through the Internet, whether maybe something here that I'm totally oblivious to, is there someone who is like a root of bitterness? A poisonous root? What they say is poison. They're saying I'm safe even though I'm in the stubbornness of my heart. We know that's a lie.

John says if you say you know Him but you walk in darkness, you're a liar. And the truth is not in you. So, a couple closing applications.

Who is out there preaching to you on the radio, on Facebook, or in an actual book? If it's unbiblical, yes, to different degrees, it will corrupt your thinking and your character and your steadfastness in the mission to abound in the work of the Lord. Bob Jennings told me once that he had went to a conference as a new Christian. It was a pretty shallow conference.

And Conrad Murrell, who a lot of them were being disciplined from, you know what he told Bob and the others? He said, stop getting your food out of the trash. And a lot of people, that's what they do. The food

they eat on the Internet, they're getting it out of a trash can.

Even certain big ministries out there are compromising in areas of homosexuality or their emphasis. We've got to be careful. Something that used to have good food could end up having trash.

We don't want to get food poisoning. You don't want to get poisoned. Because it will corrupt your character.

It will lead you to go on sinning in all sorts of different ways. Second is an application. Do you have bad company with anyone who is saying something not according to the Word? You know, there are going to be people who will try to misdirect us and we always have to keep coming back to the Word.

That's why we've got to know the Bible better. I've got to know the Bible better. There's this brother out there I was just hearing about.

He's a pastor. He's memorized 44 books of the Bible. Memorized 44.

Hiding the Word in his heart. Imagine all the verses that come to his mind. His son wrote an article.

He said he'd see his dad in the morning just mumbling over the Bible. He'd see him throughout the day doing that. Memorized 44 books.

Are you going to do that? Hope so. Another guy, the whole New Testament memorized. I think Vern Poitras.

The whole New Testament memorized. All of Isaiah. Half of Psalms.

That's a lot of truth. We need truth. Paul said in chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians, holding fast to the Word.

And I would say that Word is there interchanged with the Gospel that he preached. Holding fast to these things which are of first importance. Obviously, there are areas we're going to see different on and it's not some error that's going to corrupt everyone.

But there are many errors out there that will corrupt. Is anyone giving you some teaching that's leading you to not abound in the work of the Lord? You might, like we looked at last week, be abounding in all sorts of other things. My question is, is God's purposes the purposes for your life? A third application.

The truth here, no doubt, has a broader application than just false teachers. Obviously, it deals with them specifically. We know from Proverbs 13, 20, whoever walked with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

But people saying the dead are not raised, there you've got a fool. You're going to suffer harm. Proverbs 22, make no friendship with the man given to anger, nor go with the wrathful man, lest you learn his ways and entangle yourself in a snare.

Let me read that again. Make no friendship with the man given to anger. Why? Lest you learn his ways.

That's one of the verses that's scary for parents. If a parent is angry at all, guess what their kid's going to learn in those ways. So yes, there are all sorts of people other than false teachers who can have a corrupting influence on our life.

And you know, I was thinking about the children. Because a lot of times, this is kind of where people take this verse. Son, do you not know that bad company of this person might corrupt your good morals? Well, here my question is, if your kid's not a Christian, I'm not saying to let them hang out with that kid, but they're just as corrupt as that kid in God's eyes, and they need the same salvation, and they're both legally condemned before God.

Whether that kid's out there cussing, and yours isn't, and I don't want my kids cussing, and I'm not going to want them to be influenced into that, but I've got to drive home to my kids. There's something bigger there. That little kid's not the really wicked one.

You both are condemned and need a substitute. And thank God, there's something of first importance, and that's Christ died for our sins. There is a substitute.

There is a way to be forgiven. Even among professing Christians, who are you around the most? I love what Steve Lawson said years ago. He said this, our closest friends must be those who are pursuing holiness, because they will have an enormous effect upon our lives.

You need to find out who is the greatest Christian in this room, and say, I want to be your friend. You tell me who your friends are, and I will tell you exactly who you are or who you're about to become. Run with the righteous.

That's true. Jesus said the wheat and the tares grow together. But even among those who are truly weak, you're going to have different people with different areas of growth.

And if you get all the people who have certain immaturities hanging around themselves, they're not going to be convicted by people who don't have that immaturity. They need to be around that person. There are some young people, it's just kind of like, well, I fall into lust and sexual sin, and it's just not that big of a deal.

Well, let me tell you, it is a big deal. And if your friends are making light of those things, I don't know if those are good friends to have. I'm not wanting to condemn a struggling Christian.

But I tell you, Paul says stronger words than me in Ephesians 5. He says, you may be sure of this, that a sexually immoral man has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. And listen to what he says next. Let no one deceive you.

With empty words. Like that man in Deuteronomy 29. One who says, it's okay.

Let no one deceive you with empty words. It's because of your sexual sin that the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. If you minimize sin, if you minimize people, well, it's okay, we're all going to fall.

I don't want a Christianity where that's the mindset. We're all just going to fall. I got that from the church I used to be at and it didn't help any.

I believe in a God who will deliver me from every evil deed and bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom, to Him be the glory forever and ever, Amen. And we should desire to say as Paul does in 2 Corinthians 7, we have corrupted no one. I want to be able to say that.

I hope to God there's nothing in my life if I had a Facebook, my Facebook, video sermons, this sermon, I hope there's nothing that corrupts and ruins someone else. I want to be able to say like Paul, I've corrupted no one. So brethren, if you're in 1 Corinthians 15, one closing thought.

Chapter 16. Look what Paul says here. Verse 8, But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost.

And again, he didn't know what's going to happen there. Is he going to fight beasts at Ephesus? Well, he's willing to do it. Whether it's evil beasts, false teachers, or whether it's actual animals, Paul's willing, because this all isn't in vain.

And look what he says. I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost. Verse 9, For a wide door for effective work has opened to me.

And then look what he says. With wide doors come what? And there are many adversaries. But you know what's scary? Who was an adversary to Christ once? Peter.

Get behind me, Satan. Why? Why? You are setting your mind on the things of earth and not of the things above. He called a Christian Satan because that Christian's mind was avoid suffering.

So Peter was an adversary to Christ. In the same way, we could be adversaries to one another. So is there a wide door that I hope to God we will not be disobedient to the heavenly vision and we will live for God's purposes? There is a wide door for effective work.

But with that wide door comes many adversaries and sadly, some of those adversaries are those among the professing church. And we best not be duped by them and deceived and corrupted by their bad company and be misled. So brethren, the dead are raised.

So forget eating and drinking for tomorrow. We die. Let's not be deceived.

Let's get around good company with those who have truth. And that will make us want to be as v. 58 says, therefore, my beloved brothers at Grace Community Church, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord, your labor is not in vain. Our labor of the Gospel is not in vain.

I was just reading, I got that report from our brother who serves in the Middle. And he mentioned someone he knew. For 20 years, he labored in Afghanistan.

Was it in vain? Even though he only saw a couple converts? No, it wasn't. The Word was going forth. And now the one brother says there's been thousands of converts.

So, may none of us be able to be rebuked by Paul and said that we have no knowledge of God. That's all I have.

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