



God. God directly led the Israelites, lovingly provided for them, and sent prophets to communicate with them. Despite all of this, they were deceived into thinking that they could associate with the ungodly nations around them, and still be considered God's holy people. If it could happen to Israel, can it not happen to us?

The church at Corinth was a church established by the Apostle Paul. They undoubtedly saw the

signs and wonders that he was able to perform, as well as the miraculous gifts they had been given (cf. 1 Corinthians 12-14). Despite all of these blessings, they were deceived into thinking that they could associate with ungodly teachers who denied the coming resurrection and remain unharmed. If it could happen to the early Christians, can it not happen to us?

Brethren, we need to associate with God's people. The Scriptures make it clear that we cannot completely escape the world in our lifetime. Paul reminded the Corinthians, **"I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world... for then you would have to go out of the world"** (1 Corinthians 5:9-10). We must recognize that Paul's point is not to become a recluse, but to be careful with whom we choose to spend our time! Living in the midst of, going to school with, and doing business with ungodly people is quite different from keeping company with ungodly people. We must **"become sober-minded"** in order to discern the difference. Don't be deceived. Keeping company with the wrong people will corrupt you!



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ISSUE

16.17

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

April 27,
2014

Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM
Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Eddie Cook
Steve Dixon
Jack Langley
Neil Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Andrew Dow



Don't Be Deceived: "Bad Company Corrupts Good Morals"

By Andrew Dow

Christians can be deceived. The Scriptures warn us, **"Let no one deceive you with empty words"** (Ephesians 5:6, NASU). They say again, **"See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception"** (Colossians 2:8). We, as followers of Christ, need to wake up and realize that deception threatens our spiritual well-being. Too many Christians who have gone before us have put their guard down, given into the world's deception, and fallen away from God's truth. We need to seriously consider the Biblical warnings against being deceived.

Paul writes, **"Do not be deceived: 'Bad company corrupts good morals.' Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame"** (1 Corinthians 15:33-34). Let's observe this inspired warning together.

The Context of 1 Corinthians 15:33-34

1 Corinthians 15 contains Paul's longest discussion about the resurrection. Paul is clearly combating some false ideas that had made their way into the church. He is forced to ask,

“How do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?” (1 Corinthians 15:12). With this opposition in mind, Paul takes the time necessary to defend the coming resurrection.

Paul begins by establishing that Christ was undoubtedly raised from the dead. First, he shows that the resurrected Christ was seen by a great number of people (vs. 5-10). Paul makes a bold move in providing these names. He essentially challenges anyone who denies Christ’s resurrection to go talk to the eyewitnesses!



Second, Paul shows that Christ’s resurrection is fundamental to the faith of all Christians (vs. 12-19). After all, **“if Christ has not been raised then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.... We are of all men most to be pitied”** (1 Corinthians 15:14, 19). Finally, having firmly established Christ’s resurrection, Paul uses that as a foundation to prove the coming resurrection of all men (vs. 20-24). Paul affirms, **“In Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming”** (1 Corinthians 15:22-23).

After Paul establishes the coming resurrection of all men, he proceeds to offer some rhetorical questions that show the silliness of living for Christ without the hope of a resurrection. First, he asks, **“If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them?”** (1 Corinthians 15:29). By asking this question, Paul does NOT imply that they were being baptized on behalf of dead individuals. Paul’s question shows that, if there is no resurrection, then baptism for the remission of sins is pointless. In such a terrible situation all men, whether inside or outside of Christ, will remain in the grave. Second, Paul asks, **“Why are we also in danger every hour? ... What does it profit me?”** (1 Corinthians 15:30-32). If there is no resurrection to which we can look forward, if death is the end of everything, then why are we enduring hardship? Paul concludes, **“If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die”** (1 Corinthians 15:32).

At this point Paul concludes his argument for the coming resurrection with a warning, **“Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company corrupts good morals’”** (1 Corinthians 15:33). Paul has already observed that there were some people in

the church at Corinth who were saying **“that there is no resurrection of the dead”** (1 Corinthians 15:12). These people are the **“bad company”** to whom Paul refers in our text. The Corinthians had fallen into the trap of believing that they could freely associate with anyone without any repercussions. Unfortunately, many of them began denying the coming resurrection as a result of the company they kept. Paul exhorts the Corinthians not to be deceived, but to **“become sober-minded”** (1 Corinthians 15:34). We need to be able to think clearly in order to avoid Satan’s deception.

An Example: The Israelites

What is Paul’s primary point in 1 Corinthians 15:33-34? It may be put simply, *be separate*. Don’t be deceived into thinking that you can surround yourself with false teachers, bad influences, or ungodly people and come out unscathed. Paul wrote to the Corinthians on another occasion with these words, **“Do not be bound together with unbelievers... ‘Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,’ says the Lord”** (2 Corinthians 6:14, 17). Peter wrote a similar thought, **“Do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am Holy’”** (1 Peter 1:14-16).

This command was first given to the Israelites. In fact, the Lord constantly commanded them, **“Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy”** (Leviticus 11:44; cf. 19:2; 20:3, 7, 26; 21:8; 22:32). Israel was chosen to be the special people of God. Thus, she was expected to be Holy,

unique, different, separate from all the ungodly nations that surrounded her. Unfortunately, Israel was deceived into believing that she did not need to be holy.

Israel did not separate herself from the surrounding nations, but instead was influenced by them to act contrary to God’s will! Hosea wrote, **“So Ephraim has become like a silly dove, without sense; They call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.... Woe to them for they have strayed from Me! Destruction is theirs, for they have rebelled against me...”** (Hosea 7:11-13). Israel is depicted as a foolish bird who flies into a trap without a second thought. If they had only remained separate from these godless nations they would have lived in peace with the Lord!

Application for Today

All of this should serve as a warning to us. Israel was the chosen nation of