

BECOMING ALL THINGS TO ALL MEN

Introduction

- 1) **1 Corinthians 9:19-23** – Paul reveals his desire to do everything he can to save the souls of those who are lost
 - a) “I have become all things to all men” (as a Jew, a Gentile, a weak brother [see 8:7-13])
- 2) Paul adapted himself to the situation of others to help in the work of bringing them to Christ
- 3) This wisdom is not unique only to Paul, but is for all Christians to understand and apply
- 4) We need to learn to be adaptable to the circumstances and personalities of others in order to encourage souls to be saved and for brethren to maintain unity and fellowship

I) **NO Adaptation to Evil, Worldliness, or False Doctrine**

- A) **Romans 12:1-2** – first allegiance is to Christ; must not be conformed to this world
 - 1) Cease from doing what we once did in the world (1 Pet. 4:1-4)
- B) **2 Corinthians 6:14-18** – Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers – do not deny the faith
- C) **1 Corinthians 7:12, 15, 23** – Christians is not under “bondage” to men to deny Christ in order to please an unbelieving mate or any other unbeliever

II) **Jesus and the Twelve**

- A) Jesus dealt with people differently as the circumstances warranted
 - 1) Compassion on the ignorant and lost (Matt. 9:36)
 - 2) Anger toward those of hardness of heart (Mk. 3:5)
- B) The twelve apostles were a truly diverse group (fishermen, tax-collector, zealot)
 - 1) Bad feelings and rivalries happened (Matt. 20:24; Lk. 9:46)
 - 2) Despite their differences, Jesus made them equally effective (Jn. 17:17-18; Acts 4:13)
 - a) So also we can be united in Christ and His work despite key differences (Gal. 3:28)

III) **Being “All Things” in Order to Save Others**

- A) **Colossians 4:5-6**
 - 1) Toward those outside, let us be wise in our words in order to draw people to Christ
 - 2) Speak the truth in love, not in malice, hate, anger, revenge, selfishness (Eph. 4:15, 31)
- B) **Philippians 2:1-4**
 - 1) Seek to be likeminded, same love, one accord, one mind
 - a) Accomplished despite different personalities, races, economics, ages, genders, etc.
 - 2) Eliminate selfishness and esteem others **better** than ourselves
 - 3) Look out not only for your own interests but also the interests of others
 - 4) Problem between Euodia and Syntyche – not of the same mind in the Lord (4:2-3)
 - a) Paul urged *suzugos* [companion, yokefellow] to help these two women
- C) **Romans 12:9-18**
 - 1) Let love be without hypocrisy – no pretending or with partiality (v. 9; see Gal. 2:11-14)
 - 2) Give preference to one another (v. 10)
 - 3) Rejoice and weep with others – sincerely adapting to others’ circumstances (v. 15)
 - 4) Associate with the humble – the prideful will not adapt to the humble (v. 16)
 - 5) Have regard for good things in the sight of all men (v. 17; 1 Thess. 4:11-12)
 - 6) “As much as depends on you” live peaceably with all men (v. 18)
 - a) Do not let anger, wrath, and division with others be caused by your own carelessness, stubbornness, pride, or selfishness

Conclusion

Like the apostle Paul, we should strive to **be all things to all men** to win them to Christ. Let us be unselfish and concerned for the salvation of lost souls around us to the glory of God!