

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 13TH, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

IMMORALITY IN THE CHURCH (1 CORINTHIANS 5:1-5) CALLING OUT SIN

When we see Paul calling out immorality in the church, we must view it in light of what he previously said in his letter. Paul said, "I am not writing to shame you, but to warn you as dear children." (1 Cor. 4:14)

- **Unrepentant sin within the church must be called out and dealt with, but this must be done with a hope for restoration.**

SEXUAL IMMORALITY

The ancient Greek "pornea" is used to describe sexual immorality. It is a broad word that includes all sexual activity outside of marriage.

- Paul often mentions sexual immorality in his letters because the view of sex and sexuality that believers were to uphold were a stark contrast to the views of the culture around them. **As believers, we are called to a higher standard.**

WE CANNOT BE SILENT

Paul was aware of a man in the church, that was having a sexual relationship with his stepmother, and the church was staying silent about this incestuous relationship.

- Paul noted that this type of relationship was **detested amongst the pagans**, but these Corinthian Christians seemed to be **accepting of such behavior by not addressing it.**

INDIFFERENCE IS THE SAME AS ACCEPTANCE

Paul was concerned with the sin that was being committed, but he was equally concerned that the Corinthian Christians seemed to turn a "blind eye" to sin and were unconcerned about this matter.

- **We are unable to be indifferent about sin our lives and those around us that claim to follow Jesus.**

WORLDLY WISDOM LEADS TO MORAL FAILURE

Earlier in Paul's letter he addresses the necessity of being able to view things through the wisdom of God and not the wisdom of men.

- Now he draws a connection to how being unable to see things correctly has led to moral failure in the church and the inability of the church to address it.

TOLERANCE AT THE SAKE OF INTEGRITY

The Corinthians probably thought they were being loving because of their tolerance to this man's sin.

- Paul said this group of Christians "should be filled with grief" at the sin of a fellow believer. Instead, **they were filled with pride and became arrogant at how open-minded they were.**

IN THE SAME AUTHORITY

Paul says, "even though I am absent in body, I am present in spirit," he is saying that he did not physically have to be there to exercise his Apostolic authority.

- His letter was an extension of him and should be received with the same authority as if he had come in person to correct these issues.

MAKING JUDGEMENT

Paul exerts his Apostolic authority by saying, "I have already pronounced judgement on the one who has been doing such a thing."

- This judgement does not go against Jesus' command, "not to judge lest you be judged." In Matt. 7:1-5, Jesus is **warning against being hypocritical in our judgements and using standards that we do not want to be held to.**

THE SOLUTION

Paul instructs the church to **hand the unrepentant man over to Satan.**

- This phraseology means to put someone out of the church, into the world, which is the devil's "domain". **It is a removal of spiritual protection and social comfort that comes from being in the church. It is not an infliction of evil!**

HERE'S WHERE WE GET IT WRONG

In the time of Paul, there was no where else to go, so when someone was placed under discipline and put out of fellowship, they would miss gathering and turn from their sin.

- **We have created a flippant view of church attendance, and we have not created the type of fellowship that people would miss.**

THERE IS A PURPOSE

Paul expresses that we place people out of spiritual protection and comfort of the church in hopes that their **rebellious flesh is destroyed so that the soul might be saved.**

- The hope is that the unrepentant person will **crucify the flesh with its passions and desires** (Gal. 5:24), **repent, and be restored back to God.**

THE GOAL IS CLEAR

We do not cast someone out as condemned, but in the hope of restoration.

- **"Church discipline is not a group of 'pious policemen' out to catch a criminal. Rather it is a group of broken-hearted brothers and sisters seeking to restore an erring member of the family."** (Warren Wiersbe)

A LITTLE LEAVEN... (1 CORINTHIANS 5:6-8)

PAUL EXPLAINS WHY SIN MUST BE ADDRESSED

Paul tells the Corinthians that their "boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole batch of dough?"

- Paul uses a metaphor of leaven to explain how the Corinthian's pride in being tolerant and **allowing sin to go unchecked will inevitably affect the entire church unless it is purged.**

METAPHOR EXPLAINED

Leaven is any substance, like yeast, that is used to produce fermentation in dough. It is the main ingredient that causes bread to rise before it is ready for baking.

- It only takes a small amount of leaven, or yeast, to make the whole batch of dough rise.
- The "leaven" represents sin, and the "batch of dough" represents the church.
- Simply put, Paul is saying that **all it takes is a little bit of unchecked sin in one member of the body to affect the entire body** of believers because **we are all collective parts of one whole.** (1 Cor.12:12-26)

LIVE UNLEAVENED BECAUSE YOU ARE

Similar to how all leaven was removed from a house during the Passover feast, the church is to show the same concern to remove unrepentant sinners from their presence.

- Paul says we do this so we can be "a new unleavened batch, as indeed you are." Meaning that **we are "unleavened" through Jesus, and we must live like it!**

LIVING WORTHY OF THE SACRIFICE

Paul tells the Corinthians that they can observe the Passover feast by removing the "old leaven" of malice and evil from their lives.

- With the "old leaven" removed, the people of Corinth would be able to **live lives worthy of the sacrifice** of "Christ our Passover lamb," and their lives would consist of "sincerity and truth."

CHURCH DISCIPLINE (1 CORINTHIANS 5:9-13)

BRINGING CLARITY TO A PREVIOUS LETTER

Paul instructs the Corinthians not to associate with the sexually immoral as he stated in a previous letter.

- Paul had to offer clarity on this principle of separation. He was not saying **we are to dissociate from sinners in a sinful world, "otherwise you would have to leave the world."**

WITHDRAW FROM THOSE WITHIN

Paul explained that he was not saying to withdraw from the sexually immoral of the world, but "anyone who claims to be a brother" that **practices unrighteousness.**

- This **protects the individual**, because "bad company corrupts good character" (1 Cor. 15:33). It **protects the church** from corrupting influences that excuse sin.

"DO NOT EVEN EAT WITH SUCH A PERSON"

Though we do not approve of sin, we cannot expect the world to act like Christ Followers.

- However, **we are to expect those who claim to follow Christ to act like it and not perpetually sin like those who do not know any better.** We are not to even have a meal with such a person, which signifies agreement and partnership.

WE ARE TO MAKE JUDGEMENTS

Paul asks the Corinthians, "don't you judge those who are inside?" He is reminding the church that we are to make judgements within the church.

- **We are to judge "fruit" of those within the church, but only God knows the heart and motives and He is the one who judges those outside the church.**

CHURCH DISCIPLINE

- **2 Cor. 2:5-8**
- **Matt. 18:15-17**
- Just as a "U-turn" is placed on a road for your health and safety. It lets you know there is danger ahead, to turn around now! **Correction is meant to turn someone away from the destruction they are heading towards.** We don't view these warning signs as harsh or mean. Instead, **we should be thankful that someone cares about us enough to try and turn us away from danger.**