



Jeff Sweeten

Thus Saith the Lord

GOT CRABS?

By Jeff Sweeten

I saw, on the front of a T-shirt, a rather eye-catching advertisement for a popular sea-food eatery. Across the front, in bold, red letters, were the words: "Got Crabs?" (a great piece of advertising, actually). Now, what kinds of crabs are we talking about here because there are many different types of "crab," from a louse to a crustacean.

For instance, there is this giant spider crab (*Macrocheira kampferi*) which lives in the waters off the Ryukyu Islands southeast of Japan that stands three feet high and often weighs as much as thirty pounds. His powerful legs can spread as wide as twelve feet and any man to challenge him has usually drawn back a bloody nub. He doesn't appreciate being discovered and, during the day, secludes himself under the deep ocean waters. When the sun sets, he clambers ashore in dark secrecy and goes about beach like an extraterrestrial, attempting to quell an insatiable appetite. Japanese fishermen dread snagging this monster in their nets because of the certain damage to equipment and personnel and, when caught, this fellow can be a malcontent.

Giant crabs are a problem in a lot of areas, especially in the Church. Their wide span of influence can affect the whole Body, "**who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not**" (Titus 1:11). Their impact is damaging and often leads to severed members and, sometimes, spiritual death, having "**fallen from grace**" (Galatians 5:4). Their appetite is voracious and indiscriminate; they are not concerned with who gets eaten as long as they are satisfied, "**for those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly**" (Romans 16:18). Their most effective work is done in the darkness of secrecy, who stealthily and "**secretly bring in destructive heresy**" (2 Peter 2:1). They are incredibly powerful in their ability to devastate and devour, ignoring the fact that "**if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!**" (Galatians 5:15).

This kind of crab is hard to miss, not because of their size or color but because of their practices "**therefore by their fruits you will know them**" (Matthew 7:20). Their crushing claws are gossiping, backbiting, demoralizing and, with this kind of crab, "**perversity is in his heart, he devises evil continually, he sows discord**" (Proverbs 6:14). They feed on illwill, division and turmoil, and never seem to get enough, "**who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine**" (Romans 16:17). "**These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit**" (Jude 1:19). Worst of all, when discovered, they usually express an ugliness unbecoming a Christian, like "**raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame**" (Jude 1:13).

Yes, crabs can be a problem for the Church, from the big ones to that single, tiny, annoying little louse, and, frankly, their absence is a blessing. "**Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another**" (Romans 14:19). Got crabs?

Thus Saith the Lord
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Park Heights Church of Christ

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Schedule of Services

SUNDAY

9:30 a.m. Bible Class
10:25 a.m. Morning Worship
1:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship

WEDNESDAY

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

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