

Series: Story of the New Testament
Lesson: Controversial Topics
Author: Curt Niccum



Modern Music

Last Sunday, the song leader led some songs that were brand new to most of the congregation. The youth group though, was already familiar with them, having sung them for over a year. A few of the older Christians were upset because the songs sounded too “worldly”, and felt that they were inappropriate for the worship setting. Not only that, they were sing in unison or with women echoing men rather than in four part harmony. There were some questions as to whether this was biblical or not. Many in the youth group, on the other hand, thought it was one of the best worship services that they had ever experienced. They were eager for more of “their” songs to be included in the future. Within the week, the congregation seemed to be heading towards division based on age. There also tended to be some name calling. Things like “young whipper-snappers” or “old fogeys” could be overheard in various conversations in and around the church building.

How would you react if faced with a similar situation?

Read Romans 14:1-15:7. Based on that passage, how should Christians react to this situation?

Alcoholic Addiction

One of the members of your congregation has a drinking problem. A close, Christian friend of his has worked with him to try and get the abuse to stop. When all efforts failed, he approached a couple of other friends, and together they convinced the man to enter a Rehabilitation Program. They even paid for it out of their own pockets. The man stayed sober for about six weeks, but then began to drink again, this time worse than before. He would even come to church drunk or with a hangover. Additional intervention by his friends failed. Some members of the congregation want to disfellowship the man. Most, however, suggest that it is a private matter. "It is between him and his God," they often say.

How would you react if faced with a similar situation?

Read 1 Corinthians 5:4-8, 12-13, and Matthew 18:15-20. Based on these passages, how should Christians react to this situation?



Poor People

Your congregation has started to work with the poor in the area. Grocery items and clothes are being distributed every week to those who have need. Several things have resulted from this. First, some of the poor that have been helped are now attending worship services and some have even been baptized. They do not have nice clothes and they obviously do not shower regularly or at all. Some of the richer members are complaining about having them around. Second, news about this ministry has spread and the number of people being saved is growing at an alarming rate. Not only that, but some have figured out how to cheat the system and are clearly stealing from the church and others being helped by the church. Third, some are afraid the church is becoming a welfare station. In their opinion anyone who wants to can find a job and provide for his or her family. They are concerned about being “good stewards” and fear that the church is not observing Paul’s command in 2 Thessalonians 3:10: “If a man will not work, he shall not eat.” Furthermore they say, “This ministry only encourages laziness.” These situations have caused some to suggest shutting down the ministry entirely.

How would you react if faced with a similar situation?

Read James 2:1-13; Romans 5:6-8; 2 Corinthians 8:7-15 and 9:12-15. Based on these passages, how should Christians react to this situation?

