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August memory verse 1 Peter 1:23 (NKJV) having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,

REMINDER, CHURCH OUTING THIS WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23, WHITE LAKE

Details on back.

Commentary on First Corinthians chapters 4 and 3 by Chuck Smith 8.20.23

Chapter 4

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God ([1Cr 4:1](#)).

Ministers of Christ, the Greek word there is the *under-rowers*. They were the guys down in the bottom of the ship handling the oars, usually chained to the oars. And the fellow up on top would call the order for them to row and which side to row, the under-rowers. And so Paul uses that particular Greek word here, "We are the under-rowers of Christ. We're down on the bottom level. We're just pulling the oars at the command of Christ."

But then, "We are stewards." And the steward was the one who was in charge of the master's goods. He was the one who ordered the affairs of the household. He bought for the necessities of the household. It was entrusted unto him the goods of the master, though he was still himself a servant, but overseeing the goods of the master.

So Paul uses the second Greek word as a steward, "We're the overseers of those things that belong to the Master."

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful ([1Cr 4:2](#)).

The one requirement, really, of stewardship is that of faithfulness to that which I've been called to do or that which has been entrusted to me. Your faithfulness to that which God has called you to do is the thing for which one day you will receive your reward or lack of reward.

Have you been faithful in the call of God on your life? It's required of stewards that they be found faithful. Now Paul said,

But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: I don't even judge myself ([1Cr 4:3](#)).

Now evidently, they had been saying that, "I am of Paul, or I am of Apollos, or I am of Peter," to the exclusion of the others. In other words, there are people that cannot show,

it seems, a loyalty to more than one. Or if they have a loyalty to one, they have to put down everyone else.

For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified ([1Cr 4:4](#)):

Now he's actually saying, "I don't know anything against myself." That's quite a statement. But he said that even at that it doesn't justify me. It doesn't mean that I'm righteous just because I don't know anything against myself, that doesn't make me righteous.

but he that judges me is the Lord ([1Cr 4:4](#)). Now here's the third judgment, and this is the important one. This is the one I'm concerned about. I don't care what you say about me. I do, but so what, I can't help that. I'm not even concerned about my own opinion of myself. But I am deeply concerned of the Lord's opinion of me. You may judge me for what I've done, it doesn't bother me. I may judge myself, that isn't important. I stand before the Lord and He is my judge, and that is the judgment that I am concerned with, what is the Lord's opinion of me and what I have done.

Therefore judge nothing before the time ([1Cr 4:5](#)), In other words, wait for the day of God's judgment, the fire will come and the works will be proved, what sort and what manner they are, the motives behind them. So don't judge anything before its time, don't prejudge.

until the Lord comes, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God ([1Cr 4:5](#)).

Notice how the Lord is going to judge, the hidden things, the things of your heart, the motives. Hey, that is heavy duty. The Bible says everything is naked and open before Him with whom we have to do. "Oh Lord, I really didn't mean it." "Oh you didn't? Let's take a look." And God will be able to project what was in your heart and mind as you were doing it on a screen.

God can see into your mind. God knows what's going on in your heart. And so the day will come when God will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels, the intents, the motivations of our hearts. And then shall every man have the praise of God.

And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos [now transferring that over to Apollos and me] for your sakes; that you may learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for or against another ([1Cr 4:6](#)).

Don't become divided over the instruments of God that God may use for His purposes in your life. Receive from all, be benefited by all. It doesn't mean that you have to turn against one just because you're gaining from another.

For who makes you to differ from another? ([1Cr 4:7](#)) What makes you so different? Why are you so puffed up? What makes you different? "Well, I thank God I'm not like he is." Well, what makes you different than him? Do you have anything of value? Do you have anything of good? Do you have anything of worth? Where did it come from?

You say, "Well, God gave it to me." Well, then, if it was given to you, why are you boasting as though it wasn't given to you? You see, anything that I have that is of any value, the Lord gave it to me. Anything of my life that is worthwhile, it came to me from God. I know in me, that is my flesh, there dwells no good thing.

What have you but what you received, if you've received it, then why do you act like you didn't receive it? ([1Cr 4:7](#)) Which is quite often the common tendency to act as though it is something that we possess rather than something that was given to us by God.

Now you are full, now you are rich, you have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you ([1Cr 4:8](#)).

Now Paul is speaking in a satire here. "Now you are full, now you are rich, now you are reigning without us." This is the kind of a boast that they were making. But Paul said, "I would to God that you really were reigning in order that I might reign with you."

For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men ([1Cr 4:9](#)).

The word *spectacle* here is a word that has a lot of color in that when a Roman general would be victorious over the alien armies, he would come back to Rome for the victory march. And the general would come, usually on his chariot, into the city of Rome with the crowds of people lining the sides of the road, heaping their praise and adulation upon him. And he would bring back with him the trophies of war, all of the loot that he had captured.

But at the rear of the procession there would be those poor people that had been captured and were being brought back to be the victims in the arena, being tossed to the lions and so forth; and they were called the spectacle, they were those captives that had been brought back by the general to be sacrificed in the arena to the lions.

And so Paul says, "I would to God that ye did reign. It seems to me that God has made us apostles sort of last, as it were, we're appointed unto death. We're a spectacle." As these people would come by, the crowd would all jeer and hiss and all, and they would take them to the arena and give them to the lions for the sport of the people. And so, "We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men."

We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ ([1Cr 4:10](#)); Again, speaking with satire here.

we are weak, but you are strong; you are honorable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place ([1Cr 4:10-11](#));

And Paul's speaking of his own personal experience. He said, "Even in this present hour, we're hungry, we're thirsty, we're naked, we've been beaten, and we don't have any certain place to live, no certain dwelling place."

And we labor, working with our own hands ([1Cr 4:12](#)): I don't even make enough from the ministry to be supported by the ministry. I have to work to support my own needs. But,

being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we accept it, we take it: Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. Now I don't write these things to shame you, but as my sons I seek to warn you ([1Cr 4:12-14](#)).

So here the heart of the apostle hurt over the attitude of the Corinthians. Because somehow they could not accept from Apollos without having to put Paul down, getting into these little petty party divisions, the mark of their carnality. And Paul is hurt over the things that they are saying about him, hurt over the divisions that exist. And he said, "Now I don't write these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I want to warn you."

For though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, you have not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel ([1Cr 4:15](#)).

Now look, you may have ten thousand instructors. There may be ten thousand guys that have come along and laying some of their trips on you.

Though he said, "Hey, you may have ten thousand instructors that have come along and try to teach a different slant, but you only have one father, and I begot you into the faith." It's sort of sad to see those that you have brought to birth in their spiritual walk get caught up and carried away with some of these teachers of exotic things. So Paul said,

I beseech you [I beg you], be followers of me. For this cause have I sent Timothy unto you, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church ([1Cr 4:16-17](#)).

Timothy, Paul said in another epistle, was the only one that he had that was like-minded as was he. I have a real empathy for Paul's position here. Having brought these Corinthians to a faith in Jesus Christ, having laid the foundation of Jesus Christ, to see men coming along and building wood, hay and stubble hurt.

So Paul was sending Timothy to reestablish them in the truth that Paul had taught to them, the things that Paul taught in every church everywhere.

Now some of you are [upset] puffed up, as though I would not [personally] come to you ([1Cr 4:18](#)). Oh yeah, if it's so important why didn't Paul come then? He said,

But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills ([1Cr 4:19](#)), And I will know, not the speech of those that are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in the words that a man can say, the kingdom of God is in power. Now, what is your will? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness? ([1Cr 4:19-21](#))

"How do you desire that I come? With a rod to correct, or coming in the spirit of love and of meekness?" So with this, Paul closes his discussion on the divisions that had arisen in the church of Corinth because of the carnality.

Now he's going to start moving into some of the more difficult issues and problems that were existing in the church of Corinth, the problems of immorality, the problems of the saints taking one another to the worldly courts, and dealing again with the subject of the body of Christ and that desired unity of the body.

Chapter 5

The Corinthian letter of Paul was mainly corrective. The Corinthian church had innumerable problems. Those from the house of Chloe had reported to Paul many of the situations that did exist there in the Corinthian church. Part of the problem was the divisions that existed within the church as they were dividing off into groups sort of like, little denominations. "I am of Paul, I am of Peter, I am of Apollos." And Paul said this was a mark of carnality; Christ was not divided. Those ministers who ministered to them should have had complementary ministries, not competing ministries. And surely we should see the church and the various ministries within the church as complementary rather than competing. I don't feel that our church is really in competition with any other church, nor should it be in competition with another church. We should be complementary to the other churches, filling up a part of what they are not doing as they fill up a part that we do not do. And thus, the churches should be complementary, never competing. But yet, the Corinthian church had fallen into this competition, little competing groups dividing the body of Christ, the mark of carnality.

Now, with the end of chapter 4, Paul has completed, really, his rebuke concerning the divisions that existed within the church and moves on now to even more serious problems, problems of immorality that did exist within the church.

It is reported commonly ([1Cr 5:1](#))

That word "reported commonly" is really "it is common knowledge," that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife ([1Cr 5:1](#)).

So there was in the church of Corinth a man who was living incestuously with his stepmother, his father's wife. And the Corinthian church was so busy with their little squabbles over "I'm of Cephas, I'm of Paul, I'm of Apollos," that they allowed this condition to exist within the church. In fact, they almost took pride in the fact that they could tolerate this kind of goings on within the body. They sort of prided themselves in their broadness of view, as, unfortunately, there are some churches that pride themselves in their liberal views today.

You are puffed up ([1Cr 5:2](#)),

You're actually priding yourselves in your liberal attitude towards this condition.

and you have not rather mourned ([1Cr 5:2](#)), or grieved over this condition that was existing.

that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For though I am absent in my body, I am present in my spirit, and I have already judged, as though I were present, concerning him which has done this deed ([1Cr 5:2-3](#)).

I already have made up my mind. I've already made my judgment on this situation. And,

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus ([1Cr 5:4-5](#)).

Jesus said that if your brother sinned against you, that you should go to your brother and deal with him. And if he receives you then you have gained a brother. But if he will not receive you, then you should take some witnesses with you and you should go to him in order that the sin might be dealt with. But if he will not receive then the witnesses, let him be as an outcast, let him be as a heathen or a publican unto you.

The first thought always of the brother in sin within the church is restoration, going first seeking to restore, seeking to bring about a rectifying of the bad situation. Paul exhorted the Galatians, "If a brother be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering yourselves, lest you also be tempted" ([Galatians 6:1](#)).

So the first duty concerning that brother who has fallen into sin is going to him in a spirit of meekness, grieving over his situation, seeking to restore him to a proper walk with the Lord. Always, even in the excommunicating, the idea is that of restoration.

So even with this brother, in Paul saying, "I've already judged, kick him out. Deliver him over unto Satan that the flesh, not the body, but the flesh, that is, that life after the flesh, might be destroyed." That by his being excommunicated from the fellowship of the

church, he will realize the seriousness of the sin that he is committing, that it is alienating him from the life of the church and the life of Christ within the church.

But even in the putting him out, the idea was to destroy this work of the flesh in order that he might be ultimately restored into the fellowship of the church. And always the ultimate view is that of restoration, for that is the work of Jesus Christ, is to seek and to save that which is lost. And thus is the church, when we have to deal with issues within the church. And there are times here where we have to deal with serious moral problems where we have asked people not to return to Calvary Chapel. "Don't come back until you've taken care of this situation in your life." But the idea is that of restoration.

So turning them over to this, so oftentimes, brings the destruction of the flesh, the excitement, the glamour, the allure of the whole thing. And Paul's admonition to "deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh in order that the spirit might be saved in that day of judgment." Again, restoration is the ultimate desire and goal here, even if it involves the destruction of the flesh, the important thing is that the spirit be saved in the day of the Lord.

Now your glorying in this situation is not good ([1Cr 5:6](#)).

The fact that you're puffed up over this and you glory in the fact that, "Well, sure, you know, we can accept these kind of things." That's not good, Paul said.

For do you not know that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? ([1Cr 5:6](#))

Leaven was the sourdough starter that the women used in making their bread, always keeping a little bit of the dough from the last batch to mix it in with the new batch of dough. And leaven is used in the scripture always in an evil sense. Because the leavening process is actually a putrefying process, the air that gets into it by the rotting process. And a little starter into the new batch of dough will work its way through the whole batch of dough. A little leaven will leaven the whole lump.

And it is such a classic picture of sin, how that just allowing, tolerating, a little area of evil, it can permeate the whole life of the body. It can affect the whole body. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

Therefore, purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us ([1Cr 5:7](#)):

Now Paul brings in here the picture of the Passover. The Passover was the time of unleavened bread. In preparing for the Passover, the fourteenth of April, the Jews would go through their whole house in a search for leaven, to remove from the house any leaven that may exist. And then they would make the bread for the Passover out of unleavened bread, or the flat bread, the unleavened bread; leaven being a type of sin.

Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven ([1Cr 5:8](#)),

That would be the feast of love within the church.

not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth ([1Cr 5:8](#)).

As we meet together, let us meet together in sincerity, let us meet together in truth, let us worship together in sincerity and truth. Let us love one another in sincerity and truth. Within the body of Christ, we should not have the malice; we should not have the strife, the wickedness, but there should be a purity of heart before the Lord when we gather together to worship Him.

Now Paul refers to an epistle that he wrote to the Corinthians which we do not possess. So we call this I Corinthians, but it really is II Corinthians or maybe even more. We do not know how many letters Paul wrote to them. But he does refer to a letter that he had already written to them.

I wrote unto you in an epistle not to keep company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world ([1Cr 5:9-10](#)).

Paul now here is making a definite separation and distinction between our fellowship in the church and our life in the world. Within the church we are not to have fellowship with fornicators, nor with the covetous, or with idolaters. Outside of the church we live in a world that is filled with fornicators, filled with covetous people, filled with idolaters. And the Christian life is never intended to be a monastic existence.

In order to live a pure life, God never intended for you to go and hide yourself behind some high walls and be shut out totally from the world. God intends that you be a light to the world, and the light is not to be placed under a bushel or behind closed walls, but shining in the world to give light to those that are in the world. Therefore, as I deal with the world, I have to deal with people who are immoral, who are greedy, and who are idolaters.

But when I come to church and meet together with the people of God, I should be able to meet in a totally different environment. There should be a holiness, there should be a purity within the body as we meet together.

Now it is interesting as Paul lists these three basic sins: fornication, greediness, and idolatry. As you look at fornication, it is really a sin against yourself. It is a sin that is marked, really, by selfishness. But it is that of taking advantage of another person, thinking of them only for sexual gratification. Not really caring so much for them as a person, but only that you can satisfy your own biological urges. They become an object, so it is really a sin against the other person, a sin that is marked by selfishness.

Greed, of course, is totally selfish. Covetousness or extortioning. That is really out for myself to get from you what I can by whatever means possible.

But idolatry is sin against God. That is worshipping something other than God. When a person establishes an idol, and let us not think of an idol only in terms of some little figure that's been carved out of wood or made out of silver or gold. For a person can make an idol of a car, or of a garden, or of a building. It's amazing how many people make idols of buildings.

But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother ([1Cr 5:11](#))

This is a different sense. If he's in the church and he's called a brother, and yet, he is a fornicator or he's covetous or he's an idolater or a railer or a drunkard or an extortioner, I'm not to have close fellowship with him. And that is what the term "to eat" signifies. For you see, according to the Oriental tradition of the Middle East, to eat together with a person is to become one with that person. For in their society they usually have a common bowl of soup of sorts in the middle of the table and then a common loaf of bread. And you take and you pull off a portion of the bread and you dip it in the bowl. And the person next to you, they don't use utensils, they just take their hands and pull it off and you pass the bread around. Everyone pulls off a hunk and then you dip it in the same bowl of soup in the middle of the table and you're all eating from the same bowl of soup and the same loaf of bread. Well, that makes me one with you, because the bread that is now being assimilated and becoming a part of my body, is being assimilated into your body and becoming a part of your body. So the same loaf of bread is nourishing and assimilating in both of us, so I become a part of you and you become a part of me. And they really looked at it like that. We're being joined together as one by the eating together. That's why the Jew would never eat with a Gentile; he didn't want to become one with a Gentile.

So if a man within the church is a fornicator, an extortioner, or covetous, or an idolater, a drunkard, [or whatever,] then don't have this close communion with him ([1Cr 5:11](#)).

You shouldn't have this close fellowship with him.

For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not you judge those that are within? Those that are on the outside God will judge ([1Cr 5:12-13](#)).

But we should have a certain judgment within the church.

Therefore put away from among you that wicked person ([1Cr 5:13](#)).

Referring back to this fellow who was having an incestuous relationship with his stepmother.

Open Door Bible Church

Church Outing and Baptism 2023

Wednesday August 23th, regardless of weather

(No Bible study on Wed. Aug 23)

Baptism & Church outing at White Lake State Park

Come any time after 10 am and spend the day

Outing ends at dusk.

There will be no admission charge

Tell the attendant at the gate,

you are part of church group using the Pavilion

Please bring modest bathing suits.

Dinner will be served at 5:30 pm.

Church will provide hot dogs and hamburgers

with all the fixings and drinks.

Please bring salad or dessert to share.

Baptism will be at 6:30 pm.

Those wanting to be Baptized need to take a short instruction class,

Sunday August 13, after lunch.

Please bring something to be Baptized in and a dry set of clothes.

If you have any questions call Pastor John's cell phone

508-380-

0471