

Immorality in the Church 1 Corinthians 5:1-13

Paul has invested four chapters discouraging division in the Corinthian church.

- a) It misrepresents God's nature – God is One in Three unified Persons
- b) It disfigures God's character –
- c) It distorts God's mission - He is reconciling all things to himself in Jesus (2 Cor 5:19)

Division – *dia-balo* – is the devil's work.

First: The Reality of the Sin. v 1

- a) The sin
 - 'sexual immorality' = *porneia* (pornography) = sexual activity outside of marriage
 - 'a man has' = an enduring relationship
- b) The people

'his father's wife' = stepmother

- c) The result

Roman statesman Cicero – "This type of incest is practically unheard of."

Leviticus 18:8 - *You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife...*

Second: The Church's Response. 2

- a) Arrogant

4:8 - *Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings!*

- b) *Not mourning* – *penthos* =

15 – 10th – 6:1-11 – Suing Christians

- c) Inactive - *Let him who has done this be removed from among you.*

- 1 - An wrong view of ourselves creates
- 2 – an incorrect view of sin which leads to

3 - inappropriate behavior

Ephesians 2:4-9 – *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

1 – The source of our salvation – 4 - *God's great love and mercy.* 4

2 – The reason for our salvation—5a - *we were dead in our trespasses.* 5b

3- The result of our salvation—5b-6 - *made us alive together with Christ...and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places.* 5b-6

4 – The motive of our salvation– 7 - *so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus*

5 – The means of our salvation – 8-9 - *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

Isn't faith a work? No, because faith is the gift from God.

- Positively – *For by grace you have been saved through faith*
- Negatively – *And this is not your own doing*
- Positively – *It is the gift of God*
- Negatively – *not a result of works*

“So that no one may boast.” - Why is God giving all the glory to Jesus and none to us?

- So that we won't place an unbearable burden on ourselves.
- So we won't waste our lives trying to save ourselves.
- So that we won't die eternally lost

Let us talk plainly and boldly about our sin so that we will understand that Jesus is our only hope.

Let us easily confess our sin because we know Jesus to be so willing and great a Savior.

Third: Paul's Admonition. 3-5

- a) By putting this person outside the church, the church is effectively delivering him to the domain of the devil

- b) Suffering the consequence of his sin, his fleshly impulse will be 'destroyed'

Satan's destructive work in the man's life to lead him to repentance.

1 Timothy 1:18-20 - This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, ¹⁹ holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, ²⁰ among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

- c) The result will be that the man is saved

Church discipline is not a group of 'pious policemen' out to catch a criminal. Rather, it is a group of brokenhearted brothers and sisters seeking to restore an erring member of the family."

– Warren Wiersbe

It worked!

2 Corinthians 2:5-8 - Now if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure—not to put it too severely—to all of you. ⁶ For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, ⁷ so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. ⁸ So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him.

Note: Church discipline is crucial for at least three reasons:

1 - It is necessary to convict and correct people, so no one is fooled about their spiritual state (1 Corinthians 10:12).

2 – It is necessary for the spiritual health of the other believers and the body (Jude 1:12; Galatians 2:4).

6-8 - Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? ⁷ Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸ Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

3 - It is necessary to prevent the unbelieving world from having legitimate reasons to criticize the body of Christ (1 Peter 2:12; 2 Peter 2:1–2; Galatians 2:14).

Fifth: Sin, in and out of the Church. 9-12

- a) We should associate with sexually immoral people outside the church – 9-10

Surprisingly, this is the exact approach many people take, trying to get as far away from the world as possible. This was the whole spirit behind the monastic movement in the early and medieval church.

Paul's point is that you will have to leave the world to get away from sexually immoral people.

"I'm not talking about sinners in the world, but sinners in the church."

b) We should not associate with immoral Christians - 11

- We should not be surprised that – 10 - the world is comprised of sexually immoral, greedy swindlers, or idolaters
- We should be surprised that – 11 – brothers are sexually immoral, greedy, idolaters, revilers, drunkards, and swindlers

12a - We are too busy judging the world when God is the judge of the world.

12b – We are not busy enough judging ourselves

13 – We should love Christians enough to remove sinning Christians from our fellowship

Sixth: The Issue of Love

The cross confronts us with our sin. it says that God hates sin so much and that sin is so destructive that only God himself could cure it and at the cost of the life of his own son. The cross demonstrates that love requires we acknowledge our sin.

1 John 1:8 - *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

Love confronts. Love challenges.

- a) How is Paul demonstrating love to the Corinthians in addressing this issue?
- b) How is the man in question not demonstrating love to his father or stepmother?

IMP: It is interesting that Paul doesn't say the stepmother should be disciplined? It is probably because the father and stepmother are not Christians.

- c) How are the Corinthians not showing love to the man?
- d) How are the Corinthians not showing love to Corinth?

Seventh: The Importance of this Problem

- a) This man has 'stolen' his father's bride
 - This is what Satan attempted to do
 - Adam and Eve stole what was rightfully God's
 - Every sin is theft of God's glory and God's ownership
- b) Marriage is intended to reflect Christ and his bride
 - Jesus is a faithful Creator (1 Ptr 4:19)
 - Infidelity is like a knife to a painting, ruining the image
 - Infidelity is disruption when God is reconciling

Conclusion:

You may say, "I just want people to leave me alone." But what kind of cruel, unloving world would it be if people left you alone?

Community Groups:

- 1 – What specific sin is Paul addressing in this chapter?
- 2 – How had the church responded to this situation?
- 3 – What action did Paul say the church should have taken?
- 4 – Read Eph 2:4-9 and walk through these steps
 - What is the source of our salvation?
 - What is the reason for our salvation?
 - What is the result of our salvation?
 - What is the motive for our salvation?
 - What is the means of our salvation?
- 5 – Why isn't faith a work?
- 6 – State the positives and negatives in verses Eph 2:8-9.
- 7 – What does Paul ask the church to do with this offender?
- 8 – What is the hope of such action?
- 9 – Why is spiritual discipline necessary?
- 10 – How should we live amongst sinners?
- 11 – How should we live amongst sinning saints?
- 12 – How would you respond to someone who might say Paul is unloving in this text?
- 13 – Why is this text so important?