

# INTRODUCTORY COMMENT

- Important things to learn as we move forward...
  - We (as a part of this congregation) have been falsely accused of harming another family. In this we deny such a reckless accusation. There are others who likewise have been harmed by such statements.
  - If any member chooses to abandon Christ for selfish indulgence, they may do so at their own peril.
  - We forgive the members who chose to stand before all and make such irresponsible statements. Grand-standing is not a way of the Lord!
  - However, before we accept them back into our fold, an apology and repentance is required!
- The men of this congregation are responsible for maintaining order.
- The church assembly is NOT a platform to publicly air grievances, real or perceived.
  - Follow Mat. 18:15-17



# A CHRISTIAN & HIS BROTHER

Mat. 12:50 For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

# WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

- Formally: A Christian is someone who actively believes that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God and the Savior of the human soul. It is upon this confession that the church (of Christ) was established (Mat. 16:15-16). We collectively are members of His body (Col. 1:18, Eph. 1:22; 5:23, Rom. 12:4-5)
- A Christian is a sinner who has been forgiven!
- A Christian is an agent of truth!
- A Christian is a man or woman who truly lives in a Godly way!
- A Christian is a person who strives towards having all the qualities of Jesus in their way of living and dealing with others! (2Pe. 1:3-10)
- A Christian is someone who makes EVERY EFFORT, EVERY DAY to live the life that is in Christ! (Jam. 1:22)

# A CHRISTIAN IS NOT...

- Someone who simply believes in God or pretends so.
- Someone who warms a seat in the church building every Sunday.
  - Or whenever they decide to come to worship, fellowship or a congregational meeting.
- Someone who lives one way Mon-Sat, and then another on Sunday.
- Someone who does not know or care how to properly express the love of God to their brother or sister in Christ!
- Someone who denigrates or brings low their fellow brother or sister in Christ!
- Someone who does not forgive!
- Someone who does not hate Sin!

# WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

- 1Cor. 14:34, 1Ti. 2:11-12, 1Cor. 11:3
- Deals with the issue of authority.
- These rules are positive, explicit, and universal. There is no ambiguity in the expressions; and there can be no difference of opinion in regard to their meaning.
- Gen. 3:16 – God established the order of things.
- 1Pe. 3:7 Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.
- Eph. 5:25

# CONGREGATIONAL PROBLEMS

- Weak members. No participation, no study, no communication.
  - Members who gossip.
- Perceptions of the leadership.
- Members who do not participate but always have an opinion.
- Members living in sin or appearing so.
- Men not enforcing God's divine law concerning discipline.
  - And members not complying with it either.
- Lack of overall discipleship.
- Lack of local missions.

2Co. 12:20 For I fear that perhaps when I come I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you wish--that perhaps there may be quarreling, jealousy, anger, hostility, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder.



Someone Offends Me

Wrong Way

Right Way

Tell people ALL about it

The listener begins to Think Less of my Offender.

They join me in Speaking Negatively about my Offender

I have succeeded in:

- Sinning & Causing others to sin.
- Creating division in relationships.
- Making myself more upset by rehashing the details over and over.
- Directly, knowingly & willfully disobeying God's word by reacting according to my flesh rather than submitting to His Spirit.

Go directly To God in Prayer

He listens to me and gives me this Better Perspective

I feel Peace!  
The need to vent to others is gone

I have succeeded in:

- Honoring God and my fellow man by Valuing Unity over the Temporary Pleasure of gossiping and gaining Sympathy from others.

# CONCEPT OF CHRISTIAN LOVE

- John 13:34—“A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.”
- Jesus spoke these words on the eve of His great sacrifice.
- It cost Jesus His life to practice what He preached!
- This new command was to become the central principle of the Christian System.
- It was to regulate the relationship between brothers & sisters in Christ.
- Its importance is stressed throughout the N.T.
- But Love is NOT blind (or accommodating) to SIN!
  - Mat. 23:17, 19, 24, 26



# REASONS FOR LOVING YOUR BROTHER OR SISTER IN CHRIST

- Jesus commanded it. (Jn. 13:34) - A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.
- There is Compassion in Christ.
  - Psa. 103:13 "As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him."
- There is Accountability in Christ.
  - Rom. 3:19 "Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God."
- We have each other to rely upon against the influences of the world.
- Rom. 15:7 "Wherefore receive one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God."

# SIN & FORGIVENESS

- The church cannot allow sin to go unanswered!
- We must confront sin with urgency and decisively.
  - It must be supported with scripture.
  - It must be direct and to the point.
  - It must be in love and with compassion.
- True repentance often means an apology is expected.
- We must be willing to conform to what God calls for when there's unrepentance!
- We must be willing to forgive completely when there is repentance!

# SUMMARY

- Being a Christian requires serious effort!
- We must come together to address the issues...
  - Without reckless emotion and/or baggage from the past.
  - With a genuine desire for peace.
- If you have a problem, get it addressed immediately!
  - Reach out to someone if you need some help in arbitration.
  - Let every issue begin in prayer and end with words of edification.
- FORGIVE ONE ANOTHER!
- Take an **ACTIVE** interest in the church and **DO** something.
- Perform some Spiritual Laundry on YOURSELF!

# A CHALLENGE

- Communication is Key!
- Choose someone you haven't spoken to outside of being at church services.
- Pick up the phone and call a brother or sister in Christ and have a 5-10 minute conversation.
  - Talk about something spiritual, share a verse of scripture.
  - Pray together before concluding the call. Tell them you LOVE them!
  - Plan to by the end of the month to have called everyone in the directory at least once, even if just to check-in.
- No excuses! I'm too busy. I have a lot going on.
- Facebook or Texting does not count.
- Extra Credit: Visit someone or call someone for whom you "think" might have something against you. Get it out in the open and get it resolved.