

1 Corinthians 5, “To the Church of God”

¹It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife. ²And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? ³Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present. ⁴When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, ⁵hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

⁶Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? ⁷Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.

⁹I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—¹⁰not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. ¹¹But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.

¹²What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? ¹³God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."

Discussion Questions

1. Pastor Moody cited “*inside/outside*” as a key theme of 1Cor 5, referencing the church’s relationship with its own believer members (*inside*) and with the world (*outside*). (See 1 Cor 5:9-12) “*When we don’t have those boundaries clear, the church exhibits either a Pharisaical distance from the world, or a liberal compromise with the world.*” What are some contemporary examples of unclear boundaries?
2. In John 17, Jesus prays that His disciples would be in the world but not of the world.(John 17:15-16). However, the church tends to be “of the world but not in it.” Reflecting on the impetus in church history toward Catholic monasticism and Protestant pietism, Pastor Moody noted the sad reality that those who strive to be farthest from the world mask the reality that we are all sinners in need of God’s grace. How might you exhibit that flawed thinking today?
3. Living out the Gospel of Jesus Christ is our mission. We are to love unbelievers around us, pray with them, share our faith with them, and be salt and light in this world. Thinking of manna in the Old Testament as a type of the Gospel, Pastor Moody recalled that when the Israelites gathered and used the manna every day as prescribed, it nourished and sustained them. But when they tried to store it up, it bred worms. (Ex 16:14-20). How might that be illustrated today in terms of your relationship with God’s truth and the Good News of salvation?
4. Pastor Moody noted that 1 Cor 5 is not primarily about sexual immorality but rather about a lack of clarity around one’s identity with Christ. Looking at consistent life patterns (recognizing that none of us is free from sinful tendencies), Pastor Moody noted that “*profession without fruit is the high road to damnation*”. Discuss how a person might be fatally lulled into “thinking he was in the arms of God because he was in the arms of the church”?
5. Pastor Moody noted four truths about the practice of church discipline, sometimes misunderstood (vss. 3-11. How does this line up with your understanding about God’s Word on this subject?
 - a. Church discipline of a public kind is necessary when the sin is serious
 - b. Church discipline is the responsibility of the whole church
 - c. Church discipline is led by the leaders of the church.
 - d. Church discipline is for the purpose of salvation, or in some cases, restoration (cf. 2 Cor 2:5 ff).
6. Easily overlooked is the list of 5 areas of conduct besides sexual immorality that can lead to church discipline (v.11): greed, idolatry, slander, drunkenness, and swindling. Do we take these seriously enough? What might be some specific contemporary examples of these conducts today that would be worthy of discipline? (For personal reflection: How might God be speaking to you in these areas?)