

August 10, 2017



I know nothing, I hear nothing, and I see nothing leaders!

*Proverbs 27:23
Know well the
condition of your
flocks, And pay
attention to your
herds*

Anyone who watches old TV reruns or who grew up in the 60s remembers the lovable Sgt. Schultz from *Hogan's Heroes*. Schultz was a middle-management prison official who was responsible to oversee prisoner activities in a WW2 German prison camp. His style of leadership can be termed as *ignorance is bliss*. Schulz knew the prisoners were probably engaging in covert activities, but in an effort to keep the peace and avoid any responsibility Schultz lived with the famous phrase, "I know nothing, I hear nothing, and I see nothing."

Schultz was basically a good-hearted man, but he ignored what was really going on. Schultz was a lazy fearful leader who was only concerned about his self-interest. He wanted to avoid knowing or being blamed for the prisoner's misconduct—which might see him given a one-way trip to the Eastern Front. He liked his position and didn't want it threatened with any conflict or hassle.

It is unfortunate, but there are often Sgt. Schultz types of leaders in local churches. They do not want to know what is really going on in the lives of God's people. As long as they don't know they won't have to feel responsible to take any action. Not knowing takes the spotlight off of their lack of leadership.

There was an example of this sort of leadership in the church at Corinth. In much of the letter of 1 Corinthians



Paul is admonishing them for a lack of dealing with sin problems in the local church (fights among its members, partisan spirits which lead to disunity and even lawsuits 1:11-31, 3:1-33, 6:1-13, as well a sexual immorality among some of their young people 7:1-27). One of the most challenging issues was in Chapter 5 in which a man was carrying on an adulterous affair with his step mother. Some commentators believe that this was probably a prominent member of the church because most of the church seemed to know about it.

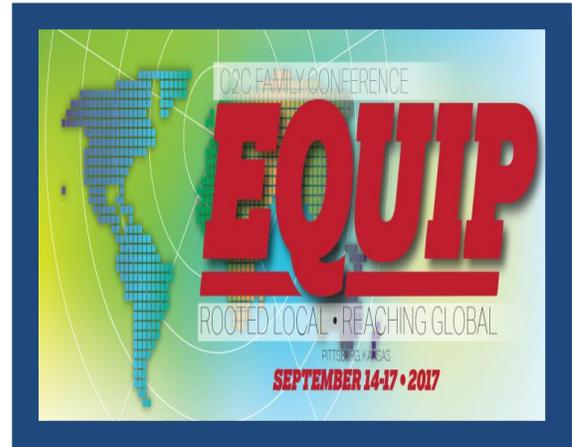
1Co 5:1-13 *It is actually reported that there is immorality among you, and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, that someone has his father's wife.*

(2) You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst...I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; (10) I did not at

all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world. (11) But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler--not even to eat with such a one. (12) For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? (13) But those who are outside, God judges. REMOVE THE WICKED MAN FROM AMONG YOURSELVES.

Like Sgt Schultz the leaders in Corinth obviously knew this was going on but chose to ignore it. While church leaders can't stop sin from happening they do have a responsibility to help **guide** and **govern** people through it effects.

I remember reading an article by John Ortberg who was writing on the tremendous lack of leaders who deal with sin issues in the church world today. *Maybe the most fundamental dynamic in church discipline is also the simplest: Sin happens. It happens in big churches, it happens in little churches. It probably happens at roughly the same per capita rate no matter what the congregation's size. It should sadden everyone, but it shouldn't shock anyone. So the question is not how to respond if it happens. The question is how to respond when it happens? A second dynamic is also a constant*



across congregations regardless of size: In any biblically authentic community, sin is confronted, not ignored. I believe churches try to cover up sin even more than people outside the church do, and larger churches are more prone to this temptation than smaller ones.

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Example of Sgt. Schultz Leadership

As a church leader who has lived in smaller communities I have come across the Sgt Schultz approach first hand. I have literally had other leaders hold up their hand and with similar words as Sgt. Schultz say, "I don't want to know about it!" Sometimes it has tragic consequences.

Years ago a leader caught me at a community prayer time and with tears in his eyes said, "I should have listened to what you were trying to tell me...I am so sorry....why didn't I listen?" He was referring to an interaction we had a couple of years earlier.

I had encountered a young man who had come to one of our gatherings with an obvious interest in a young girl in our church. He was making weird hand signals during the worship time. A friend and I met with him after the service to inquire what was going on. We discovered he was involved with magic and had touched the occult in it. We expressed concern for some of the things he was involved in and later met with his dad to share our concerns. He listened but didn't think it was that big of a deal.

I knew the pastor of their church so I met with him and shared what happened and our concerns. He was very uncomfortable and didn't seem to want to hear it. It reminded me a little of Sgt. Schultz so I left it with him. That young man ended up seducing the youth leader's wife. Now the marriage had blown apart leaving a small child who had to be raised without her father in the home. It was so sad because I had spent time with that couple a few years earlier and they had a sweet spirit and zeal for God.

Leader's cannot stop sin, but as Paul told Titus they must fearlessly exercise God's governing authority to warn and restore those who are caught up in it. **Titus 2:15** *Teach these things, as you use your full authority to encourage and correct people. Let no one disregard you.*

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