

The University Heights Messenger

January 2, 2010

Wronged No One, Corrupted No One, Taken Advantage Of No One.

Have you ever been taken advantage of? Have you ever been around a corrupting influence? Have you ever been wronged? Of course you have. We all have. Truth be told, many of us have likely done to others one or more of these things. It is not easy to make room in our hearts for an individual who does one of these things to us, is it? Should any of us be involved in one of them let us remember that each of them does nothing but damage our influence and shrink the pool of people willing to give us a hearing.

The apostle Paul knew the damaging effects of these things and so he wrote a reminder to the Corinthians on the topic. **“Make room in your hearts for us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one”** (2 Corinthians 7:2). Let’s spend a few minutes considering this verse.

Paul longed for the Corinthians to make room in their hearts for him. In 6:11-13 he spoke in very touching terms about his feelings for them. **“We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections. In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also.”** Though his opponents claimed that Paul possessed no genuine affection for the Corinthians, his heart felt words demonstrate the real truth. His heart was open wide to them, he kept them in his thoughts and prayers always, he remembered them with the most tender affection. He pleads with them to do the same for him. However, it is very important that we note that he based this plea upon three things: we did not wrong anyone, we did not corrupt anyone, and we did

not take advantage of anyone. Let’s pursue these thoughts a bit further.

It is possible that Paul’s enemies were charging him with some specific case of wronging someone, perhaps the incestuous man that he had handed over to Satan in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5. Whether this single event is under consideration or not, the charge is that Paul was treating people unjustly, or injuriously (the meaning of the word for “wronged”). All we need do is consider Paul’s life and we can confidently say he did not make a practice of injuring people or treating them unjustly. However, because he *did* deal with sin the way it had to be dealt with it is easy to see how those who were more interested in worldly things than spiritual would have claimed Paul wronged them in his handling and condemnation of their sins.

Second, regardless of his opponents accusation, Paul had not corrupted any of the Corinthians. The word for “corrupted” in this place refers to moral corruption, the very thing Paul warned against in 1 Corinthians 15:33. **“Do not be deceived: Bad company corrupts good morals.”** The truth was that the Corinthians themselves, or at least Paul’s enemies among them, were guilty of the very thing of which they accused him. The false teachers among them were the one’s guilty of corrupting the morals of the Corinthian Christians. Paul was frightened at the prospect and spoke of his fear in 11:3. **“But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”** The last thing Paul would do was corrupt the wholesome Christian morals that he had worked so hard to help instill in them.

Paul’s opponents took things a step further. Portraying him as a man of pride, they

accused him of taking advantage of the Corinthians. The phrase refers to defrauding others by using them for selfish gain. Take a moment to read **12:17-18** to see Paul defend himself in more detail from this charge.

His opponents had to blind themselves as well as the remainder of the Corinthians to even consider making this heinous accusation. Take a moment to read **2 Corinthians 4:11-12**. Consider also Paul's instruction that "**love does not insist on its own way**" (1 Corinthians 13:5). Can we imagine that he would behave oppositely of his instruction? Surely not and the Corinthians should have been able to see it regardless of any naysayers.

Paul's conduct was always absolutely becoming of a Christian. He treated all people, particularly his brethren, with the upmost dignity and honor. Did he correct sin and error? Strongly. Did he defend himself against false accusations? Vehemently. Did he live in accordance with his claim to Christ? Always. So too must you and I (Philippians 1:27).

Because the true Christian imbibes the **love** of Jesus Christ, he will never be found guilty of treating someone unjustly or seeking injury to them. Because the true Christian imbibes the **morals** of Jesus Christ, he will never be found guilty of corrupting the morals of anyone. Because the true Christian imbibes the **humility** of Jesus Christ, he will never be found guilty of taking advantage of anyone. This is a fitting description of Paul. Is it of us?

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IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Jeff Howerton was able to return home Wednesday. He will still be in physical therapy and confined to home for a few weeks.

Joseph Miller is recovering from having his tonsils removed.

Glyon Hill, a friend of Pat Seabolt, has been diagnosed with colon cancer.

Vina Krassow (friend of the Morelan's) is suffering kidney difficulties.

Our members: **Jim Edwards, The Daniels' family, Glenn Davis, Glenn Kimberlin, Janet Brundige, Harrod family.**

Others: **Robin Miller, Tom Curtis, Ann Sego, John Bennett, Dennis Brennan, Sara Phillips, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Kay Montgomery, Donald Dawson, Jean Gartland, Wes Kidd, Gail Stein, Shannon Gilbert, Chuck McDavitt**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Streaming Bible study every Tuesday at 7. We will begin at Mark 6:21 this week. Please remember to tell people about this effort.

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

- Sun:** Ezek 34-35, Ps 122, 1 Tim 4-6
- Mon:** Ezek 36-37, Ps 123, 2 Tim 1-2
- Tue:** Ezek 38-39, Ps 124, 2 Tim 3-4
- Wed:** Ezek 40-41, Ps 125, Titus 1-3
- Thu:** Ezek 42-44, Ps 126, Philemon
- Fri:** Ezek 45-46, Ps 127, Heb 1-3
- Sat:** Ezek 47-48, Ps 128, Heb 4-6

SERMON TOPICS:

Sunday AM. Philippians: A Message of Joy
Paul: A Pioneer For Christ
(Philippians 1:12-26)

Sunday PM. The Pattern Of A Falling Nation
(Jeremiah 6:10-16)