

# ALAN TAYLOR

P O BOX 700623; TULSA, OK 74170-0623

918-447-8951

alantaylorministries.org

## Preparing for the Broken

The Apostle Paul faced a problem he had no clear answer for, and it stemmed from the location of the church he established in the city of Corinth. He remained there to plant the church of Christ in the heart of a Gentile society. First, he presented the gospel to the Jewish temple, then brought the message to the lost within the city, and what a place it was. Corinth's diverse and dynamic population made it a thriving hub of commerce and financial success. Yet, spiritually, its center was a temple dedicated to the goddess Aphrodite. This pagan cathedral revolved around various forms of sexual activity. Its worship practices blurred the lines between sacred and profane making casual and commercial sex not only acceptable but celebrated.

Sexual acts, especially through ritual prostitution, were considered acts of devotion to the goddess of love, beauty, and fertility. The belief was that by pleasing her in this way, one would receive blessings on crops, family, or business. In fact, the Greek verb "to Corinthianize" came to mean engaging in immorality. The priestesses of the temple would openly prostitute themselves as an act of religious service. Another practice among the female worshipers was to shave their heads as a visible sign of their allegiance.

In the midst of this culture, a new church was born, and Paul began leading new believers on the path of Christianity and holiness. He had to teach them from the ground up what salvation meant and how to walk it out. As the message of salvation spread, more converts joined the fellowship, many of them genuinely seeking God, yet, still carrying the cultural habits of the temple they had just left. After about eighteen months, Paul moved on to establish other works, leaving the church under the leadership of local elders.

Three to five years later, he wrote a letter addressing several concerns and answering specific questions they had sent him. As it says in 1 Corinthians 7:1, "*Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.*" This verse shows us that Paul is now responding to their inquiries. It's important to recognize that his answers were directed at the unique issues facing that local church. However, many believers have taken those answers and treated them as universal doctrine, when in truth, they were intended specifically for this group. Paul had no direct command from the Word of God for these matters, so he relied on the wisdom taught to him by the Holy Spirit.

Another example appears in verses 25–26: "*Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made trustworthy. I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress—that it is good for a man to remain as he is.*" Again, it's important to see that Paul, as an apostle, is forming a response based on divine wisdom. He clearly states that, due to their specific struggles, he is advising single individuals to remain single, a remarkable recommendation, especially since it runs counter to the general command from God to be fruitful and multiply.

Paul continues addressing complex issues within the church, including women who, though born again, were still carrying behaviors from their temple upbringing. Some saw themselves as

dominant over their husbands and even styled themselves to resemble the priestesses of the pagan temple. He addresses another concern in 1 Corinthians 11:2: *“Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.”* Here, he uses the word “traditions” indicating that these were practices he established to address specific problems.

Verse 3 states, *“But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”* Some marriages were becoming disordered, with husbands surrendering their authority and wives assuming the leadership role in the home. This imbalance at home was also beginning to affect the church. Paul’s solution was to introduce a symbol of submission so that the women in the congregation would not be mistaken for the priestesses of Aphrodite. He encouraged them to grow their hair long or to wear a covering on their heads.

He concludes the matter in verse 16: *“But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.”* In other words, this was a tradition formed from wisdom for them, not a direct command from God. In today’s world, the obstacles to truth are greater than they were even a few decades ago, with new standards now being accepted as the norm.

We, the church, must prepare for an ocean wave of broken and scarred people coming to Christ. This last generation has been twisted and manipulated into believing many falsehoods about themselves and their sexuality. They are the new harvest emerging from a web of lies and deceit, seeking real answers and the power to walk away from the world. Many will be broken in ways the church has never encountered, both physically and mentally. Because of their past deception, some will struggle to trust leadership, needing extraordinary love and patience as they learn to trust what is truly good and real. Others may attempt to carry aspects of their former identities into their Christian walk, and they too will need compassion as they learn to let go of the past.

More than ever, our pastors and leaders must be praying in the Holy Spirit and seeking divine wisdom. We will need to establish new traditions and customs to address our own unique set of challenges in these last days. What a harvest we will have!

## **ALAN TAYLOR**

P O BOX 700623; TULSA, OK 74170-0623

918-447-8951

[alantaylorministries.org](http://alantaylorministries.org)