

I chose the second lesson, 1 Corinthians chapter 1 for today's sermon text.

The title for today's message is: **Are You Arrogant, or Ignorant? God has the Cure.**

Paul said: *in every way you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge.*

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ, For thousands of years Christian church's have asked themselves what there going to do for the future of there congregations.

Such as, how are we going to let the light of Christ shine more brightly on the people of our community, and surrounding communities?

Going forward as a congregation, reaching out to the community with the Word of God, serving them, and evangelizing them.

For the congregation It will certainly take time, commitment, effort and ability! As well as all our gifted people, actually using our gifts from God.

But as congregations we must be careful not to try something that is beyond our ability. Nor do we want to allow our abilities to go unused either.

How then does our congregation plan for the future, making sure we have the ability to achieve our mission?

Now, as for the congregation in Corinth, they had many abilities, and great potential to do great things.

Yet, Paul wanted to be certain that they didn't become over confident, nor under confident in their abilities.

The thing needed, was to get the light of Christ out into the community, something congregation fail miserably to do today.

Paul said in his letter to the Corinthians: ***in every way you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge.***

And make no mistake about it, the Corinthians had a multitude of gifts. In 1 Corinthians chapter 12, Paul mentions some of them, he said:

For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

Yes, they had great potential. But there was a problem, they were like hungry athletes without much training, or discipline.

They were divided over things like who their leader was, and they were arrogantly bragging, and were divided over who had the greater gifts.

Things we see still today, however we have been better trained and are much more disciplined, well, better trained anyway.

They had no sense of right and wrong. Sexual immorality was running rampant throughout the congregation in Corinth at the time.

Now, Paul, through this letter was trying to straighten out the problems that had occurred in the Corinth church, but like many today, people didn't listen.

They thought they could make their own decisions, and lead their own lives without Paul's help.

So as a result, Paul's godly advice was in fact rejected, and they even ridiculed him.

Now I ask you, what's the first thing you want to do when someone ridicules you. You want to ridicule them back, right? But, look at what Paul did.

He complimented them! He said: ***To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:***

Now there's a difference in the way that Paul complimented the Corinthians, from the way He complimented Romans, Philippians, Ephesians, and other congregations.

Look instead of giving any of the other congregations any credit, Paul gives the Corinthians credit for all the gifts God blessed them with.

This isn't just old history, this is a reality for congregations today. We've seen this pattern throughout the history of Christ The King.

That's right! God has blessed the CTK congregation in Walnut from the very beginning, This congregation didn't just happen, God gave it many gifts.

But at times over the years, like many other congregations, we too have lost focus on what we've been charged with. Not only speaking the Word of God.

But were also charged with bringing other people to the Lord through living a Christian life, promoting God.

Bringing friends, family and strangers to worship with us here at Christ The King, another words growing the church so our voice for God will be stronger.

God gave us these great gifts, not so we will be comfortable, rather so we will be strong faithful disciples of God.

Look, God took His own Words, which Paul spoke, and made them firmly implanted in the souls of the congregation at Corinth.

And when God brought us to faith through the Word of God, spoken to us in our Baptism. He put the signature of “Christ” on us.

But as believers in Christ, we need to realize the success of this congregation is not only in our gifts, talents and hard work, but rather on God’s grace alone.

No matter what plans are made, they wont be successful in God’s eyes, that is if we don’t go forward humbly, “in Christ.”

Now, in today’s text, God promises us that He will keep us strong to the end, so that we will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It’s something we can thank God for, and be content with. Its something that will help us when it comes to our planning for the future.

Look, it would be easy for us to say, “our congregation makes this much money, and has lots of talent, so we think we can do anything we want.”

There’s times we think our future is based on our own abilities, but that’s nothing but arrogance on our part.

Just like many businesses today, who try to convince their employees that they can do anything they put their mind to.

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And as long as we stay connected to His Word, and sacraments, He will be able to keep us in the faith until the end.

Paul told the Corinthians in his letter, that God had made them competent as ministers of the new covenant.

That they have the Gospel, the ministry of the Spirit, which is the only tool that can bring people from death, back to life.

Paul said: we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. You, me and all believers are conquerors, and nothing can stop us.

Because we have the most powerful weapon in the world, the Gospel of Christ, the gift that gives us eternal life.

We have the promise of the Almighty God, that He will never leave us, nor forsake us.

So, why should we worry that our congregation will not survive, that we won’t be able to pay its bills, or that we will just grow old, and die?

Besides, if and when it does come time for our congregations to die, don't we want to be able to say we gave it our best?

Look, we can plan for the future of our congregation all we want, but we need to do it in the right way.

And God has given us a cure against arrogance, and ignorance, a cure found in the grace of God, and if we truly believe that.

God will bless our future, and help us turn up the light of Christ in our community, no matter what decisions we make.

Amen.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.