

1Corinthians – Week 21

I. **Review:** 1Cor 5:4-7 – From the *WHY* to the *WHAT* – Walking in Holiness

- A. Our power comes from living conformed to Jesus
- B. Disfellowshipping is done out of love and hope. To not do it would mean to enable someone's sin and dishonoring the Lord.
- C. Walking in holiness is something we do together, as a church. It requires us to be transparent with each other as we seek to do the Lord's will together (Eph 4:22-25). We belong to one another (Rom 12:5).

II. **Continuation** – Distinguishing Yourself From Worldly Ways

A. 1Corinthians 5:8 (ESV) *Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

- i. Since our lives now are a celebration of the festival, as we discussed in the last verse, we celebrate without the leaven that accompanied us in our former way of living. All malice and evil needs to be removed from our thoughts and our ways of dealing with one another.
- ii. We are about living and speaking sincerely and truthfully, as the Scriptures also point out in Eph 4:22-25.
 - 1. Getting rid of the old yeast and walk in holiness, in the light, is about being transparent with one another.
 - 2. Hiding sin or accepting sin in our lives belongs to our former way of life. We crucified that life with Jesus when we got baptized.
 - 3. Living without leaven (sin) is holy living. This kind of life often draws fire from those with ulterior motives because God uses holiness to expose the deeds of darkness. Being holy is not being Pharisaic or legalistic, as some may suppose. Holiness is not legalism.
- iii. Definition of Pharisee and legalistic
 - 1. **Pharisee:** someone who follows man-made traditions while saying he "teaches" God's word. Do as they say not as they do, said Jesus (Mat 23:2-4). They may be teaching right but not practicing what they preach (1Ti 4:16). Jesus called them hypocrites (Mat 23:13; Mar 7:6-7), which is being two-faced or divided in mind, since they said they followed God but instead followed men.
 - 2. **Legalist:** Someone who followed the Mosaic Law without regard to the grace of Christ. Someone who seeks justification in God's sight by following laws (perfect obedience) instead of by faith in Jesus (Rom 3:21-24; Rom 3:28; Gal 2:16; Gal 3:11).
- iv. Those who are sincere are transparent, walking in the light (1Jn 1:7), seeking not to be justified by an appearance of perfection (no one can be perfect), but by purity of heart which leads to sincerely desiring to please God (obedience). This is shown by openness (confession of sin) and a desire to be instructed, corrected and rebuked by God's word through the people of God.
- v. Without this attitude you are merely playing church, holding to an appearance of godliness but having no power (2Ti 3:5). You seek justification from men instead of God, and you will never have the satisfaction of pleasing men (or yourself), since men cannot be pleased by anything. This is an idolatrous attitude.
- vi. Only the pure in heart will see God (Mat 5:8).

B. 1Corinthians 5:9-10 (ESV) *I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people-- (10) not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.*

- i. The Spirit acknowledges that sin is all around us, all the more we ought to make sure we are distinct from them (1Pe 1:14-15; Rom 12:2). But we ought to make even more of a distinction between those in our fellowship that say they follow vs. those who actually sanctify themselves through faith in and obedience to Jesus.
- ii. So not only the sexually immoral were to be purged from among the church, but also the greedy, the swindlers and the idolaters. In the next verse he also adds the reviler and the drunkard.
 1. Sexually immoral (fornicators) - Those who live to fill their sexual passions by thought and/or action. Jesus said that to look at women lustfully was the same as committing adultery (Mat 5:28), so entertaining sexually immoral thoughts are equal to having committed the action as well, however minute the thought is.
 2. Greedy (covetous) - those who are not satisfied with what they have, always wanting more and more; those who are always wanting more, especially what belongs to others - greedy of gain - never satisfied - never wanting to give but always getting.
 3. Swindler (cheaters, extortioners, dishonest) - those who always want to think they are in control - manipulating to get what they want - lying to get ahead or to be in control - thieves and robbers - dishonest gain.
 4. Idolaters - Those who worship false gods, or who worship God falsely (Mal 1:6-14) - whether they worship created or material things, or are people-pleasers or pay homage to a false idea of who God is. To bow down (literally, emotionally or intellectually) to a graven image - to a man-made concept of God.
 5. Revilers (abusers, bullies) - those who seek to intimidate with abusive language or threats. Those who seek to be in control by threatening - those who bully others to manipulate - blackmailers.
 6. Drunkards - those who seek intoxication, whether by distilled spirits or other methods, to escape reality and responsibility.

C. 1Corinthians 5:11 (ESV) *But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler--not even to eat with such a one.*

- i. We are not to associate with those whose lifestyle is not in accordance to Scripture and yet call themselves Christians. These would be those who are like the Pharisees, therefore, Pharisaic. The instances described here are not a one-time sin, but a worldly lifestyle that has not been abandoned.
- ii. We ought not to associate with anyone who calls himself a Christian and also is known for these sins because of a pattern of unrepentance and lack of renewal in the Holy Spirit that has been established. Such a person's life is devoid of the power of the Spirit and full of the evil power from this world.
- iii. So the Spirit is casting a wider net for the church to make a distinction between those who belong in the fellowship and those who shouldn't. Not only the sexually immoral are to be cast out but the greedy, idolaters, revilers, drunkards and swindlers. These we defined in the last verse commentary.
- iv. Remember from the previous verses that when things are found out from these individuals they ought to be confronted and brought before the servant leaders to make a judgment as to their belonging among the saints. If you, as an individual, see these things it is also your responsibility to confront and denounce, with love. If the person does not change then you avoid them and bring this up to those who are the servant leaders of the congregation (Mat 18:15-17).
- v. How do I Treat Such a Person?

1. **What kind of interactions should I have with them? What if that person and I had a more intimate relationship? What if that person is a relative? Generally you are to avoid them, especially after you have tried to confront their behavior and they are unrepentant. Don't even entertain them or share a meal.**
 - a. **Treat as a tax collector – when you come across them in ways you have to interact because they are your relative or because of business. Be business-like, conversing only about relevant dealing and if they ask why they are getting a cold shoulder from you, tell them about their need to repent. Don't seek to engage them. They need to feel your avoidance.**
 - b. **Treat as a worldly person (sinner, gentile, pagan) - avoid them (Rom 16:17-18; 2Th 3:6). They do not walk like you, in holiness, and they have caused division and put obstacles in the way of the brethren. Stay away from them!**
 - c. **The avoidance is even to be applied to sharing a meal - common fellowship. So any kind of friendship you may have had is compromised by the person's dishonoring of the Lord in their lack of repentance. Don't contact them, seek them, poke them Facebook them or tweet them. They have to feel shame (2Th 3:14-15) and they have to be made to understand they have distanced themselves from God.**
 - d. **This is not to be done in hatred but in love. Don't treat as an enemy but admonish (warn him) as a brother (2Th 3:14-15). Leave this admonishment to the servant leaders – those who are spiritually mature:**
 - i. **Gal 6:1 which reminds us that only those who are spiritually mature should attempt any kind of restoration in gentleness, since there is the danger of you falling into sin by associating with that person in any other way.**
- vi. **It is important at this point to distinguish how to treat those who are excommunicated (disfellowshipped) from those who have fallen away. Those who have fallen away must be encouraged to return to the Lord and His people. Those who are excommunicated should not be asked to return to the fold, since they were asked to leave; but rather, they must be told to get right with God and do what they must do in order to be accepted back into the fold. Sometimes disciples, especially inexperienced ones, treat the backslider and the disfellowshipped in the same way.**