

June 18, 2017

**Reboot**

Read 2 Corinthians 4: 7-12



First, I want to apologize for not publishing these *Roots* over the past several months. It has been too long. I am sorry.

Now that's done, let's talk about imperfections and how they sometimes hamper us. Think of how many times you've heard something like this, "I don't want to pray in front of everyone because I don't sound as good as that person." Or try this one, "I don't know the bible well enough to respond to these kinds of questions or accusations." Chances are you've heard something like this recently. Maybe you've even said something like this recently. Well let me try to alleviate any fears or concerns or qualms, because you are all qualified (and expected just look at 1 Peter 3: 15) to answer the tough questions and you are all more than qualified to pray in public. But, most of all I want to address the underlying issue with thoughts like this.

Ask yourself right now why you don't want to pray. Ask yourself what it is that you need to know in order to answer the tough questions that come up in your lives, and why you don't have it. Now, what holds us back in many and various ministries as a church as a whole? FEAR! Simply, we are afraid of something! We're afraid we're going to say the wrong thing in prayer, as if we don't have God the Holy Spirit backing us up in that department. Maybe we're afraid that we'll turn someone away from God if we don't present our argument just right. Maybe we're afraid that people will see the church for what it is, a place of gathering for sinners and hypocrites and prideful and you-name-it-we-got-it people. In many cases we are

afraid that we don't have it all together and because of that we can't do any good in this, that or the other situation. First consider this: because we're afraid we've turned this into a First Commandment issue. We are fearing something more than God. YES, I said it, and I meant it. We need to FEAR God above all else, just like Luther taught us. Yes there is an aspect of awe and reverence in this fear, but it is also FEAR. Think of your chores growing up. Sometimes the only reason you got the really nasty ones done is because you feared how dad or mom would react when they saw you hadn't done them. In the same thinking, fearing to do as God has commanded because we might look silly, or might get hurt, or might say it wrong is fearing your own inability more than fearing how God will react when he sees you've not done a thing. So FEAR God and love your neighbor enough to overcome your shortcomings.

Second consider this: Jesus died for your sins, they are covered and forgotten. More than that, Jesus rose that by his life he might work through the lives of those who call on him in faith. Paul tells us that we have a treasure in jars of clay. Clay jars scratch and break and chip and crack as they are used and abused. That is the same in our lives, but that doesn't change what is inside us. No matter what our imperfections are on the outside we have Christ alive within us, ready and able to work by his Spirit through our cracks and chips. So the answer to those tough questions is this: the love of Christ. You know it so live it for the person asking.

*Pastor Carl J. H.*

