



73 Twenty Ministries
BIBLE STUDIES FOR THE ENTHUSIAST

DISCORD IN THE EARLY CHURCH

73 TWENTY MINISTRIES

A TEACHING MINISTRY OF DR. ROBERT C CROWDER

73TWENTY MINISTRIES: CHARTING THE WORD, NAVIGATING FAITH

Rooted in a lifelong passion for teaching and guiding others in Biblical truth, 73Twenty Ministries is devoted to helping believers navigate the depths of Scripture with both clarity and conviction.

The name 73Twenty holds deep personal significance: it comes from my childhood home at 7320 Greenwood Boulevard in Denver, Colorado. It was here that the foundations of my faith, study, and service were first laid. With the majestic Rocky Mountains ever-present on my horizons, God's Word has been a constant guide and presence throughout my life. The logo of 73Twenty Ministries, with its three mountain peaks in gray, blue, and orange, symbolizes not only the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but also the unwavering foundation of Biblical truth upon which our faith is built.

For more than twenty years, I've served as a pastor, teacher, mentor, and author, committed to making Biblical truths accessible and applicable. Through sermons, Bible studies, books, articles, and other teaching resources, 73Twenty Ministries exists to equip believers, strengthen churches, and proclaim the Gospel. Our mission is both simple and profound: to chart the Word, guiding faith, and helping others anchor their lives in Scripture.

At 73Twenty Ministries, we believe that faithful Biblical study should engage the mind, transform the heart, and shape daily life. Whether through exegetical teaching, character studies, theological exploration, or practical application, every resource is crafted to deepen understanding, strengthen conviction, and encourage obedience to God's Word.

As a ministry grounded in a conservative Baptist, dispensationalist approach, we focus on Biblical exposition, doctrinal clarity, and practical discipleship. We uphold the belief that Scripture is the authoritative, inerrant, and sufficient Word of God, and it's our privilege to help others navigate its timeless truths.

I invite you to explore the resources at 73TwentyMinistries.com and join us on this journey of discovery, growth, and unwavering faith. Together, let's stand on the mountain of God's truths and proclaim His name to every generation.

For His glory alone,

Dr. Robert C. Crowder, Th.D.

Founder, 73Twenty Ministries

DISCORD IN THE EARLY CHURCH

The early church, though established by Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, was not immune to conflict. As the gospel spread and diverse groups of believers came together, disagreements inevitably arose. The New Testament records numerous struggles within the fledgling Christian communities—ranging from leadership disputes to doctrinal controversies. These challenges, while unsettling, ultimately played a crucial role in shaping the church's identity and ensuring that its foundation remained firmly rooted in the truth of the gospel.

FACTIONAL DIVISIONS AND LEADERSHIP DISPUTES

In churches like Corinth, believers began aligning themselves with different apostles or leaders (e.g., Paul, Apollos, Cephas). Such divisions threatened the unity of the community and prompted Paul to urge believers to set aside personal loyalties in favor of the gospel's common message.

MORAL AND ETHICAL LAPSES

Reports of sexual immorality and other behaviors that ran counter to Christian ethical teachings appear in several of Paul's letters. For example, in his correspondence to the Corinthians, Paul addresses not only sexual misconduct but also the tendency to bring legal disputes among believers before secular courts—a sign that the community was not living out its new identity as radically transformed lives.

DISORDER IN WORSHIP AND THE USE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

As the church experienced a surge of spiritual gifts (like speaking in tongues and prophecy), there arose confusion and sometimes chaotic practices during worship. Paul's instructions in 1 Corinthians emphasize orderly worship, highlighting the need for structure so that the gifts edify the entire community rather than create discord.

CONTROVERSIES OVER JEWISH LAW AND GENTILE INCLUSION

One of the most significant early conflicts centered on how much of Jewish tradition, such as circumcision and dietary laws, should be imposed on Gentile converts. The Council of Jerusalem (recorded in Acts 15) and Paul's epistle to the Galatians reflect the struggle to balance respect for Jewish heritage with the radical inclusion of non-Jewish believers, ultimately emphasizing faith in Christ over adherence to the Mosaic Law.

FALSE TEACHINGS AND DOCTRINAL DISPUTES

The New Testament also warns against individuals who distorted the gospel for personal gain or who introduced teachings that conflicted with the core message of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. Both Paul and other New Testament writers stressed the importance of sound doctrine, as deviations could lead to confusion and division within the body of believers.

CONCLUSION

Despite its internal struggles, the early church persevered, guided by the wisdom of the apostles and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit. The conflicts recorded in the New Testament serve as both cautionary lessons and affirmations of the church's resilience. They remind us that unity in Christ must always take precedence over factionalism, that truth must prevail over distortion, and that the gospel transcends cultural and historical barriers. In navigating its growing pains, the early church laid the groundwork for the faith we continue to uphold today.

