

**BBC – Home Bible Study Outline - 7/13/25 – “Our Testimony Matters” --- [1 Cor 9:19-23](#)**

This study emphasizes the importance of our Christian testimony. Church dysfunction is harmful.

- There are various types of Churches: Conservative (those that adhere to Biblical truths, whether they be traditional or contemporary); Liberal (accommodate sin & worldliness); Legalistic (‘letter-of-law’ view).
- Denominations aren’t necessarily bad. God accommodates for various cultures, customs, etc.
- But some Church traditions tend to promote a harmful testimony. Paul notes five negative effects.
- Paul writes to the Corinthian Church about divisions, fractions, conflicts, immorality, & doctrinal errors.
- These 5 negative affects bring harm to ourselves, our Christian brethren, and our testimony to all!

**Discussion:** *How can our testimony affect us personally, as well as those within & without the Church?*

The Apostle Paul admits he was a former Jewish legalist ([Galatians 1:13-14](#); [Philippians 3:5-6](#)).

But eventually he learned of his liberty in Christ ([2 Corinthians 3:17](#); [Galatians 5:1](#); [1 Corinthians 8:9](#)).

Paul understood how we tend to look at the outward appearance, but God at the heart ([1 Samuel 16:7](#)).

Paul lays a foundation of 4 essentials from [1 Corinthians 1:30](#); wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. These correlate to 4 results in us: belief, salvation, separation, & our blessed-hope.

Understanding this as practicing Christians, brings inner peace, unity, & a good testimony for Christ.

**Discussion:** *How does our testimony reflect the correlation between the 4 essentials & 4 results?*

In [1 Corinthians 9:20-22](#), Paul alluded to his own testimony among Jews, those ‘under the law,’ those ‘without the law,’ and the ‘weak.’ We can correlate “Jews” to non-religious Jews (for us, ‘Christendom’), those “under the law” as the ‘Pharisaical’ legalistic religious Jews (for us, legalistic churches), those “without the law” as Gentiles (for us, the unchurched), and the “weak” (for us, the immature believers).

Paul didn’t ridicule or condemn any of these. Rather, to reach them, he identified with their condition.

**Discussion:** *How did Paul “become” each of these in order to win them to Christ?*

It is important that we as Bible-believing Christians carry forth a good testimony to the unsaved world.

Paul was appalled at the gross sin that was tolerated & left uncorrected within the Corinthian Church:

- [1 Corinthians 5:1](#); “*that one should have his father’s wife*.” Even unchurched unbelievers wouldn’t accept such immorality. Paul said this kind of fornication was unheard of among the Gentiles.
- Paul reprimanded the Church for failing to provide Biblical discipline to this offending member, but also went further ([5:9-13](#)), saying we ought not to fellowship with any church-member who is a fornicator, covetous, idolater, railer, drunkard, or extortioner. These bring harm to the cause of Christ!
- In [5:6](#), Paul also alluded to the fact that these sins are corrosive within the Church as well.

**Discussion:** *How much damage does a ‘church-scandal’ cause to the unchurched world?*

It is important that we as Bible-believing Christians carry forth a good testimony within the Church.

Paul suggested both tolerance of non-essentials & intolerance of behavior causing one to stumble:

- Tolerance of non-essentials is promoted by divisive ‘legalism-vs-liberty’ factions:
  - Paul addressed “non-essentials” in [Romans 14:1–15:7](#), related to people’s individual convictions of what they eat, what they drink, and what special days they may or may not observe.
- Intolerance of behavior causing stumbles is also caused by those un-Biblical man-made traditions:
  - In [Galatians 2:9-16](#), Paul recounted an early public confrontation he had with Peter in Antioch.
  - Peter was the first minister God used to bring the Gospel to Gentiles (by a special vision; [Acts 10](#)). He ‘ate’ (openly intermingled & fellowshiped with Gentile Christian converts in Antioch), but became fearful of legalistic Jewish Christians who came to visit from Jerusalem, and withdrew himself. This brought confusion to Jewish Christians there, as well as Paul’s companion, Barnabas!

**Discussion:** *1. How could Peter, of all people, the champion defender of Gentile converts ([Acts 11](#)), fall prey to the fear of legalists and create such harmful confusion?*

*2. How important is our Church unity, and our consistent Biblical testimony to all?*