

Sermon Discussion Questions for:

You are God's Field, God's Building

I Cor. 3:1-23



Pastor Bill Jeschke

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1. What are the works of the "flesh" (unaided human effort) that divide people in Corinth and leave them, in Paul's view, as babies needful of milk, not meat?
2. Fill in the blanks. In essentials_____, in non-essentials _____, in all things_____. (unity, liberty, charity).
3. Discuss 3 things which divide churches and how to avoid them: false doctrine, divisive people, sexual immorality.
4. I belong to Paul. I belong to Apollos. I belong to Cephas. I belong to Christ. These people groups became strife-filled parties in the city of Corinth. Why do you think that happened? How can you guard your heart from succumbing to factionalism? How can the message of the cross and the crucified Jesus undermine the pride and silliness of this kind of hero worship and the divisions which not only rend the church but the home and the family?
5. How can reliance on the Holy Spirit's work in us and in our relationships, rather than leaning on the flesh (unaided human effort), lead us to less conflict and more unity in our interactions with one another? Could you share a time in your life where that's happened?

FYI: In Essentials Unity, In Non-Essentials Liberty, In All Things Charity by Mark Ross

Philip Schaff, the distinguished nineteenth-century church historian, calls the saying in our title "the watchword of Christian peacemakers" (*History of the Christian Church*, vol. 7, p. 650). Often attributed to great theologians such as Augustine, it comes from an otherwise undistinguished German Lutheran theologian of the early seventeenth century, Rupertus Meldenius. The phrase occurs in a tract on Christian unity written (circa 1627) during the Thirty Years War (1618–1648), a bloody time in European history in which religious tensions played a significant role. The saying has found great favor among subsequent writers such as Richard Baxter, and has since been adopted as a motto by the Moravian Church of North America and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Might it serve us well as a motto for every church and for every denomination today?

Remember leaders: these are only suggested questions and ideas. Trust the Lord to guide and direct you, because He loves you, in any way the Spirit leads!