

**Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:13-20**

**Note:** Today we are going to talk about living in fellowship the world around us. We are not talking about compromising our walk with God we are talking about how we are to interact in the world. I know we are called to be separate from the influence of the world but the world needs to hear a message only we can tell them.

**I. We are to be the light of truth to the world. Matthew 5:14-16** *Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

**1. We are the share the truth with the lost. 1 Corinthians 5:9-10** *I wrote unto you in an epistle not to 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.* The lost person sins because that is their nature. The words God says fornication is wrong because God said it is wrong means nothing to him. They need to hear the truth about how Jesus came to pay the penalty for all sin. How will the lost hear if we don't share the truth. **But them that are without God judgeth.** They are under the judgment of God; only he knows their heart and only he knows how he can use us to reach them.

**2. We need to be Holy in our testimony so God can use us to win the lost. Colossians 4:5-6** *Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. <sup>6</sup> Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.* The people without are the lost, people outside of the family of God. I am reminded of a couple of verses in Jude 21-23 *Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. <sup>22</sup> And of some have compassion, making a difference: <sup>23</sup> And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.* Jude reminds to live in the love of God. Some folks need compassion; they are hurting and they need encouragement and awareness that God loves them. First they may need to know you love them. Some folks need to realize God is serious about judgment; there is a place called hell and you don't want to go there. Fear of hell does lead some folks to Christ. Let's face it "walk in wisdom" means live out your faith. Don't just talk the talk, walk the walk. When people see you they should see a reflection of Christ. We must take care to **Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt**, This can mean a lot of things from filthy communication, to constant complaining, (some folks will find a cloud in every silver lining); to gossip. Some well-meaning Christians drive people from Christ with an arrogant attitude constantly saying how what they believe is far superior to what anyone else believes. Sometimes these folks will put people down using the scriptures. We must take care not to have a holier than thou attitude. We also need to be careful how we talk about sin. Proclaim it as wrong sure but realize some folks can be hurt by the way it is proclaimed. Seasoned with salt means pure and penetrating; it's purpose is to make things better. Finally Paul says **know how ye ought to answer every man**. This goes with what Peter said in **1 Peter 3:15** *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.* The key to that is they must see the hope in you. When was the last time you had the opportunity to say I am the way I am because Jesus made me that way. We have the greatest news ever told to folks and we need to take great care how we proclaim it.

**II. We cannot allow the criticism of men discourage us. 2 Corinthians 5:13** *For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.* I believe he is talking about different responses to the gospel.

1. Some people think we are crazy for believing in Jesus. For whether we be beside ourselves, We should not be surprised at that remember what Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 1:18** For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. Paul is saying I don't care if you think I am crazy I need to tell folks about Jesus. I remember being laughed at when I said in front of a room full of people that God talked to me through a still small voice. They thought I was crazy. If you don't know Jesus of course you'll think talking to God is crazy.

2. Some will think we are self-righteous if we stand for Gods holiness. or whether we be sober, In this case it means being alert to the wiles of the devil to prevent compromising with the world. Trust me the minute you say I will not do that or I will not allow that in my house because God said it is wrong you are labeled self-righteous.

3. Love compels us to share the truth about Christ death on the cross. **2 Corinthians 5:14-15** For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: <sup>15</sup> And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

A. The love of Christ refers to Jesus sacrificial death on the cross for us. For the love of Christ constraineth us; This refers to Christ's love toward us. There are several verse we need to remember in relation to Christ love for us. **Romans 5:6-8** For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. We did not have to clean up before Christ died; He died for us and then cleans us up. Better still he died for us before we were even born. People need to know that.

B. Our love for Christ should cause us to proclaim the offer of His grace. For the love of Christ constraineth us; Because we understand how much Christ loves us we want to show our love for Him by doing something which will bring Him joy; telling others about Him so he can share His love with them too.

III. God has called us to be His ambassadors. **2 Corinthians 5:20** Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. Webster says an ambassador is a minister of the highest rank accredited to a foreign government or sovereign as the official representative of his own government or sovereign. An ambassador is an official representative sent to a foreign country by a king to present and protect his interest. Paul was acting as an ambassador for Jesus when he appeared before King Agrippa in **Acts 26:16-18** But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; <sup>17</sup> Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, <sup>18</sup> To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. The message was open your eyes, turn from darkness to light, be free from the power of Satan. The offer from God is the forgiveness of sins, reconciliation, the blessing of being part of God's kingdom and eternal life.