

Christ Flavor (2)

2 Corinthians 2:14-17

April 7, 2019

Last Sunday, I said that the world was in desperate need of seeing and tasting Christ flavor. I had mentioned that we need to be Christ flavor in our homes and communities. The sad thing is that more often than not we have become the object of criticism rather than the object of admiration. One of the main reasons for the criticism is because we often do the opposite of what we preach. We preach love, tolerance, and forgiveness, yet in reality, we often become judgmental toward the people who do not agree with us, and when we do that, we do it in the name of being faithful to God.

Last Sunday, I briefly mentioned that the number of Christian denominations in the world have reached more than 34,000 denominations. That was from one of the statistics, but according to the Center for Study on Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Seminary the number of Christian denominations reached more than 41,000 as of this year, and not 34,000.¹ Whether it is 34,000 or 41,000, it is absolutely shocking, isn't it? Using the number 41,000, this means in the last 15 years, the number of Christian denominations was increased from about 20,000 to 41,000. That is about 1400 new denominations every year. This means about 3.8 or almost 4 new Christian denominations were born every day in the last 15 years. Amazing, isn't it? What happened to the message of Christian unity? What happened to the message of love, humbleness, tolerance, forgiveness, and acceptance?²

Self-righteousness brings division into the body. Would it be fair for anyone to say that Christians are very self-righteous people? Last Sunday, I mentioned that Jesus did not want his disciples to have a turf war. When John, one of the disciples said to Jesus, "My Lord, we saw someone using your name to cast out an evil spirit. Since he is not part of us, we stopped him." Jesus said, "Don't stop them. Leave them alone. If they are not against us, they are for us."

Instead of having a turf war, learn to honor and serve one another. Paul in

¹ <https://christianity.stackexchange.com/questions/56020/how-many-christian-denominations-are-there>

² Daesun Chung's sermon, "Christ Flavor (1)".

his letter to Philippians said, “Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus...” (2:5). Have the mind of Jesus Christ. Let your mind have Christ flavor. Let your actions have Christ flavor. Let your love have Christ’s flavor. Let your tolerance have Christ flavor.

Then what is it to have Christ flavor in our lives?

One, our values must have Christ flavor. Our values need to reflect Christ’s values. Sometimes we fail to practice what we believe and preach, and we need to do a better job in doing what we preach. Nevertheless, a large portion of what we believe needs to be evident in our lives.

We are living in a time when secular values and lifestyle dominate. Sometimes having Christ’s value is not the most popular thing.

Chuck Swindoll tells about a wife who was taking a French language course. She went out to have a lunch with her classmates. One of the ladies asked the women, “How many of you have been faithful to your husband throughout your marriage?” Only one lady raised her hand.

That evening this wife Chuck Swindoll was talking about the incident to her husband, and she admitted she was not the one who had raised her hand. Hearing that, her husband was shocked. Then the woman quickly reassured him that she had been faithful to him. He asked, “Then why didn’t you raise your hand?” and she answered, “I was ashamed.”³ Can you imagine?

Ashamed of being faithful? Our society has deviated from the standard so much that we don’t even know what the standard is anymore. I am afraid to say that Christians are no different. Perhaps Christians have the name Christian but not the life that reflects its character.

Two, our capacity to love must have Christ flavor.

John Killinger, in his sermon entitled, “The Great Importance of Little Deeds,” explains how significant small deeds are. He said, “... when we die and come into the presence of God and all its fullness, it will not be our major

³ Come Before Winter.

achievements that speak for us: ‘He was the president of a bank. She was the first woman senator from her state. He was the author of more than 20 books.’ It’s none of that, but what would speak for us are the small things we had done, something we had forgotten long time ago. ‘He mowed my lawn when I was sick. She cared for my child when I went to the market. She helped me with the insurance claim when my husband passed away. She washed and mended my socks.’”⁴ Things like that.

John Killinger said that these small things are what’s important. I am not saying that the great accomplishments are not important. They are, but what I am saying is that small acts of grace, insignificant gestures of kindness and love are what hold this world together.

The world desperately needs to see our love in action. They need to taste the flavor of Christ in you. Sometime love is expressed in saying “No.” Sometimes it is expressed in challenging a person to change his life, but doing it with a genuine concern and love.

Three, our values and love should not stay in the saltshaker if it is to reveal Christ flavor. So often our faith is limited to the inside of these four walls. This church is a saltshaker. This is not the place where our faith lives or dies. It is out there. Our faith either lives or dies in our daily lives, at home, at work, in our community, in our relationships.

Now all of us are here to worship God, and that's wonderful, but unless we take the gospel from here out to the world our faith means nothing for other people.

Salt does not exist for its own good. It exists to season, to bring out flavor, and to preserve.

According to Arthur Westing, an ecologist and natural scientist, about 50 billion people have walked the earth since the beginning of time. The present population is 7.6 billion and growing very, very fast. What this means is about 15% percent of the people who have ever existed are alive right now. What an opportunity to be salt, to be leaven, to be light.

⁴ Fundamentals of Preaching, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985).

You notice how each of these are penetrators. Salt penetrates the meat; leaven penetrates the loaf; light penetrates the darkness. We are called to penetrate the world in which we live and to permanently change it.

I invite you to choose your words and gestures and actions in such a way that it will bring a lasting comfort, joy, peace, hope, gladness and pleasure to people's hearts and lives. That is how we become Christ flavor.