

- ✚ From here on, we are leaving the introduction of the letter for the body where Paul begins to deal with the specific problems within this church.
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1. The first problem is the problem of division within the body of Christ, 1st Corinthians 1:10-12.

2. Of all the problems that this church had, Paul addresses the problem of division first. Why?

- ✓ The gospel is a love story and only love can tell it! An unloving environment is capable of saying the right words, but the vibrations are wrong. People pickup on the vibe of things long before they listen to the words. A church that is divided gives the lie to the message of God's reconciling love! The last thing our world needs is one more example of how not to get along. The church that reflects more of the sinful nature's power to divide than it does Christ's power to unite has lost its right to preach Christ's message at all.

3. Let's dig into what Paul says to this church about division.

- ✓ "That they speak the same thing," 1st Corinthians 1:12, in their saying that they were of one sect or another, they were essentially saying, "I'm not with you." One group going this way, and another going that way, both claiming to be right, both claiming the theological high ground. This kind of things only stops at the true theological high ground, John 13:34-35. I believe in sound doctrine but also know that the world is not initially convinced by doctrine but by our practices.

4. When we divide over non-essentials and secondary doctrines, we engage in Christian cannibalism.

- ✓ Galatians 5:15, we appoint ourselves as theological watchdogs, constantly sniffing the saints for the least error, and bark when we think something doesn't smell right. Love doesn't act that way! If you really are a strong Christian and theologically correct, then demonstrate those attributes through your tolerance and love of those who have short-comings and in the gently and loving way you lead them to the truth. To "be made complete;" "be perfectly united," is only one word in the Greek, the same one used in Matthew 4:21. This teaches volumes, because the church of Jesus Christ is like a net being let down to catch sinners for the kingdom.

Whenever we are divided in the Body, we cause a tear or break in the net which is a place where the catch won't be caught. Souls aren't rescued by Christians and churches with divisions, because only love can tell a love story!
