

2. 1 Corinthians: a Tale of Two Kingdoms

...be united in the same mind and the same purpose. 1 Corinthians 1.10

...the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned. Matthew 4.16

Quarrels among us has become a _____ in the Church!

The Apostle Paul addressed this issue in the Church in Corinth and wrote: *...that all of you be in agreement and that there be _____ divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose* (1 Corinthians 1.10).

So, _____ happened?

Cosmic _____ and spiritual forces of evil are the true source of quarrels among us!

The western cultural worldview, however, does _____ acknowledge these *cosmic powers and forces of evil*. But the very institutions that deny them are themselves harbingers of the same. Academia in America prides itself on the gathering of knowledge, yet, within these institutions there is ruthless competition for power and authority.

Leslie Newbigin, in *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, summarizes these forces for us: "The principalities and powers are _____. They are invisible and we cannot locate them in space. They do not exist as disembodied entities floating above this world, or lurking within it. They meet us as embodied in visible and tangible realities – people, nations, and institutions. And they are powerful" (p. 207).

Jesus is the answer! His first message is _____ *for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!* In the Cross, Christ has overpowered these cosmic powers and evil forces. He has not destroyed them, that will happen at His Second Coming, but He has disarmed them. And through His resurrection He empowers us to triumph over them, in the world and in our own souls. But, the choice is ours!

Our minds are our _____ offense and defense in taking a stand against cosmic powers and evil forces. The mind is the Holy Spirit's path to the soul. The renewal of the mind opens the way for the restoration of the soul. But there is a choice we have to make if we want to have the mind of Christ, that is, if we want to see the world through His eyes.

_____ is a choice, the first choice we make to have the mind of Christ; obedience to the Word and Spirit is a close second. Humility must come first, however, for obedience without humility subjects us to *cosmic powers and forces of evil*.

As we come to Christ's Table this morning, let us consecrate ourselves in _____ before God and commit ourselves in obedient to His Christ by the power of the Word and Spirit. In this way, we overcome the *cosmic powers and forces of evil* in us and in the world.