



a publication of kirk irwin and sarah kennedy irwin in ministry with Cru and partnering with Friday Arts Project

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I hear that there are divisions among you

"...men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do..."
—I Chronicles 12:32 - speaking of the Men of Issachar

The year after I graduated from college, I met regularly with my pastor—Peter Lillback. We talked about many things at those breakfasts, my young mind absorbing as much as it could. We especially talked over my college experience and the content I was taught, as well as questions about Christianity and my relationship with God.

I remember one of the answers to a particular question I had, "Why is there division in the Church?" Pete's answer was something I've thought about often and have returned to from time to time. My question wasn't one of challenge, as if this would seal my departure from God, it was more a question of understanding. In Pete's answer, he turned my attention to the Corinthian Church in the early days of Christianity and the Apostle Paul's first letter to them. In chapter 11 Paul writes this: "...I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized." After several chapters of engaging the Corinthian church about severe things, Paul appears to have snuck in the reason for divisions in this phrase—"that those who are genuine among you may be recognized"—or to put it another way, that someone may be shown to be true, in this case "genuine". Pete posited that the reason there is division is to show who is right. That was hard to hear, but nevertheless rang true.

Recently division has arisen even within Cru in the last few years. Christianity Today released an article on June 3 about this very division (you can find that article here: <https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2021/june/cru-divided-over-emphasis-on-race.html>). We wanted to let you know that we have been very aware and involved in the discussions about this disagreement. It has not been easy, nor is it over. But as "iron sharpens iron" we hope we all come out in closer proximity to the true King, the one who is always right and, in whom, we are made right.

Being right himself wasn't really Paul's point, because sentences later from these verses in chapter 11 he points them to the Table—the visible example of the Gospel, and yet he goes further. He adds at the end of chapter 11 that he wishes for those at the Table already to wait, "so that when you come together it will not be for judgment." It was almost as if he was saying even if you are right, wait, and refrain from wrong judgement.

That is our hope in the midst of this turmoil. We would really appreciate your prayers, as the myriad discussions and communications have been draining, but not without hope.

Even so, we are both no less committed to the story of our Rabbi, who lived the perfect life, died the atoning death, and rose again defeating Death. It is His story that we wish to tell our neighbors and friends through our words and deeds here in Rock Hill, and the arts community near and far.

On our "Patron's Page" we have uploaded a letter from the US Director of Cru, Mark Gauthier, addressing the internal issues. Again, we ask your prayers for us and all our brothers and sisters in Cru. Pray that we would grow in our relationships with Jesus, the one who is always right, and makes us right in Him.**

**If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. ■

Blessings—

Please Pray

- » We've run into a real obstacle regarding the regrading of our property. We need to have this done to secure the stability of our wonderful old house for the long term. Please pray God provides a landscaper to get this done as soon as possible.
- » We hear rumors of "spiritual awakenings" happening here in the US. Not many, but then God is not one to always be public about His work. Pray that God would prepare us for whatever He would wish related to this. We really wish people here in our community would see who Jesus is and trust Him.

Updates

- » Audrey (Sarah's best friend) is doing much better right now. You can follow along with her on her Caring Bridge Journal, <https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/audreybutler/journal>



Kirk has recorded a video update - watch it on the Patron's page on our website.

- ★ For more information about us and our ministry, visit our website: www.birdandkey.com also check out Friday Arts Project on Facebook or website: www.fridayartsproject.org
- ★ If you would like to partner with us in ministry, visit our giving page on Cru's website: www.cru.org/0402593

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