

Leaven in the Church

I Cor 5:1-21

6/12/01

Intro

- Sack lunch today after second service.

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This is Paul's second letter to the church at Corinth, though we don't have the first. He brings correction to them in that letter as well as this one.

He's dealt with divisions and spiritual immaturity, challenging them to be more than carnal Christians.

Now Paul is dealing with the problem of immorality in the church. There was a man who had a sexual relationship going with his father's wife, in other words, his stepmother.

Here we learn how we should live our lives as well as how we should operate the church. There is much for us to learn personally in the process.

Here we learn about God's heart regarding immorality in His church.

I. We need to have the right attitude about immorality.

Vs 1-2

A. They were actually arrogant about it.

- They were proud of the fact that they could tolerate such a lifestyle.
- This man was very open about what he was doing and totally unrepentant.

B. Therefore, because they didn't take action, the church also needed correction.

Vs 2

- Paul says that such a person should be removed from their church.
- He was going to do it himself, if necessary.

II. God's heart is always about restoration.

Vs 5

A. Paul wanted the man given over to Satan.

- For the destruction of the flesh.
- This means to give him over to his sin.
- That is the worst punishment of all.
- God does the same thing.

See Romans 1:24, 26

Vs 5b

B. God's purpose is always to restore.

- "That his spirit may be saved for the day of the Lord Jesus."
- There is always the offer of grace.

Illus- A couple that loved to gossip in our church many years ago, was offered restoration before removal.

Illus- The story of the dragon and the prince.

Vs 6

C. Leaven affects the whole lump.

D. In fact, we are unleavened in Christ.

Illus – When offering a sacrifice in the O.T., the lamb was inspected, not the one making the offering.

Conclusion

We all struggle with the flesh, and God knows this. But He has given us a way to live holy. And that is to live in fellowship with each other. We can hold each other accountable and love each other into the higher places in the Kingdom of God.

III. **Live in the world, but not of the world.**

Vs 9-11 (Paul told them not to associate with immoral people)

A. Live in the world.

- Paul was not referring to those out in the world.

Illus- Otherwise we would have to ask the grocery clerk if he/she was pure!

Illus- In Russia I met a man who wouldn't eat food prepared by others. How sad.

- Have you ever wanted to buy an island off New Zealand and live free from the world? I have.

B. We are called to be the light of the world.

- That's why God left us here.

C. But we should not be of the world.