

Rocky Hill Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
“Small Group Bible Study” – sponsored by the Open and Affirming Committee
Session #2 – January 27, 2009 at 7:00 PM

WELCOME

PRAYER

REVIEW Behavioral Covenant (handout)

FIRST READING: 1 Corinthians 6:1-20

STEP 1: Read the context bullet-points together.

STEP 2: Read the Bible passage out loud together.

STEP 3: Discuss each of the following questions together:

- What is the author trying to tell us in this chapter?
- According to this passage, how should conflicts among fellow believers be resolved?
- How would you characterize our culture’s view of sexuality?

SECOND READING: 1 Timothy 1:1-20

STEP 1: Read the context bullet-points together.

STEP 2: Read the Bible passage out loud together.

STEP 3: Discuss the following questions together:

- What message is the author delivering to his readers?
- In your experience, has God been more of a “lawgiver” or “lover”?
- How has your understanding of God changed (or not changed) throughout your life?

Next Time (Session 3)....Your ideas? Some suggestions....

John 4

Luke 10:25-37

Galatians 5:1

Ephesians 5, 21-33

1 Peter 3:1-7

1 Thessalonians 4:2-5

Matthew 19:3-12

A Behavioral Covenant for Group Conversations and Forums

Behavioral Covenants* have been very important aids to individuals, institutions and congregations engaged in sensitive discussions. The Open and Affirming Committee encourages use of this covenant during ONA programming.

Covenant

Our purpose is to promote understanding.

We will treat each other with caring and respect, as God's beloved children.

We will take time for prayer.

We will speak in the first person "I", and from our own experience.

We will speak one at a time.

We will listen for understanding, especially when we seem to disagree.

We will speak and seek the truth in love.

We will allow each other equal "air time."

We will ask questions for clarification, not for judgment.

*Source (with modifications): <http://www.ctucc.org/resources/behavioralcovenant-sbs0304.html>

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2/12/2008

1 Corinthians 6:1-20

From the Oxford Annotated Revised Standard Version Bible, 1977:

- Paul is writing this letter from Ephesus to the church at Corinth, which was consistently one of his favorites—despite there being doubts and suspicions at work on both sides from the start. The whole of this letter is concerned directly or indirectly with doctrinal and ethical problems that were disturbing the Corinthian church.

From The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. II, 1953:

- vv. 1-8: the relationship of the church to the courts; what to do about legal cases.
- vv. 9-11: standards of the kingdom
- vv. 12-20: chastity among the members of the body of Christ

To the assumption that physical acts do not affect the inner person, Paul counters with two limitations on a Christian's freedom:

1. From the social point of view, is the act helpful?
2. From the individual's point of view, will the act make one slaves to passion and thus destroy freedom itself?

From The New Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 1, 1994:

- For Paul, humans do not have bodies, they ARE bodies. It is a much later idea that humans are composed of body and some more valuable inner spark that might be termed "soul" or "spirit."
- Paul believes one's relationship with Christ is like a marriage. If the quality of our marriage does not reflect our ideal relationship with Christ, it's time to work on our marriage. If our marriage is in better shape than our relationship with Christ, then we should be working to improve our relation with Christ. What can be said about marriage can be extended to other relationships by analogy. In short, how we are with the Lord should find correspondences in the other relationships in our lives.

1 Timothy 1:1-20

From the Oxford Annotated Revised Standard Version Bible, 1977:

- The first letter to Timothy (most likely NOT written by Paul, to whom it is attributed) has a double purpose: to provide guidance in the problems of church administration, and to oppose the false teaching of a speculative and moralistic type.

From The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. II, 1953:

- vv. 1-2: the salutation.
- vv. 3-7: the charge to maintain sound doctrine
- vv. 8-11: the Christian and the law
- vv. 12-17: Paul, the ideal preacher
- vv. 18-20: Timothy, Paul's loyal successor
- The Law expressed in this passage refers to the 10 Commandments, which Paul expands in his list. Specifically, adultery is expanded to include immoral persons and sodomites.
- "The Law is given for the wicked, and as superseded by the gospel is without luster"

From The New Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 1, 1994:

- At the time of this writing, "the new Christian movement was still young. Its center was firmly fixed in the gospel of Jesus Christ, but its circumference was far from clear. The process of definition and boundary drawing required a firm hand; otherwise the identity of the new movement would be dissipated...Later generations may question some of these firm lines, but without them there would probably have been no lasting lines of definition from within which these questions could be posed."