

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 12TH - 13TH, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

## POSITIVE REBUKE? (1 CORINTHIANS 5:1-5)

### CONTINUING THE THOUGHT

Originally there weren't chapters in the Bible. Chapter 5 is continuing with the same narrative as chapter 4: will the church in Corinth be humble and repent for their blatant sin?

- Paul was shocked to learn that not only sin had been "reported" and the church was tolerating it, but also the degree of sin they were tolerating.

### NON-BELIEVERS DON'T EVEN TOLERATE THIS!

The sin was a man having sex with his stepmother. Incest was actually practiced often in Rome, but it was an unspoken taboo.

- Shockingly, the Corinthians weren't just allowing this sin, they were celebrating it! **The problem was that tolerance, instead of biblical integrity, became a badge of honor in the church community.**

### "SHOULDN'T YOU BE FILLED WITH GRIEF?"

Paul is astonished that the church wasn't distraught over the blatant sin and even states that they are "arrogant" or proud of how progressive they were.

- **If we claim to love God and others, sin should disturb and grieve us because the "wages of sin is death" (Rm. 6:23). Sin dishonors God and destroys people!**

### DISCIPLINE IS NEVER EASY

Paul's conclusion is that **people who are unrepentant and knowingly engaging in sin should be removed from the church community.**

- We're to meet with people and give them the opportunity to confess and repent. If they choose not to, we're to separate from them for the integrity and sake of the church.

### THIS REBUKE IS AN ACT OF LOVE

We're instructed to "hand that one over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh." This means we disfellowship with them.

- **This isn't done out of malice, but love! When professing Christians disregard the Word, we have to take measures that hopefully move people towards repentance because we care about them.**

### HOW DOES THIS WORK TODAY?

Today it is impossible to know everyone's heart, but we can teach the Word and limit involvement in the community.

- **Everyone is welcome to the weekend services because it should be an open door. The real community is people who are involved in the mission, in relationships, and willingly being held accountable.**

### CONTAMINATED (1 CORINTHIANS 5:6-8)

#### A LITTLE SIN CAN RUIN THE ENTIRE CHURCH

Paul says, "Your boasting is not good" because the allowance of even a little sin in the church is like leaven when placed into a loaf of bread; it spreads throughout the whole congregation.

- The incestuous man wasn't the biggest problem. **The church's failure to address sin held much greater consequences.**

### LIKE "A NEW UNLEAVENED BATCH"

We (the church) are called to be a pure representation of God on earth. We are instructed on how to do that by the teachings and principles of the Bible.

- The problem is **so few churches teach the Bible. When we fail to address the hard truths of the Word, we not only fail God, we mislead people.**

### OUR ADDICTION TO ACCEPTANCE

Remember, the prevailing problem in Corinth was the people's turning from the truth to what is culturally popular and accepted.

- **Have we turned to the broken systems of man rather than the eternal truths of God? Where has it led us? Has our addiction to affirmation and acceptance brought us contentment? What is the eternal cost?**

### DEALING WITH SIN

We are told to deal with the "leaven" in the church. We are to also deal with the "leaven" (sin) within ourselves. **It is only by addressing sin that we can live in the will of God.**

- **The Bible defines sin and teaches us the means by which to eradicate its hold on our lives.** This is only possible through **Jesus' sacrifice and our obedience.**

### SO WE CAN LIVE IN "SINCERITY" AND "TRUTH"

If we partake in "the feast, not with old leaven or with the leaven of malice and evil" **we can live a life of sincerity and truth.**

- It goes back to the simple choice of either living by the wisdom of God and His Word or the "wisdom" of the world. One yields truth and sincerity, the other yields anger and evil.

### DISCIPLINE (1 CORINTHIANS 5:9-13)

#### THIS GIVES A LOT OF CLARITY

Paul didn't want to be misunderstood. He clearly tells the church to not associate with "sexually immoral people," who claim to be Christians.

- This is part of a bigger lesson: **we cannot hold people accountable for things they don't know or claim to adhere to.** On the other hand, **we MUST hold professing Christians accountable.**

### WE ARE ALSO CALLED TO BE LIGHT IN THE WORLD

We're not meant as Christians to be isolated from the world. This is clear in V10 when Paul essentially says it is impossible to distance yourself from the "immoral people of this world."

- **In order to be the light in the darkness, we must be insulated by the Holy Spirit, not isolated from a world that needs the truth we possess.**

### WE ARE NOT TO ELEVATE OTHER'S SINS

Notice Paul starts with sexual sin but then includes greed, dishonest business practices, idolatry, people who are verbally abusive, and intoxication in his list of things that God doesn't approve of.

- **All sin is evil. The point of the Bible isn't to address the evil in everyone else, it's to address the evil in ourselves.**

### "DO NOT EVEN EAT WITH SUCH A PERSON"

When people claim to be Christians but fail to give evidence of that claim, we are to distance ourselves from them because it damages the reputation of the church.

- The #1 reason people avoid church and Christianity is they believe we're hypocrites (Barna). **We will not be perfect, but we can avoid hypocrisy.**

### THIS IS THE LAST RESORT

"Remov[ing] the evil person from among [the church]" is the last resort. We would be wise to start with the method set forth by Jesus in Mt. 18 before ex-communication.

- **Church discipline is a difficult and troubling process that must be carried out with wisdom and mercy in order to create a path back into the community.**

### HAVE WE ALLOWED SOME "LEAVEN" IN?

- Have we been dedicated to the Bible enough to know what actions and thoughts are sinful?
- **Have we been willingly ignorant to sin or compromised our integrity because of the pressure of culture?** Do we even celebrate it at times?
- Do we understand even a little sin contaminates the entire church?

### LOVING PROTECTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- We are called to stand guard against the corruption of Jesus' Bride, the Church. **Are we courageous enough to identify sin and stand by the teachings of the Word?**
- **Do we love the people around us enough to teach them the truth about sin and its ramifications?**
- Do we grieve over the sins of others?

### ARE WE WILLING TO BE REBUKED?

- The Bible was written so we can identify the evil in us. **Are we willing to be held accountable by God, His Word, and other Christians?**
- Are we looking for correction or affirmation? What if our feelings conflict with the Bible?
- **If we claim Christ, are we submitted to His commands?** (Jn. 14:15)

### EVIDENCE

- **What is the evidence of our faith?** If "a tree is known by its fruit" (Mt. 12:33), what "fruit" is being produced in our lives that shows we are following Christ?
- Do we even know what fruit to look for and what unrighteous things to remove, or **has our attention to culture confused us as to what is good and evil?**