

CHURCH OF CHRIST SAN MATEO

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**NO MATTER HOW SOMEONE MAY FEEL, OUR
OBLIGATION IS TO ENCOURAGE BY THE WORD...**

Some days you might feel like you've said all you can say. No matter how often you have tried to introduce someone to the gospel, or how many times you have tried to encourage someone (however subtly) to consider being more faithful, there are times when you will not be heard. When this happens you might just "throw your hands in the air", or "wave them like you just don't care." None of those things will really avert problems with our attempts to convey the seriousness of these matters, so read on:

The apostle Paul (with the daily care of the churches on his mind) was writing to the church at Corinth about several areas of major concern that they of the household of Chloe had at least partially informed him (I Cor. 1:11). Generally speaking, the areas of concern were division among brethren (chapters 1-4), fornication (chapter 5), sinful litigation (chapter 6), marriage (chapter 7), eating meats offered to idols (chapters 8-10), the Lord's Supper (chapter 11), spiritual gifts (chapters 12-14), the gospel in general and the resurrection in particular (chapter 15), and the tangible contribution responsibilities that Christians have (chapter 16). It is in his remarks following mortal man putting on immortality at the resurrection and the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ that Paul urged the Christian's toward even more faithfulness, perseverance, dedication, and steadfastness in I Corinthians 15:58.

Are there any/similar problems in the church today? Are there any that have grown fainthearted? Are some brethren living a (closeted) worldly life that is only tinted with Christianity? Then, what the church needs today (more than ever) is the word of God. It must be read, taught, preached, and lived with greater fervor and zeal than has become observable in recent years. Man is an immortal being who will exist eternally in either heaven or hell. Admittance into the one and avoidance of the other requires a power greater than man with all he can do for himself. The word of God is the answer "for the word of God is quick [living, ASV], and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even of the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). Who then shall keep us from God's source of life giving power? Shall misunderstanding it, or shall tribulation or persecution yield offence at it? Shall the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke away the life from it? (See: Matthew 13:18-23). Aware that the Christian is receiving a command of God that will cause him to be productive in the kingdom of God, will he take into a good and honest heart Paul's words, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always bounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

Yes, there will always be those (sometimes brethren) who will ignore or attempt to evade the authority of the scriptures, but the word of God "abideth forever" (I Peter 1:23) and will be what we are judged by. Still, we must not ever be discouraged by the actions of others, for if we warn them of the perils of disobedience...(Ezekiel 3:17-21)



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February 6, 2005

Volume 9, Issue 6