



SERMON NOTE

As Christians, what unites us is much stronger than what can divide us. We must beware of foolish controversies. Not only are they contrary to the message and spirit of the gospel but they possess the potential of dividing us (1 Tim 6:3-5).

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CONTROVERSIES

(2 TIMOTHY 2:23)

I) Our Unity In Christ

- A) **1 Cor** 12:13: We are all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

- B) **Gal** 3:27-28: For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
 - 1) The standard categories of race, gender and social status that normally divide people do not apply to those who are in Christ.

II) Controversy Can Destroy This

- A) Understanding Controversy
 - 1) The Greek word *zētēsis* denotes, firstly, "a seeking" or inquiry.

 - 2) Secondly, it denotes "a debate" or questioning.

- B) By definition Controversy isn't necessarily a bad thing.
 - 1) **John** 3:25: *Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew over purification.*

 - 2) **Acts** 25:20: *Being at a loss how to investigate these questions, I asked whether he wanted to go to Jerusalem and be tried there regarding them.*

- C) Healthy Controversies Can Lead To Positive Outcomes
 - 1) **John** 4:1-42: *The controversy over the location of worship.*

 - 2) **Acts** 17:16-34: *The controversy over which deity to worship.*

 - 3) **Jude** 1:1-4: *The controversy of defending one religious faith.*

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My Sermon Notes

Myths. (1 Tim 1:4). The Greek term used here, *mythos*, refers to legendary stories about the gods. It also could be used to describe stories generally understood to be false. Such tales distracted believers from the truth (i.e., the gospel message) and sound doctrine, resulting in ungodly behavior. Peter also disapproved of myths (2 Pet 1:16), even those of Jewish origin or influence (Titus 1:14). They used "myths" as a label for teachings considered especially immoral or dangerous.

Genealogies. (1 Tim 1:4). A list of descendants (e.g., Gen 10; 1 Chr 1-9; Matt 1:1-17). Genealogies were used to legitimize the inclusion of an individual into a group or the succession of an individual into a role. Besides tracing one's royal lineage and the lineage of David to identify the coming Messiah, the Jewish community used genealogies for two primary reasons: 1) Prove one's Israelite roots or heritage. But this is of no value under the New Covenant because all who are in Christ are God's spiritual Israel (Rom 9:1-8). 2) Trace their lineage back to the Levi, in order to serve in the priesthood (Ezra 2:61-63). Under the new covenant this also is of no value since all of Christ's people are priests (1 Pet 2:1-9; Rev 1:3-6). 3).

D) An Unhealthy Controversy:

- 1) Seeks to disrupt truth.
- 2) When courtesies are absent attitudes are unbecoming (**Col 3:11-15; 1 Cor 16:14**).
- 3) One that is more concerned with advocating position or beliefs rather than facts and truth (**Pro 18:2**).
- 4) Cause division and hurt feelings among Saints (**Pro 6:16, 19**).

III) Major Controversies of the early church

- A) Circumcision (**Acts 15**).
- B) Unclean meats and meats offered to idols (**1 Cor 8; 1 Tim 4:1-5**).
- C) Myths (**1 Tim 1:4**).
- D) Genealogies (**1 Tim 1:4**).

IV) Unhealthy Controversies

- A) The Ugly Realities
 - 1) They undermine the stewardship of God (**1 Tim 1:3-6**).
 - 2) They can lead to apostasy (**1 Tim 6:20-21**).
 - 3) They only ruin those who Hear it (**2 Tim 2:14**).
 - 4) They breed quarrels (**2 Tim 2:23**).
 - 5) They are unprofitable and worthless (**Titus 3:9-11**).

V) Everything that we do must be done love.
(**1 Cor 16:14; Rom 14:15**).