

When Controversies Arise - Sunday AM 02/04/18

Introduction:

Notice our title “When” not “If”. We know issues have and will continue to develop among Christians and the world as well as among fellow Christians. The word “apologetics” means, the branch of theology concerned with the defense or proof of Christianity.

I) Defending the Truth

A) Passages such as *Jude 3, 1 Peter 3.15*

B) Issues in the first century

1. Eating of meats, *Romans 14*
2. Circumcision, *Acts 15.1*
3. Observance of Sabbaths and other days, *Colossians 2.16ff*
4. Going to the temple of idols, *1 Corinthians 8ff*
5. Deity of Christ, *1 John 4.1-3*
6. Resurrection of the dead and the return of Christ, *1 Corinthians 15, 1 Thess. 4.*

C) Differences in issues

1. Personal opinion (conviction), *Romans 14.5*
2. Binding where God had not bound, *Galatians 2.2-5*
3. Loosening where God had not loosened, *Matthew 19.3*
4. False doctrine (denial of the resurrection, deity of Christ, etc.)

5. Moral issues, idolatry, worldliness, etc.

D) Issues today

1. Head covering
2. Christians serving in the military/police
3. Work of the church
4. Organization of the church
5. One elder or multiple elders
6. Lord's Supper on Sunday night
7. Lord's Supper one cup or multiple containers
8. Deity of Christ
9. Marriage/Divorce/Remarriage
10. Many more issues – located preacher, divided classes, etc.
11. Moral issues, worldliness, etc.

II) How Are We to Handle Such Issues?

A) How not to handle such issues? Examples from the first century

1. Personal attacks- Paul was attacked personally.
 - a. His speech and appearance, *2 Corinthians 10.10*
 - b. His character – not coming to Corinth as he first planned, *2 Corinthians 2.12*
 - c. Same for Jesus- eats with sinners

2. Carnal methods, *2 Corinthians 10.4a* -- Name calling, misrepresenting what is being taught, etc. *Acts 17.5*
3. Emotional arguments – *Acts 19* Demetris
4. Ignore the issue- hope it will go away.
 - a. What if Paul had simply ignored Peter's hypocrisy in *Galatians 2* or if the brethren had not addressed the issue in *Acts 15*?
 - b. We cannot ignore our way into faithfulness.

B) How to handle

1. Establish Biblical authority, focus on the Bible. Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ, *Galatians 1.1*
 - a. Too many focus on the who and not the what.
 - b. Paul did not defend himself but he did defend his apostleship.
2. Understand the Biblical principle.
 - a. Example in *Acts 15* dealing with circumcision.
 - b. The Law of Moses, *Galatians 5.3,4*
3. Properly define words and phrases, *Titus 3.9*
4. Keep it simple, *1 Corinthians 2.1-2*

Conclusion:

We are told to rightly divide the word of God, *2 Timothy 2.15*. We now have a song selected to encourage anyone who needs to obey the Gospel to do so.