

“FOR THE EDIFYING OF THE BODY...” (3)

By Keith Greer

In the final part in our discussion of **TEACHING**, let us examine the need to preach "**The Whole Counsel of God**".

"And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God." (Acts 20:25-27) How could the apostle Paul make such a statement? Let us give some reasons.

When Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, what instructions did he give them? "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Corinthians 1:10)

Paul ended his second letter to the Corinthians by telling them that "Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction." (2 Corinthians 13:10)

To say that the church at Corinth had "problems" would be an oversimplification, but that did not stop Paul from trying to teach them the truth. There were divisions among them (1 Corinthians 1), there was fornication among them (1 Corinthians 5), and they were making the Lord's Supper a common meal (1 Corinthians 11), Paul pointed out the errors that were among them in order to try to save their souls.

In the case of the one who had his father's wife, Paul told the Corinthians "For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Corinthians 5:3-5) Why did the apostle Paul give such strong teaching? To save a soul!

When the Corinthians made the Lord's Supper a common meal, Paul asked them, "For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you." (1 Corinthians 11:21,22) Why did the apostle Paul give such strong teaching? To save their souls.

As Paul finished his letters to the Corinthians he told them, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you." (2 Corinthians 13:11) He gave them strong teaching, yes, but he also told them how the God of love and peace would be with them.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Today, many local churches have gone into apostasy. While each individual Christian has the responsibility to be on guard against false teaching, many preachers have failed to preach the whole counsel of God. Many subjects are listed as too "conservative" to speak upon. Others tend to upset the members so we are supposed to leave those alone also. How many lessons have you heard lately on **"MODEST APPAREL," "WORLDLINESS," "KEEP THYSELF PURE," "DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE,"** and **"THE SOCIAL EVIL OF OUR TIMES?"** (cont.) ***