

INTRODUCTION:

Welcome to the live stream of Sappony Baptist Church in Stony Creek, Virginia. We are pleased to have you join us online. We look forward to the day that we can meet again in person! What a day of rejoicing that will be! Do us a favor if you would, please like and comment to let us know that you've joined us. Audio of this sermon, along with sermon notes and information about our church will be available at sappony1773.org.

INVOCATION:

Gracious Father, we are once again thankful to be in Your presence worshipping together although separated by distance and time. We thank You for allowing us to gather in this manner, even in the midst of a pandemic. Prepare our hearts to hear Your word to us this morning. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

BACKGROUND:

Corinth was a very worldly city on an isthmus between the Aegean and Adriatic seas. Ships would be dragged across this strip of land from one body of water to the other. Paul had been there in about 50 AD and helped found the church there. By 55, the church was engaged in immorality, sin, and aberrant beliefs, which caused Paul to write 1 Corinthians. He heard later that they still had not repented, so he wrote them another letter which has since been lost. After that, he received good news that they repented, and wrote what we know as 2 Corinthians to them. He wrote this book to express gladness that they had repented, to remind them of their commitment to give to the poor in Jerusalem, and he wrote to assert his authority because some were accusing him of being a false teacher.

SCRIPTURE MESSAGE:

1. SICK PEOPLE CAN MAKE YOU SICK
 - a. (6:14) **Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness?**
 - i. Avoid false teachers! Know your Bible! (Matt. 7:15-23)
 - ii. Marriage: Unequally yoked (KJV).
 - iii. Other alliances/arrangements: There is a very old saying that the enemy of my enemy is my friend. Is this true?
 - b. Whether *they* know it or not. Sometimes their only intention is to be a friend.
 - c. Whether *you* know it or not. If you don't recognize the sickness in someone else, you place yourself in danger.
 - d. "I'll just stay away from the sick people?"
2. SOMETIMES SICK PEOPLE DON'T ACT SICK
 - a. Sometimes people don't *know* they're sick. Some cases of COVID-19 have been mild. And often it takes a lot of time for symptoms to show. In the meantime, they carry on with life, making other people sick.
 - i. Sometimes it's the same with sin. Lost people don't know that they're caught in sin.
 - ii. (Eph. 2:1) **And you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you previously walked according to the ways of this world.**
 - iii. The world is dead and don't even know it.
 - b. Sometimes people pretend that they are well.
 - i. Some people put on a great front.

- ii. Think of false teachers. They want to pass on their sickness to you.
- c. This is why we need to be good at socially distancing.

3. WE NEED TO DISTANCE OURSELVES FROM THE SICK

- a. (6:15-16) **What agreement does Christ have with Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? And what agreement does God's sanctuary have with idols?**
 - i. These are incompatible with each other.
 - ii. The dirty defiles the clean, not the other way around.
- b. (6:16) **For we are the sanctuary of the living God, as God said, "I will dwell among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.**
 - i. If we are disciples, we have the Holy Spirit in us. Let's be careful where we take Him.
- c. (6:17) **Therefore, come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord; do not touch any unclean thing, and I will welcome you.** (ref. Isaiah 52:11)
 - i. (1 John 2:15-17) **Do not love the world or the things that belong to the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For everything that belongs to the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride in one's lifestyle — is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world with its lust is passing away, but the one who does God's will remains forever.**
- d. This is where we get the sickest is trying to hold onto the things of the world.

- e. While we want to avoid getting sick, we also have a duty to the sick.

4. SOMEONE HAS TO CARE FOR THE SICK

- a. (1 Cor 5:9-11) **I wrote to you in a letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. I did not mean the immoral people of this world or the greedy and swindlers or idolaters; otherwise you would have to leave the world. But now I am writing you not to associate with anyone who claims to be a believer who is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or verbally abusive, a drunkard or a swindler. Do not even eat with such a person.**
 - i. Paul is making a careful distinction here. There are those who claim to be believers whose lives do not match that claim.
 - 1. Look at the list. These are not compatible with the Holy Spirit.
- b. But Paul doesn't tell us to not associate with the sinners of the world. In fact, we have a duty to them to bring them Christ.
- c. He is the cure for the sickness that they may not realize they have, and they will not know about Him unless we tell them about Him.

5. AM I SICK?

- a. (2 Cor. 13:5) **Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith. Examine yourselves. Or do you yourselves not recognize that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless you fail the test.**
- b. (John Calvin) We have to examine whether we have true repentance in ourselves, and true faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. These two things are so conjoined, that the one cannot subsist without the other.

- c. **(7:1) Therefore, dear friends, since we have such promises, let us cleanse ourselves from every impurity of the flesh and spirit completing our sanctification in the fear of God.**
 - i. Have you turned away from the sickness of your sin?

6. GOSPEL PRESENTATION (James Merritt)

- a. The bad news: We are all sinners separated from God.
 - i. Everyone sins.
 - ii. God is holy and sin is a barrier between us and Him.
- b. The worst news: There is nothing we can do to take care of our sin problem.
 - i. Religion?
 - ii. Trying harder?
 - iii. Generosity?
- c. The good news: Jesus did for us what we cannot do for ourselves.
 - i. He lived a sinless life
 - ii. He died for our sins.
 - iii. His payment was proven at His resurrection.
- d. The best news: God's forgiveness and eternal life is a free gift, and all we have to do is receive it.
 - i. Realize you are a sinner.
 - ii. Repent of your sin.
 - iii. Receive Christ as Lord and Savior.
- e. Three questions
 - i. Do you understand what you have heard, and does it make sense to you?
 - ii. Is there any reason you can give God that God would accept why you could not receive Christ into your life?
 - iii. Are you willing to pray to Christ for your salvation?

Lord Jesus, I confess today that You are Lord. I turn my life over to You to do Your will. I believe in my heart that You were born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died on a cross for my sins, was buried for three days, and was raised from the dead on the third day. I confess that I am a sinner and ask Your forgiveness for my sins. I commit my life to You from this day forward. Amen!

If you just prayed this prayer for the first time and are now a new believer, please let us know in the comments so that we can reach out to you to help you get started in your new life in Christ.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.