

**Monday, 23 October 2017** 1 Corinthians 3:2-5

*I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human? What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each.*

Is there a message here regarding our rampant denominationalism in the Church? I've heard numbers claiming more than 30,000 denominations in the US alone. Yes, there are absolutes, that must be accepted if I am to describe myself as a follower of Jesus Christ, but none that suspend my responsibility to love my neighbor as myself. It is sometimes said that Christians treat non-Christians with more love and grace than they show towards rival denominations or schisms within their own. Do you suppose that grieves the Holy Spirit?

---

**Tuesday, 24 October 2017** 1 Corinthians 6:4-6

*So if you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who have no standing in the church? I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers, but brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers?*

Not just legal questions, but do I complain about the behavior of my fellow Christians to non-believers? Do I seek their advice and guidance? Do my prayers for the situation truly seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit or am I giving Him instructions about how to resolve the difference?

---

**Wednesday, 25 October 2017** 1 Corinthians 7:12-16

*To the rest I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the*

*brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?*

Short translation—in Paul's carefully considered opinion, divorce is not an option available to the believing spouse. Apparently a frequent situation in Corinth and not so unusual in this day and age. However, the question often arises regarding an abusive spouse, and I, not the Lord, respond that there is nothing to forbid separation when necessary for the safety of spouse and children. Further, the church should make every effort to ensure the safety of the family and work to heal the abuser.

---

**Thursday, 26 October 2017** 1 Corinthians 7:12-16

*To the rest I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?*

Now considering the opposite case when the unbelieving partner desires a divorce. The believer is instructed to acquiesce to the request and released from their vows. It is an opportunity to witness to the world that there is a peace that transcends all understanding that comes to those who fear the LORD, God, the Almighty.

---

**Friday, 27 October 2017** 1 Corinthians 7:24-25

*So, brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God. Now concerning the betrothed, I have no command from the Lord, but I give my judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy.*

Paul is examining, in vv 17-40, various situations where we do not have a direct word from the Lord but can, through

His mercy, offer advice that is consistent with the Word. As we mature in our faith, we mature in our ability to recognize the good, acceptable and perfect will of God. (Rom. 12:2) Always keeping in mind that we need to be before the Lord in all situations. It may be an arrow prayer lifted up before responding, but frequently requires the humility to say, "Let me get back to you, I need guidance from the Holy Spirit before I answer your question."

---

**Saturday, 28 October 2017** 1 Corinthians 9:16-17

*For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, I am still entrusted with a stewardship.*

Can I join with Paul in recognizing that preaching the gospel is a necessity? Yes, I can but do I? Whether I do or don't, it is still a stewardship that has been entrusted to me. A no questions allowed trust! A roll up your shirt sleeves and get to the work trust. Be prepared to preach the gospel in season or out trust.

---

**Lord's Day, 29 October 2017** Psalm 119:18

Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law. Lord, continue to lead me in the Way of the Kingdom, that understanding of Your Law and its application to every facet of my life, that which brings the righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit that is the mark of the Kingdom. Praise You, my Lord and Master, the Giver of Good.

Voices Together is published daily on the website of the Fellowship of Ailbe, [www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org); along with material by other writers to encourage and assist in our walks as disciples of Jesus Christ. These messages can also be received as daily emails or in a monthly printed version by sending a request to: Pastor John Nunnikhoven, The Church at Prison, Inc. PO Box 8318, Essex Junction, VT 05452 or to [prior@ailbe.org](mailto:prior@ailbe.org)

The Fellowship of Ailbe, ([www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org))  
Realizing the presence, promise and power  
of the Kingdom of God.

# VOICES TOGETHER

*Daily Meditations from the Scriptures*



*October 23-29, 2017*

**Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: Philemon 4-7**  
*I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.*

We thank our God as we remember each member of [our congregation] in our prayers as we hear about their faith in the Lord Jesus and their love for all the saints. We pray that we will continue to be active in sharing our faith so we will be led to a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. May each of us be encouraged by the testimonies of the others as they have ministered to the hearts of the saints in their pastures. Amen

**Creational Theology hint for the week—Fall is upon us**

I realized this afternoon as I wrote these meditations for the week that suddenly I could see the Green Mountain range to the west. The row of sugar maples, marching in a row on the other side of the road, very effectively screens my view of the mountains from leaf out to leaf down time. Now the true harbinger of the mid-fall to mid-spring season. Now, the maples rising in barren splendor constantly remind me of the Lord's eminent return when my drab life will be replaced by the glory of His presence.