

Self-control is something that we all have in abundance – it's other people who are lacking. To put it another way; everybody is entitled to *my* opinion.

Seriously though, self-control is a very important characteristic that we should all seek to exercise. Just because we listen to an alternative viewpoint doesn't mean we agree with it. Just because we don't scream and shout at supporters of other faiths doesn't make us weak.

If you need a 'Master Class' in self-control, simply look at any passage where Jesus is confronted by opposition. Despite, in some cases, extreme provocation Jesus always remained calm, simply presented his argument and never once called upon his supporters and Disciples to start a riot or throw weapons, stones, or even insults at any opposition. In fact, when a stoning was argued for, Jesus defused that ugly situation [Jn. 8:2-11], not by berating those involved but by asking them to examine themselves. Brilliant!

Self-control doesn't mean that our beliefs are not important, the reverse is the case. The key is how we express, promote and demonstrate [live] what we believe.

Remember this; we are not Politicians, we are Ambassadors for Christ.

Read 1 Corinthians 9:23 – 10:13

I presume that we have, by now, had enough of the election. That said, there were some who acted with dignity and self-control and others who were 'rabble rousing'. I wonder how many would claim a Christian faith?

1. Our reading begins with a sport setting, which is appropriate as the Olympics have just started. Greek/Roman games were very different from modern ones. Our world is different too. Is our faith different from Paul's? If so, how?

2. Being a Baptist, I like the concept of the 'mass baptism' of the Israelites as they passed through the Red Sea [10:1-4]. I also like the symbolism of Communion in the same verses. There is a **caveat**, or warning in verse 5 though. How does this apply today?
3. Look again at verse 6. Bearing in mind all the access we have to technology and instant information, what could be 'evil thoughts', even unintentional, that we may be subject to today? How can/should we protect ourselves?
4. We know from previous readings that the church in Corinth wasn't exactly a 'temple of paragons', it had some problems. How do you think Paul reacted? With self-control? Or was he overly strident? [remember that he had fallen out with others previously].
5. Look again at verse 7. Idolatry was the 'norm' when Paul was writing, most Roman homes, even the poorest, would have a shelf for 'Lares' [household gods]. What do you treasure and why is that different from idolatry? Or is it?
6. Corinth was a strange place. One temple alone had 2,000 'temple prostitutes' [male and female] and that was seen as 'normal'. Sexual immorality isn't new. How can we advise those in our church on sexual ethics?
7. What do you understand Paul to mean by 'testing Christ'? [Vv.9] Do we? How?
8. Verses 12 & 13 are both warning and encouragement to the Corinthian church and us today. What can you pass on to future generations as an encouragement?

Prayer Points –

Please continue to pray for the preparations as the youth go off to Satellites youth camp. Pray for Karline and the team as well.

Pray for our government and the decisions before them, as they seek to navigate the problems we face.

BMS - Our partners in Nepal are working with teachers to improve education in rural areas. Pray for effective workshops that result in new opportunities for students to achieve their potential.

Sermon Notes



BIBLE STUDY

July 28th 2024

**Called, Gathered Sent.
Part 10.
Self Control.
1 Corinthians 9:23-10:13.**

As Baptists we commit ourselves to being a movement led by the Spirit of God. Celebrating diversity, we will value, trust and respect one another in Christ. So what does it mean to belong together? How do we live this life as followers of Jesus in this world? As we continue in our journey with 1 Corinthians, we will reflect upon our mission to live out this Christian life together as we come face-to-face with the challenges of what it means to live holy lives.

If you would like to join a Connect Group, please contact the church office 01424 730001