

“The Issue of Sexual Immorality”

1 Corinthians Chapter 5

Human body has an immune system. An **immune system is a system of biological structures and processes within an organism that protects itself** against disease by identifying and killing pathogens and tumor cells. **It detects a wide variety of attacking agents**, from viruses to parasitic worms, and **needs to distinguish them from the organism's own healthy cells and tissues in order to function properly**.

A Church body has an immune system. A churches **immune system is a system of doctrinal structures and practices within an church organism that protects itself** against dysfunction by identifying and killing error and sin. **It detects a wide variety of attacking agents**, from false belief to parasitic worms, and **needs to distinguish them from the organism's own healthy faith and truth in order to function properly**.

1Cr 5:1

1) Dealing with the Specific Issue vs 1-5

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.

- REPUTATION - (KJV = “It is **commonly** reported”) This wasn’t a rumor or gossip. This was an actual condition of what was happening. It was well know in the church as well as in the community.
- Immorality among them and not just your everyday run of the mill immorality; but immoralities that would cause even the pagans to cringe.
 - The ancient pagan world was quite loose in their standards of sexual behavior
 - **Roman culture**, with some limitation allowed prostitution, adultery, concubines and homosexuality. The limitations had more to do with social status and dominance. Adultery within the higher social class received stiff penalties while a there was very little punishment of a Roman having an adulterous relationship with someone from a lower class. Homosexuality was acceptable as long as the Roman was the dominant partner. Rome’s mentality was to rule and control. So it was shameful to be dominated in any relationship.
 - **In Corinth**, there was the Temple of Venus / Aphrodite where there were a thousand prostitutes available to render their services in the name of a religion.
 - **In the US (according to the US Census and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
 1. There are 9.7 million Americans living with an unmarried different-sex partner and 1.2 million American living with a same-sex partner. 11% of unmarried partners are same-sex couples.
 2. 41% of American women ages 15-44 have cohabited (lived with an unmarried different-sex partner) at some point.
 - This includes 9% of women ages 15-19,
 - 38% of women ages 20-24,
 - 49% of women ages 25-29,
 - 51% of women ages 30-34,
 - 50% of women ages 35-39, and
 - 43% of women ages 40-44.
 3. 33% of all births are to unmarried women.
- Someone is engaged in a sexual relationship with his father’s wife. Those among the Corinthians who were Jewish or had learning concerning the Old Testament should have known God’s Law concerning sexual immorality.
 - **Leviticus 18:8** “*You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father’s wife; it is your father’s nakedness.*”
 - **Deuteronomy 22:30** “*A man shall not take his father’s wife so that he will not uncover his father’s skirt.*”
 - **Deuteronomy 27:20** “*Cursed is he who lies with his father’s wife, because he has uncovered his father’s skirt.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’*”

1Cr 5:2 You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst.

- Arrogant Tolerance - Should have mourned but you are "puffed up"

1Cr 5:3 For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present.

- "absent from the body but present in spirit" is not astral projection.
- Didn't need time to pray or have a consultation - Judged

1Cr 5:4 In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus,

1Cr 5:5 I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

- Paul tells them to have a church meeting, IN THE LORD'S NAME, not his and deal with this man
- "deliver one to Satan" - put out into the world
- "destruction of his flesh" - flesh, not body, meaning rebellious human lust
- "so that his spirit may be saved" - the goal of church discipline. RESTORATION! Not to punish or condemn.
 - The Inquisition used this verse as threats to enforce obedience.
 - The church today has a difficult time with church discipline
 1. If a member is disciplined and he can easily leave and attend a church around the corner and never mentions his shortcoming.
 2. A pastor / church leaders will be called controlling and legalistic when confronting individual's problems.
 - Because of this it may seem unfruitful to discipline. **But Church Discipline is good**
 1. for the individual that he may find the motive and opportunity to deal with sin in his life.
 2. for the church to know the righteous standard to follow and to know that they are protected by biblical standards.

1Cr 5:6 **2) Dealing with a More Important Issue** vs 6-8

Your boasting is not good.

- Referring back to verse 2
- Their Arrogant Tolerance is NOT GOOD!
 - The Church has SPIRITUAL AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome)
 - The body does not have the ability to recognize a harmful threat to its own health.
- The Corinthian Church boasted their good deeds. Among them was their amazing ability to show love and acceptance to sinners. Even to the point of this particular man's sin.
- Again, they had lost their ability to RECOGNIZE SOMETHING HARMEFUL.
- There were probably many godly and good things that this church could boast about but a little leaven will ruin the whole lump.

Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough?

1Cr 5:7 Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are *in fact* unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.

1Cr 5:8 Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

- Leviticus we studied the Holy Convocations. We learned that the Passover deliver Israel from slavery and death by the blood of the lamb. Christians recognize the Jesus is the Passover that delivers us from slavery of sin and death by the Lamb of God.
- After Passover, after the victory over slavery and death there was the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This was 7 days without leaven. It could only happen after the Passover Lamb was slain, not before.

- Paul is telling the Corinthians because of Jesus our Passover Lamb we now can remove the leaven.
- Sincerity and Truth are the guiderails of Christian living. (Guizk)

1Cr 5:9 **3) Dealing with Associated Issues** vs 9-13

I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people;

- Paul wrote a previous letter to the Corinthians. I believe it is lost to us because it was a letter specific to that church in that time and that the Holy Spirit did not consider it to be preserved as Canon for all churches in all times.

1Cr 5:10 **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.**

- It seems Paul wrote a general comment that was took literally. Paul corrects the misunderstanding and it seems that he is acknowledging that it was due to his not being clear.
- “Not to associate with immoral people” – This unfortunately is what Christians do. To protect their walk with Christ they fortify themselves away from sinners.
 - This was the reason for the monastic movement of the church.
 - This is motivated by fear not faith
 - This demonstrates a weak Christianity, not a strong Christianity
 - Jesus was known to eat with sinners (Matthew 9; Mark 2; Luke 5)
- We know sinners sin. We should not be surprised when they do.

1Cr 5:11 **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.**

- Paul clarifies that a Christian should not associate with a “SO-CALLED BROTHER”
- Paul believes that the Christian does not live as the sinner lives. We should be shocked and disgusted when a brother (so-called) is covetous, or a reviler or a drunkard or a thief.
- Paul says to not eat with these people.

1Cr 5:12 **For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church?**

- Paul is making it clear that there is no reason or no call of God to judge unbelievers.
- Paul says we judge inside the church.
- **Matthew 18:15-17** “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”
- Here was the opportunity to judge the woman who is in the immoral relationship with her husband’s son. Paul doesn’t seem to judge the woman. Possibly, she is an unbeliever and Paul’s main concern is correcting the behavior of believers.

1Cr 5:13 **But those who are outside, God judges. REMOVE THE WICKED MAN FROM AMONG YOURSELVES.**

- God Judges the Sinner
- Paul says to judge inside the church and remove the immoral man.

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