

**I. Read II Corinthians 5:11**

- A. In verse 11, Paul speaks of “the terror of the Lord” (NKJ). Another translation uses the phrase “the fear of the Lord” (NAS). Is this a warning to unbelievers of the potential for eternal destruction and judgment or to believers as an exhortation toward greater faithfulness?

Read II Corinthians 2:1,5, 10 and discuss the circumstance Paul faced earlier in Corinth that would provide the context for understanding his wording in 5:11.

- B. (Read Ephesians 5:22-23). In Ephesus, the special relationship Christ has with the church is explained. What analogy is used to help us understand Christ’s love for the church?

Would you normally expect that a husband would be willing to do whatever was necessary to protect his bride?

Given the passage in Ephesians 5, how would you expect Christ to deal with those who attack and divide the Church?

- C. (Read Jeremiah 17:9-10.) What does Jeremiah explain regarding the heart?

Discuss how God reveals to us or others the true condition of our heart. (See Jer. 17:7-8; Matthew 7:15-20; Matthew 12:33-35)

- D. Does the evil one put those in the church that he intends to use as a means of attacking the work of the church? (See Acts 20:29-31.)

Will they be immediately recognizable?

Is Satan always the cause of divisions in the Church? (See James 1:13-15).

- E. How can a church learn to recognize the sorts of attacks against leaders which Paul alludes to in II Corinthians 5:11? (See Revelation 12:10; 1 Timothy 5:19.)
- F. Read Hebrews 12:3-11 and discuss how the principle pertaining to the discipline of the Lord might support the need to grow with respect to a healthy "fear of the Lord."
- G. Returning to II Corinthians 5:11, the main thrust is on the believer living in a *healthy* "fear of the Lord." This means each one of us should seek to live under and within a biblical concern and desire to please Christ in our thoughts, words, and actions. This is particularly true in regard to how we interact with others in the church and how we guard our testimony before a watching world. Suggest some ways that we can avoid stumbling into sin or causing others to stumble, or find correction when we have sinned.