

**Text: 1 Cor 5.1-13**

As we move through Corinthians, we will keep our place by developing the broad outline we started with.

**I. Introduction (1.1-9)****II. Conditions reported to Paul (1.10-6.20)**

## A. Divisions in the church (1.10-4.21)

<sup>1</sup> Cor 1.11 For I have been **informed** concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's *people*, that there are quarrels among you.

The divisions reflected a worldly approach by the Corinthians, treating their leading teachers as competing philosophers, not recognizing they were their servants to lead them to Christ.

**Today:** We turn to the next troubling report from Corinth, the presence of immorality in the church.

## B. Lack of discipline in the church (5.1-6.20)

<sup>1</sup> Cor 5.1 ¶ It is actually **reported** that there is immorality among you...

1. Stating the case (1-2)
2. Pronouncing judgement (3-5)
3. Analogy of the Passover (6-8)
4. Expounding the implications (9-13)

**Stating the case (1-2)**

## Understanding the situation (1)

Immorality in the church: a man has his father's wife (not his mother, but a step-mother; Paul doesn't mention adultery, so the man's father is probably deceased)

Immorality was a common problem in 1<sup>st</sup> C. culture, but mostly not an issue among the Gentiles (Greeks and Romans). This case would be scandalous among them however.

“As depraved as Greek culture was, even the pagans looked down on incest, and Roman law prohibited it.”<sup>1</sup>

Under Judaism, this would be a capital offense (see Lev 18.8, 29)

The man is probably a church member, but the woman is not, since Paul only speaks of expelling the man.

### Corinthian attitude (2)

They were arrogant and had not mourned: What does that mean? **They had considered it a matter they didn't have to deal with, hadn't thought of it as bringing shame upon the assembly.**

What should they have done? **They should have expelled the man from the church.**

What kind of arrogance would have led them to behave in this way, if even the pagans abhorred this kind of immorality? **Various possibilities: might have been a wealthy member whom they found some way to excuse and congratulate themselves, or seen themselves as “enlightened,” or some other thing**

### Pronouncing judgement (3-5)

Paul immediately turns to pronouncing judgement. He doesn't reason with them. He doesn't persuade. He commands.

What is acknowledged in v. 3? **Paul is absent, not physically present.**

What authority is cited in v. 4? **The authority of the Lord Jesus**

Who is called on to act? (4) **The Corinthian assembly in a public meeting**

What does Paul mean for them to do? (5) **Expel the man from the church (“deliver to Satan”)**

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<sup>1</sup> Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), 1 Cor 5.1.

**Difficult phrase:** “deliver to Satan for the destruction of the flesh” (5)

Compare 1 Tim 1.19-20:

1 Tim 1.19-20 keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.  
 20 Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught not to blaspheme.

What was the goal for handing over Hymenaeus and Alexander?

**Correction, training**

What is the “flesh”? **That part of man oriented away from God, the “old man”**

Ultimately, what does Paul want to happen to this man? (5) **He wants his spirit to be saved; if the flesh is destroyed (the “old man”) his spirit, the “new man” can be saved: in other words, he wants him to get right with God and turn away from the life of the flesh he is now living.**

### **Analogy of the Passover (6-8)**

Paul uses leaven as an illustration in v. 6. What does he imply by this? **That the continuing presence in the church of a man in flagrant unrepentant sin would end up contaminating the whole body of the church**

Paul calls the church to “clean out the leaven.” (7)

“In Jewish life it was customary to throw away (“Clean out”) all the old leaven in the house when the family prepared for the Passover celebration (Exod. 12:15; 13:6–7). They did this so that the bread they made for Passover, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread that followed, would be completely free of leaven.”<sup>2</sup>

What is the analogy between the Passover cleansing and the condition of a Christian church? **By Christ’s redemption the church is purified, thus the church must model in its public life the purity of Christ — be unleavened**

<sup>2</sup> Constable, 1 Co 5.7.

Paul goes on in v. 8 to urge the celebration of the feast in the proper way. Here, “the feast,” refers to the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In the Jewish calendar, this feast began the day after Passover.

Passover corresponds with Salvation (Crucifixion), and the Feast corresponds with the subsequent life.

We are called to live out the feast without two things, what are they?  
**The old leaven (pre-Christian sinfulness) and the leaven of malice and wickedness (flagrant public post-Christian sin)**

### Expounding the implications (9-13)

Paul previously taught them not to have anything to do with immoral people, like the man dealt with in this chapter. But now he clarifies his teaching. Paul does not mean by this that they should shun people outside the church.

Why? **Because they would have to isolate themselves from everyone**

What types of immoral people did Paul want them to shun? (11) **Anyone immoral person who claimed to be a believer**

Who has the responsibility for judgement of immoral people? (12-13) **The church must judge those among themselves, God would judge those outside the church**

Final observations?