

July 23rd, 2023
Pinecrest Baptist Church
p.m.

Sermon Title: Blessed Endurance
Sermon Text: (1 Corinthians 15:58)

I cannot think of a greater challenge in the ministry than facing the challenge of discouragement. I have learned from experience that after every victory comes a bucket of cold water.

Discouragement is not merely for pastors, but healthy doses are waiting anyone who is trying to get serious about serving the Lord.

Now that being said, in this one verse tonight, we are given some instructions concerning the health of our own zeal and faithfulness.

In the text:

Paul has just given a “shoutin’ ground” discourse on the resurrection of the saints, the coming of the Lord, and the ultimate defeat of death.

As he concludes he gives the Corinthians a proverbial shot in the arm based upon the glorious future ahead.

I. The Command to Be More – “my beloved brethren, be ye”

*Note – Note this: - They are already brethren – they are already being spoken to as though they are saved, saints,

sanctified and sealed by the Spirit of God. – And there is still yet something for them to “be ye”

- We will find out that our Position in Christ does not always manifest our Condition with Christ.

*Note- The Corinthian church had had theological problems, they had all sorts of divisional problems. They had been divided in fellowship and distorted in doctrine, and Paul’s intent had been to straighten much of that out.

*Note – But here in the therefore, he is adding more on to them, and stretching their growth.

(I must say that every Christian needs to be stretched beyond mere satisfaction.)

- We can learn to do anything that we are told to do.

- “be ye” literally means, cause this to happen.

Some things had happened, and yet there was still more to come.

A. *More than just Fellowship* – “beloved”

1.) “beloved” is a term of endearment. A term of fellowship and joy.

*Note – For far too many churches, sweet harmony, and precious fellowship is the end goal.

*Note – But here is what happens. Once their harmony is sweet they are without direction.

(In the first church that I pastored, there was a brief period of time in which the fellowship of the church became the electricity in the air. Never before, and never since have I

seen such a thick love and care for one another as I did during a season of life within that church.

Such fellowship fosters growth. Growth came and was welcomed. People joined in the joyful fellowship and all was sweet. – UNTIL fellowship within the church became the central focus of the church. – then the fire went out and someone unplugged the power in the unity!

Harmony and Unity are Sweet, but they are not the end development within the church.

B. More than just Family – “brethren”

1.) Salvation is to be enjoyed, but many are living like it is endured.

a.) Being a church family is not the end goal, it is not the final arrival of a church.

*Note: - When the whole focus of a church/ pastor/ Christian/ is fellowship, and family, he is preparing himself for discouragement.

- Unreal expectations produce emptiness
- Unexpected realities produce cluelessness
- When you put emptiness and cluelessness together you have a great formula for being discouraged.

- Having said that, the only way to avoid unreal expectations; and surprised by unexpected realities is to have an industrial strength grip on Biblical expectations; and Biblical realities.

- Proverbs 21:16 – “The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.”

Paul said of his “**beloved brethren**” that even though they are **beloved**, and even though they are “**brethren**” there is more they need to “**be ye.**”

II. The Condition to Become – “in the work of the Lord”

*Note – Paul’s instruction is for them to “**be ye in the work of the Lord.**”

*Note – Based upon the fact that the resurrection is real, beloved brethren ought to be in the “work of the Lord.”

*Note – I thank God for men who give themselves to the work of the Lord, and I am speaking of spiritual work.

- I am reminded of Exodus 17:11-12 – “**And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.**

¹² But Moses' hands *were* heavy; and they took a stone, and put *it* under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

*note – There is much work to do, and it is not to all be done by pastors, and preachers.

*Note – Paul is teaching the church at Corinth that our Future is the basis for our Present, and all beloved brethren are to be “**in the work of the Lord.**”

- He describes it three ways:

A. Steadfast

- 1.) “settled” in the work of the Lord.
 - a.) Whether you’re in or out, will or won’t is no longer a discussion. – The debate has ended.

*Note – This presents the condition of being “finalized.”

B. Unmovable

- 1.) It is the Greek word, “Ametawkinaytos”
 - a.) It is the negative derivative of the word “metakineho”
 - b.) meta – of it’s meanings means to “transfer to another place.”
 - c.) kineho – related to our terms kinetic energy, literally means a stirring.

*Note – I said all of that to say this – unable to be stirred to another place.

*Note – This is the resolve that will not be “stirred, talked, or emotionally coerced” to voluntarily walk away from working in the Lord.

C. Always Abounding

- 1.) Now here is lesson for all practical and pragmatic thinkers. – This word literally means to “excess” and “more than is necessary.”

*Note – Paul is saying here that our work in the Lord is not to merely do all that is necessary, but our work in the Lord is to be MORE than is necessary.

*Note – Now that being said we are going to see in a minute one reason that is.

We are to be “in the work of the Lord” – settled, steady, and more than is necessary.

III. The Conviction to Possess – “as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

A. The Worth is in the Lord

- 1.) The worth of the work in the Lord is not in the work but in the Lord!

*Note – Now let’s notice why Paul said we are to labor in the Lord MORE than is necessary.

a.) 1 Corinthians 9:22-23 – “To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all *men*, **that I might by all means save some.** ²³ And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with *you*.”

*Note – Paul understood that not everyone would be won! It takes the **effort to win EVERYBODY, in order to win ANYBODY.**

*Note – I understand the law of the harvest, but here is counterpart on the other side of the equation.

- Paul is giving all, spending all, yielding all why? So that he might gain some...

*Note – If I were to say would you spend \$1000 to win \$1000 people to the Lord. – We’d say yes.

If I were to say would you spend \$1000 to win 10 people to the Lord, I think most Christians I know would say yes.

If I were to ask would you spend \$1000 to win 1 person to the Lord. Do you know what I think most people would say? They would say “Can you guarantee me they’d be won?”

*Note – Here is the bottom line. – It is not possible for work in the Lord to be a waste! – If you gave your life to Christ Jesus totally and completely, and He took it and wadded it up like a piece of paper and threw in the trash, it would STILL NOT BE A WASTE.

- I'd rather my life be wasted by Jesus, than exalted by anyone else.

B. The Working is in the Lord

1.) Labor in the Lord is not in vain.

a.) Bible study is a labor

b.) Prayer is a Labor

c.) Witnessing is a Labor

d.) Worshipping requires Labor

e.) The work of the preacher is to
“labor in the word”

*Note – Real effort and energy invested in the hope of Spiritual Growth, and Kingdom Growth of ourselves and others.

- God wastes no energy given to Him.

- God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love according to Hebrews 6:10

Conclusion:

We have the Command To Be More

We have the Condition to Become – “in the work of the Lord.”

We have the Conviction to Possess –

It is worth it, and our work is not worthless.

Give yourself to the Cause of Christ; it is only thing in life that has any eternal worth.