

Home Group Questions

the week of 5/20/2018

Romans 16:17-20

PROTECT THE GOSPEL

GETTING STARTED...

- This past Sunday, Pastor Mel continued his series on the book of Romans. This week's study addressed the fact that after Paul shares so many amazing truths in this letter, he warns the church at the end of his treatise to be aware of those who would want to spread deception and division in the church. We need to protect the gospel we've been given and contend for the faith!

LOOKING IN THE WORD...

1. Read Romans 16:17-20. Paul makes a strong appeal here for the church to "watch out" for those who cause divisions and create obstacles to the faith. Why do you think Christians have a difficult time watching out for false teaching and divisive doctrine when it comes to the church? What should our response be to those who say the church should be "more open-minded" or "more inclusive" to new ways of thinking about God and faith? Sometimes confronting error sounds unloving but obviously it's not to be that way. If someone said that the church is not acting in love when confronting error, what would you say in response? What are some other observations you have from verses 17-20 that pertain to our "watching out" for doctrinal truth and the unity of the body?

2. Read Ephesians 6:10-20. In the Philippians passage Paul emphasizes our need to "stand". The Ephesians passage reiterates the need to stand numerous times. What are some truths we can learn about "standing" from the Ephesians passage? Talk about the devil and his schemes. What are some strategies for us, and steps that we can take to be believers who can stand?

Standing firm is essential to the life of a committed Christian. We should be reminded that:

- Standing firm includes knowing what you believe.
- Standing firm includes knowing what you believe is truth.
- Standing firm means knowing how to respond to deception.

Respond by learning to:

1) Identify it, 2) Dismantle it, and 3) Prevent it (from spreading)
What are some examples of deception that you see around you in our culture today? What is your opinion of how the church in the United States is doing in responding to deception and immorality? How can we as Christians be more effective in standing up for truth without turning our culture off to what the core message of our Gospel is?

3. Philippians 1:27 speaks of "striving side by side for the faith of the Gospel." Scripture emphasizes that the church needs to strive together "as a team." What are some illustrations from athletics or from the military that show what "striving side by side" looks like in the church? What makes the church more effective when we can strive "side by side"? How can we avoid allowing Satan and this world to divide us as a church and keep us from protecting one another's "sides"?

4. Read Jude 1:17-23. The theme of the letter of Jude has been stated as "Contending for the faith." Here's a passage that gives us insight as to how best to contend for Christ as a church. Share what these verses teach us about "contending." What are some ways in which we need to look out for one another in the "contending" or "battling" process? In verse 23, Jude says to hate "even the garment" stained by the flesh. This appears to be a statement of how we need to stay clear of fleshly, ungodly activities and desires. How do we keep our distance from these kinds of 'stains' that are all around us? What are some measures you take to steer clear of being caught up in even the appearance of evil?

MOVING FORWARD... Pray we boldly defend the faith.