Paul's Good Advice

Bill Brinkworth

In Paul's concluding remarks to the Galatians (Galatians 6), he left them with some good advice. His counsel included:

- If someone has a weakness, and you truly are spiritual, help them with their problem. That advice is contrary to what so many do when one is having difficulties (Gal. 6:1). Too many talk about the dilemma of those who are hurting, ridicule them, and "kick them" when they are down.
- Take others' hardships to your own heart. Bear the burdens of others (Galatians 6:2), as if they were yours.
- No matter how successful you think you are, do not fool yourself into thinking you are better than you really are (Gal. 6:3).
- Hardships and trials are difficult and exhausting, but when you persevere through them, you will feel better about yourself (Gal. 6:4, 5). Too many try to keep others from learning a valuable life lesson by making it easier for them. Those people never experience the joy of overcoming the difficulty. Often, facing a problem alone can lead a person to draw closer to and become more reliant on God.
- Never forget or be fooled, one always reaps what one sows! If one plants a crop of sin, he will reap the harvest of some really rotten "fruit" (Gal. 6:7, 8)!
- Do not quit doing right! You may feel that there is no reward in doing so, or that no one may ever give you the credit for doing right, but God promises that, in time, you will reap the blessings of a good "crop" (Gal. 6:9)!
- Be a blessing to others, especially other Christians (Gal. 6:10)!

Those seven bits of advice will make one's life more rewarding and limit many unnecessary bad consequences that many face. Paul's wisdom, if followed, would result in fewer selfish people and many more others-oriented, content, and fulfilled Christians.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." *I Corinthians 15:58*

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When the Holy Spirit Whispers to Your Heart

Bill Brinkworth

Paul had corrected the carnal Corinthian church in his writings to them. He got no joy out of rebuking them for their sin and weaknesses (II Corinthians 7:8), however, he rejoiced over the results of his correcting them.

The Corinthians weighed his remarks about their sin, found the accusations were correct, saw that it was wrong in God's eyes, were sorrowful over their iniquities, and corrected their behavior (II Cor. 7:8-9). Paul's verbal stand against their wrongdoing helped them repent of their error.

That is usually the intent of every preacher who preaches behind the pulpit. They labor over the portion of the Scriptures God had laid on their heart to preach and deliver a message. Many times, the preacher would rather not say what he has to say. He knows very well how some will react.

The preacher has a duty, however (II Cor. 7:12). That duty is to deliver the truth, no matter how hard some may take it. As Paul did, the preacher is to put the spotlight on spiritual problems in our lives. Once we see the error, it is up to us to correct the wrongdoing.

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What We Do Have

Bill Brinkworth

From time to time, one hears a complaining Christian murmur, "I am a Christian. I can't do this or that." They sound like they do not enjoy being a Christian. They forget who they are and what they have.

Romans 8 reminds us of some of the many advantages of being a Christian. When we are saved, the blessings include:

- We are not condemned for the many sins we commit. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,

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When the Holy Spirit ...

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Some hear the message pounded from the pulpit, and do as the Corinthians did. They hear it, and most likely do not like what they hear. Then they realize that it was not the preacher that was rebuking them, but God Himself from His own Word. When the seriousness of the matter is realized, they become "sorrowful" over the matter. They become so sad about what they had done, that they commit themselves not to do it again. The Holy Spirit's work through the preacher's sermon has done what it was intended to do!

However, there are many that react differently to the sermon. Instead of getting their sin or spiritual weakness corrected, they get mad at the deliverer of the Good News. It is not unusual for some to storm out of the church, never to return, blaming the preacher for, "He was personally attacking me, and embarrassing me before the whole church!" Quite often the preacher has no idea that his words hit the mark the Holy Spirit was aiming at, or whom it applied to.

Others react badly by discrediting the Spirit's tugging at their heart by, "The preacher doesn't know what he is talking about"; "That Scripture was for another time, and doesn't apply today"; "I don't agree with what he said", and on and on the excuses flow. The truth of the matter is that the Holy Spirit spoke to their heart, and they refused to obey what He was convicting them of doing.

Preaching is the media God often chooses to speak to our heart. However God speaks to our heart, it is up to us to heed the warning, and turn from our ways.

Have you heard His commands? Did you get glad and repent, or did you get mad and not correct what He desired you to change?

What We Do Have

who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:1

Matthew Henry wrote, "Paul does not say, 'There is no accusation against them,' for this there is; but the accusation is thrown out, and the indictment quashed. He does not say, 'There is nothing in them that deserves condemnation,' for this there is, and they see it, and own it, and mourn over it, and condemn themselves for it; but it shall not be their ruin. He does not say, 'There is no cross, no affliction to them or no displeasure in the affliction,' for this there may be but no condemnation." We are protected from the law's judgment on our sins because of Christ.

"When God's Word convicts you of sin, don't shoot the messenger; heed the messager."

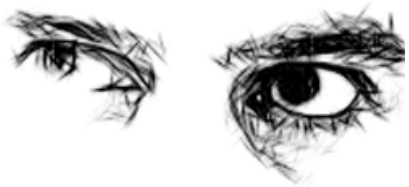
- We have the opportunity to be led by the indwelling Spirit of God. We do not have to follow the flesh that only wants to do what feels right to it, and leads us to commit damaging sin. We can follow God's perfect, safe guidance (Rom. 8:5).
- Because we can follow the Spirit of God, we can please God (Rom. 8:8). Before the Spirit guided us, we did not please Him.
- We are "sons of God" (Rom. 8:14). Praise the Lord! We are family members!
- We are adopted into God's family when we are saved (Rom. 8:15). He is our "Abba", our Father. There is no greater honor than to be able to call the Creator of everything "Father." We can, once we are saved!
- We are no longer bound by sin; we are freed from its control (Rom. 8:15-16).
- The indwelling Spirit lets us know that we are different; we are the children of God (Rom. 8:16).
- When we love God, we know that all that happens to us can turn out for our good and God's glory (Rom. 8:28). There is no need to be afraid, because God is for us (Rom. 8:31).
- No person or circumstance can separate us from our loving God (Rom. 8:35-39).

So, praise the Lord! If you are saved, you are on the winning side. You have much for which to be thankful.

"Insiders" Can Do More Damage

Author Unknown

We who have believed can hurt Christ more than those who have not. Enemies within the fort are more dangerous than enemies without. God's worst enemies when He sought the world through His Son were not the unbelieving Romans, but the Jews who believed in God and had worshipped Him for centuries.



What a responsibility this truth puts upon those who bear Christ's name. For the damage is just as severe from unintentional disloyalty as from open enmity. Every lowering of our standard is a worse stab at our best Friend and Saviour than can be dealt by scoffers or unbelievers.

"If you live for God, you might miss some things: drunkenness, AIDS, divorce, jail, etc."

— Barbara Brinkworth