Another Manger

Tony Mauck · Proverbs 14:4

INTRODUCTION

- Where there are no oxen, the manger is clean. But abundant crops come by the strength of an ox.
- If you wanted a clean manger, if you want it to be pristine and not messy, what you need to do is just get rid of your oxen.
- The point is that growing things, good things, productive things, often involve a little mess, a little unpleasantness, a little work to clean up.

1 Practicing Hospitality

Acts 2:46; Romans 12:13; 1 Peter 4:9

- The importance of Christians practicing hospitality is emphasized regularly in the New Testament.
- They were having their meals together from house to house with gladness and singleness of heart.
- Be hospitable to one another without complaint. Now, why would anybody complain? Well, it's a difficult task. It involves hard work, it involves strenuous effort and sacrifice.
- We make that too hard. We just need to be together.
- Practicing hospitality. That's important. It builds relationships in the local church.
- You don't have to worry about any of that if you don't practice hospitality. But you may need to be concerned. If in the end you're going to be invited into God's home.

2 The Cost of Leadership and Involvement

- Somebody's got to provide leadership in the local church if it's going to grow and thrive.
- If you serve in some kind of leadership capacity among the Lord's people, somebody's going to criticize you.
- You name me one influential leader among the Lord's people in the first century who did not receive criticism and trouble.
- We're going to keep the manger clean. But is that really better?
- If we have to suffer for the cause of Christ, if we have to endure unjust criticism because we're visible, because we're workers of the kingdom, then so be it.

3 A Growing Church and Maintaining Unity

Ephesians 4:1–3; Philippians 4

- Being diligent to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.
- We're going to have to put some effort into this. It doesn't just happen.
- Everything's not always going to be nice and neat in the local church.

- Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.
- There are little things that are problems in a local church that are not quite as neat as we would like them to be. But if we're going to be a growing church, we've got to accept some of this.

4 The Efforts We Make in Evangelism

Ephesians 4:15; Mark 6

- Grow up in all aspects unto him who is the head, even Christ, speaking the truth in love.
- There is a proper manner in which the truth needs to be spoken. It's not enough to simply convey the truth.
- A lot of times our thinking is, and I'm guilty of this as well, let's not dirty up the manger.
- A lot of times we're reluctant to bring it up with the coworker, we're reluctant to bring it up to a neighbor.
- Is it better to say nothing and just let them be lost? Is it better to let them continue in their sins?
- And so you can keep the manger clean, but what about the potential cost to souls?

THE CHALLENGE

The salvation of your soul is your most important concern. Have you decided to follow Jesus?

MY NOTES