

"Christ Our Passover Also Has Been Sacrificed"

1 Cor 5:1-13

Celebrating the Centrality of Christ in the Local Assembly

In chapters 1 through 4, the apostle has dealt with division within the local assembly. He now turns his attention toward the failure of the body to minister to an unrepentant sinner. Paul opens chapter 5 with a statement of astonishment that the Corinthian Church is tolerating gross immorality in their midst (v.1). He is shocked at their arrogant attitude in the midst of coarse debauchery (v.2). His response is swift and final, "The one who had done this deed [should] be removed from your midst (v.3)."

I. The need for correction – (vv. 1, 2a)

The persistent sin inside of the fellowship tells us that the information was common and known.

The Old Testament clearly denounces such sin as incestuous. "Anyone guilty of those or other sexual 'abominations' was to be cut off from his people" (Lv 18:7, 8, 29, cf. Dt 22:30).

Notice the hypocrisy. We shudder at the immorality of the couple, but do not grieve over the spiritual apathy of the fellowship in the presence of persistent and blatant sin.

How often do we find ourselves like the disciples of our Lord in Bethany with the woman who comes to anoint the head of Jesus with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume (Mt 26:6-9)?

Mat 26:6-9 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, at the home of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume, and she poured it on His head as He reclined at the table. But the disciples were indignant when they saw this, and said, **"Why this waste? For this perfume might have been sold for a high price and the money given to the poor."**

II. The method of correction (vv. 2b-5)

Grace and correction are not mutually exclusive. True grace and freedom in Christ never lead to lasciviousness. Grace is the only true guard and protection from immorality (Col 2:20-23).

It is less than loving and gracious to tolerate persistent patterns of sinful behavior that manifest no spirit of repentance.

"[Delivering one over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh] means that he must be

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excommunicated. The world was looked upon as the domain of Satan (Jn 12:31, 16:11, Acts 26:18, Col 1:13) just as the Church was the domain of God. Send this man back to Satan's world to which he belongs, is Paul's verdict."

By putting them out of the local assembly, they would be removed from the protective influence of the body of Christ. What does this tell us about the local assembly?

- A. God uses churches for the protection of His people.
- B. Prolonged absence from the local church fellowship places us in a position of vulnerability.
- C. Not to be identified with a local church puts us into the realm of the devil.

Stressing regular church attendance or personal involvement is not legalism, but protective, gracious, and loving.

III. The reason for correction (v. 6-8)

In verses 6-8, Paul explains why such action by the body is essential. Tolerated sin in the midst of the fellowship can permeate the whole fellowship if left unchecked, thus the exhortation to "Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump (v.7)."

Reference to Passover and the sacrificial lamb speaks of two things.

First, it speaks of deliverance from death.

Second, it speaks of community and family. Tolerating flagrant unrepentant sin in the local assembly is a betrayal of both actions.

IV. The realm of correction (vv. 9-13)

Paul in this section tells the fellowship to "keep its nose in its own business." We are not judging those outside the local church, but those within the local church.