

1 Corinthian Series #14
"One Bad Apple" - 1 Cor. 5:1-13

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Last Week

1. Vs. 19-21
2. A church beset by problems
3. He had already written them
 - a. addressed the problems
 - b. they had proudly resisted him
4. "How shall I come - with strict discipline or tender instruction?"

B. This Week

1. Now, he gets specific
2. There was a serious sin in the church
3. Had to be dealt with
4. He expresses his concern that they haven't
5. Tells them how

C. A Tough Passage

1. Not hard to understand - Hard to read for what it says
 - a. it challenges us
 - b. hits us where we are
2. Cannot read and go away without being faced with a decision
3. For all of us, and specially as a church, we will be brought to a hard place of obedience today
4. But obedience to God is the mark of a faithful church, as well as a faithful Christian
5. 1 Sam. 15:22 - To obey is better than to offer a sacrifice
 - a. we lift a sacrifice of praise and worship
 - b. we make an offering
 - c. but are we obeying God?

II. TEXT

A. Vs. 1-2

1 It is actually reported *that there is* sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles; that a man has his father's wife!

2 And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you.

1. Word had reached Paul about a serious case of sexual immorality in Corinth

2. One of the men in the church was living with His step mother in an illicit affair
3. Text makes several things clear . . .
 - a. he was a part of the church, she wasn't
 - b. his step mother - "father's wife"; not his mother
 - c. it was an ongoing affair - "has"
4. This was a serious and appalling sin; a scandal
 - a. a case of incest
 - b. OT forbids it
 - c. while that culture was very loose, even they considered incest a horrible sin
 - d. Roman law forbade it (Cicero)
5. But what is even more shocking to Paul than this sin, is the Corinthian's response to it
 - a. rather than being shocked themselves and disciplining the guy
 - b. they acted as though it was a mark of their great spiritual maturity that they welcomed him to be a part of their fellowship
6. Paul was aghast and sent them strong words of instruction on what to do

B. Vs. 3-5

3 For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed.

4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

5 deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1. He is following the direction of Christ from Matthew 18:15-20
2. Apparently the first steps had been taken with this guy but he had not responded
3. So time had come to take the final step = Disfellowship, excommunication
4. Paul uses his Apostolic authority to command them to take this step of church discipline
 - a. V. 3 For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed.
 - b. it is clear to Paul what must be done
 - c. and that was . . .
5. V.4 = In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ

- a. when they were together
 - b. they were to speak with the authority and power of Jesus and the apostles to this issue of sin
 - c. and they were to say, in effect, "**Not here you don't.**"
 - d. notice the terms Paul uses in v. 4 . . .
 - 1) When you are gathered together
 - 2) in the name and power of the Lord Jesus Christ
 - e. he is applying what Jesus said in Matthew 18:18-20
6. Here specifically is what they are to do . . .
 deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.
- a. they were to withdraw the protection of Christian fellowship from him
 - b. Jesus said, "Where two of you are gathered in My name, there am I in the midst."
 - c. that is what they were withdrawing from him
 - d. by doing so, the protecting influence of the presence of Christ was taken from him
 - e. placing him squarely under the dominion and influence of the devil
 - f. the devil's goal is to steal, kill, and destroy.
7. Paul's goal was not to punish this guy but to restore him
- a. the hope was that by withdrawing the covering protection of fellowship, he would be faced with the seriousness of his sin and repent
 - b. that is what he means by delivering him over to the devil for the destruction of his flesh that his spirit may be saved
8. The goal of church discipline is never retribution or punishment
- a. the goal is restoration
 - b. if we keep that goal in mind it will temper the way discipline is administered
 - c. notice how Jesus said the church was to treat someone who had been disfellowshipped
 - 1) as a heathen or a tax-collector
 - 2) how do we treat them?
 - not with hate or spite
 - with tender care for their soul
 - we lovingly try to bring them to the kingdom
 - but we certainly don't allow ourselves to fellowship or partake with them in sin
 - 3) the one and first goal is to win them to Christ
 - 4) the one and first goal we have with a disfellowshipped person is to restore them to

repentance

D. Vs. 6-8

6 Your glorying *is* not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

1. Paul was gravely concerned for the effect this guy will have on the whole church if he is not sent out
2. He uses the illustration of leaven and bread
 - a. a little leaven is enough to raise a whole loaf
 - b. leaven is a strong symbol for sin in the bible
 - 1) it does it's job by puffing up with emptiness
 - 2) it does it's job by fermenting - really by bringing decay
3. Just as a little leaven infects a whole loaf - so a little sin can infect a whole church
 - a. a cold virus
 - b. one bad apple / strawberry
4. What to do?
 - a. remove it
 - b. "Purge the leaven"
5. The Christian life is foreshadowed by the deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt
 - a. just as they were delivered by the blood of the Passover lamb
 - b. so we have been saved from the bondage of sin by our Passover Lamb - Jesus Christ
 - c. the Jews celebrate the Passover with unleavened bread
 - d. we too celebrate with unleavened lives

E. Vs. 9-10

9 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people.

10 Yet *I* certainly *did* not *mean* with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.

1. Paul had already sent them a letter
2. But they had misunderstood a part of it
3. He had told them not to keep company with the sexually immoral

- a. he meant those who claimed to be Christians but who were sexually immoral
- b. not the sexually immoral of the world
- c. they had shunned the worldly sinners, but were harboring religious sinners
- d. this was flatly backward
- 4. That culture was very loose
 - a. sexual morality was terrible
 - b. specially in Corinth!
 - c. if they were to withdraw from the people of the world who were sinners, they would have to book passage on a starship
- 5. We are to be in but not of the world.
- 6. John 17:15-18 "I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world."
 - a. a redeeming witness
 - b. present but not participating
- 7. No, Paul meant something else by his first letter and he clarifies it in vs. 11-13

F. Vs. 11-13

11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; not even to eat with such a person.

12 For what *have I to do* with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside?

13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."

- 1. Here is where it gets tough for us
- 2. Paul says that just as he has instructed them with this guy who committed incest, so they must do with anyone who professes to be a believer but who lives in sin
- 3. Then he gives a list of specific sins that must not be allowed to flourish in the Body of Christ . . .
 - a. fornication
 - b. covetousness
 - c. idolatry
 - d. revilers (slanderers, gossips)
 - e. drunkenness
 - f. extortioners (cheaters, swindlers, crooks)
- 4. Contrary to popular opinion - Christians are called to judge
 - a. Paul says so here

- b. but the sphere of our judging is not the world
 - c. it is in the Church
 - d. Jesus said that it is by the fruit of people who profess to be believers that we will know whether or not they really are
5. We cannot see a person's heart, but we can see their life.
 6. And we are called to relate to a person, not based on their profession of mouth, but their confession in deed.
 7. Understand; there is a distinction to be made here
 - a. there is a difference between the person who struggles with sin
 - b. and the one who professes Christ but doesn't struggle with sin - He lives comfortably in it
 - c. the struggle is a fruit of a changed life
 8. Paul says, in quoting the OT, "put away from yourselves the evil person."

III. CONCLUSION

- A. A Defining Moment
 1. How can we read this and then just go away without implementing it?
 2. We can't. We must put it into practice
 3. Really, we have already done this a few times at points in the past
 4. But now that we have studied it together, we must set it as a foundation stone of our fellowship
- B. What Do We Want For Calvary Chapel?
 1. Do we want to be successful as the world or God defines it?
 2. If we desire the world's kind of success . . .
 - a. then numbers and money will be our driving passion
 - b. we won't say or do anything that may offend someone
 - c. we will be the completely politically correct church
 - d. the church of the lowest common denominator
 3. But if we want to be successful as God defines it . . .
 - a. then our aim will be holiness and love
 - b. and that means we will have to have a tough minded determination to confront sin in a loving and gracious way
 - 1) when we see a brother or sister struggling
 - we come alongside and help bear their burden
 - we encourage, support, exhort, and help
 - 2) when we see someone living in unrepentant sin, we confront, rebuke, and graciously disfellowship
- C. Hear Me -
 1. If you call yourself a Christian - you are called to holiness

- a. Hebrews 12:14 Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:
 - b. 1 Peter 1:13-16 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance; but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."
- 2. If you are living in sin - stop it!
 - 3. Know this, if the leadership of CC hears about it we will follow the instructions of the Lord in Matthew 18
 - a. not because we enjoy it
 - b. but because we are accountable to God for your soul and the integrity of the flock
 - c. Hebrews 13:17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.