

I. Unity over Ethics (5-7)

A. Ethical Conduct in the House of God Pt. 1 (1 Cor 5:1-13)

1. What happened in Chapter 4?

You will note that we have skipped chapter 4. This is because Paul primarily repeated some of the same arguments he has used from chapter 1. He emphasized the need to properly consider who the apostles are (4:1-2, 6-7). He also expressed concern with the arrogance of the Corinthians (4:6, 18-19). He concluded the chapter with a warning, as we shall understand in chapter 5. He sent Timothy ahead of him to Corinth to remind them of his ways. But he will be coming. He can come with “love” or with a “rod” (4:21). Before he comes with the “rod,” he explains why.

2. Sexual Immorality in the Church (5:1-2)

- a. Historical Context: Among the things that Paul heard, he heard that a man in the church was sleeping with his stepmother. This, he says, was beyond the pale. This was something the Gentiles did not do who did not know the Lord. As such, the man was committing “fornication” (porneia). He was sleeping with a woman who most likely was not his mother. We do not know if he was dead or alive. But this was a clear violation of the Scripture (Lev 20:11). It was also a violation of the principles of Christ. But the congregation not only allowed the man to do this without rebuke but they continued to celebrate him.
- b. Gentiles had different attitudes regarding sexual behavior but even they knew there was a problem with this kind of relationship. We are unaware of who this man was but he may have had a position of authority or influence in the church which allowed him to do this deed without criticism.
 - i. Do we hold to and practice a view of sexuality based on the Bible?

3. Judgment In the Temple of God (1 Cor 5:3-13)

- a. Paul bemoans the attitudes of those within the church regarding this situation. He explains to the church that he has already judged the matter in the Spirit (v. 3; cf. 2:15) and with his spirit and the power of God, the community should come together to oust this man from the congregation (vv. 2, 5). Paul uses the language of handing the man over to “Satan” (v. 5). So that the flesh might be destroyed but the spirit may be saved. This judgment may be individual, the man’s flesh and the man’s spirit, or it may speak of the destruction of sin in the community and the sanctification of the community.
- b. The preservation of the community matters most, this is why Paul demands the lump of the church be purified (vv. 6-8).
- c. Paul had written an earlier letter to them (is this really 2 Corinthians?) where he told them not to share fellowship with sexual immoral and sinful people. This letter clarifies it. He means if people are sexually immoral, greedy, idolaters, abusive people, drunkards, and swindlers. These people should be put out of the church and members should not even eat with them.
 - i. Do we still believe in church discipline?
 - ii. Under what circumstances should church discipline be applied?