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1 Corinthians 5
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By Dan Maines

1 Corinthians 5

1 Corinthians 5:1

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, namely, that someone has his father's wife.

† Paul rebukes the Corinthians for tolerating scandalous sin that even pagans condemned.

† The church's failure to discipline revealed pride and compromise.

† Josephus (Antiquities 20.200) condemned similar immoral practices in Jewish history, showing Paul's outrage was consistent with cultural standards.

1 Corinthians 5:2

You have become arrogant, and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst.

† Their pride led to tolerance instead of grief.

† True love for holiness demands discipline.

1 Corinthians 5:3-5

For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present. In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I am with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, I have decided to turn such a person over to Satan for the destruction of his body, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord.

† Paul pronounces judgment, showing apostolic authority in Christ.

† Delivering to Satan meant excommunication, outside the protection of the church, so repentance might come.

† Tertullian (On Repentance 7) pointed to church discipline as a means of salvation, not destruction.

1 Corinthians 5:6-7

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.

† Tolerated sin corrupts the whole church.

† Christ, our Passover Lamb, calls us to purity.

† Philo (On the Special Laws 2.145) wrote of leaven as

corruption, aligning with Paul's imagery.

1 Corinthians 5:8

Therefore let's celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

† The Christian life is a continual Passover feast in sincerity and truth.

† Holiness marks the true people of God.

1 Corinthians 5:9-10

I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people, I did not at all mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the greedy and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to leave the world entirely.

† Paul clarifies that separation applies to those claiming to be believers, not unbelievers.

† The church lives in the world but is not to imitate its corruption.

1 Corinthians 5:11

But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is a sexually immoral person, or greedy, or an idolater, or is verbally abusive, or habitually drunk, or a swindler —not even to eat with such a person.

† Discipline applies to professing believers living in sin.

† Fellowship must reflect holiness.

1 Corinthians 5:12-13

For what business of mine is it to judge outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the evil person from among yourselves.

- † The church judges inside, not outside.
- † God judges the world, but the church must discipline its own.
- † Deuteronomy 17:7 commanded Israel to purge evil from their midst, fulfilled here in the church's call.

How it applies to us today

- † 1 Corinthians 5 teaches that holiness cannot be compromised by tolerance of sin.
- † The church is called to discipline for the sake of restoration and purity.
- † Christ is our Passover, and we must live as unleavened bread, in sincerity and truth.
- † The world is judged by God, but the church must be vigilant in judging itself.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

Source Index

- † Josephus, Antiquities 20.200 - condemnation of sexual immorality
- † Tertullian, On Repentance 7 - discipline for restoration
- † Philo, On the Special Laws 2.145 - leaven as corruption
- † Deuteronomy 17:7 - remove evil from among you

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