Devotion #300

**Live Orderly Lives**

**1 Corinthians 14:40 (NASB)** *“But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner*.”

There are many weeks that seem to be more hectic and chaotic that others. There are so many things that get in the way of the normal routine. My experience with people tells me that most people do better or live a more peaceful life when the day is structured or, at least, normal as much as possible. Of course normal is a relative term. No two people’s weeks are the same. One may have many meeting, with travel and phone calls, etc. while another person’s week is at home, by themselves, living with their best friend, the computer. But both people in this illustration would say that whatever is normal for them is the most comfortable where they do their best mentally, emotionally, and even spiritually.

At times, life gets crazy, and normal is changed from the daily routine to chaos. When that happens, not only is the person sent into a frenzy, but also everyone around them feels the effects of the chaos. The craziness of life can translate into the church. That’s what was happening in Corinth. The believers had come out of some very ungodly backgrounds. They had gone from worshipping idols and living in all sorts of fleshly situations, and, unfortunately, they were bringing that into the church. So God says through the Apostle Paul that the church is to be a place where all things are to be done in an orderly manner. God’s work, the service to God, whether worship or anything else is to be orderly. The word “orderly” means regular arrangement or a fixed succession in time. We could translate that into keeping things in their proper place. Specifically that means that worship of God is not to be filled with ecstatic utterances or crazy gyrations but a calm, steady emissions from the soul that only seeks to worship Him.

You might wonder what the point is of that? Does that also mean we can’t bring coffee into the sanctuary or come dressed as we like to dress? No it doesn’t mean that. God is simply saying that He doesn’t want our hearts to be all over the place, chasing after all kinds of things that appear to be worship. He is not so concerned about the externals of our lives, unless they promote ungodliness, as much as He is concerned that our hearts are centrally focused on Him. We should come to worship with focused attention on Him and not be distracted by what we want or like in a worship service, but what most honors and glorifies Him.

Even outside of worship, God wants our hearts and minds to be focused properly - on Him. He has said that He is not the author of confusion. (1 Corinthians 14:33) That is the work of Satan. God is telling us that when our hearts are distracted by what we want and what we think is right, we can and do often miss the point of not only worship but daily living.

His children are not to be blown about by various teachings.(Ephesians 4:14) He wants us to live our lives based on His Word and His Word alone. (2 Timothy 4:2, John 17:17) We are to be students of His Word so that when the challenging things of life come our way, we are not tossed around like a dingy behind a ship, but we are steady and keep a course that is directly focused on Him.

This past year and a half has been a time of great uncertainty and challenge for us all. And many, even in the church, have lost their focus, either by not meeting or letting the situations of life dictate what they do as a people of God and as a church, instead of keeping their focus on God. We are to meet for worship no matter what the world says or what is happening in the world, as long as we are being wise. We are not to follow foolish things just because we feel a certain way, but we are to follow God and His Word which was given to guide us through the troubles of life. (Psalm 119:105)

So when you find yourself being blown about by all kinds of things, remember, God is the God of decency and orderliness, both in glorifying Himself and in the way He wants us to live our lives. We are to be steady and focused on following Him as the anchor for our souls and our lives.