

The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians

Immorality and Discipline in the Church

1 Corinthians 5:9-13

1. The Need for Discipline (v.1)
2. The Duty to Discipline (v.2)
3. The Method of Discipline (vs.3-5a; cf. Matt. 18:15-20)
4. The Reason for Discipline (v.5b-8)
5. The Sphere of Discipline (vs.9-13)
 - A. A Command Misunderstood (vs.9-10)

Christians are not to isolate ourselves from the world; it is both impossible and disobedient (Matt. 10:16-18; 28:18-20). Jesus' pattern of living amongst, and dining with, the irreligious and sinful members of society is a pattern that we are to follow (Luke 5:30-32).
 - B. A Command Clarified (v.11)

All of the descriptions of these so-called brothers are included in the catalog description of individuals who will not inherit eternal life (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-10). Christians, particularly when gathering together, are not to associate with professing believers who are impenitently and publicly continuing to engage in flagrant sin (2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; cf. 1 Tim. 5:8).
 - C. A Judgment Deferred (vs.12a, 13a)

The Christian is to live so as to testify of the reality of his faith (Matt. 5:14-16) and to corroborate his preaching of the gospel to the lost (Rom. 3:23; 6:23; cf. 1 Tim. 1:15). Exposing men's eyes to the sinfulness and consequences of sin is part of proclaiming the good news. Proclaiming the coming and certain judgment of God to unbelievers is an act of great love, and should not be accompanied by social ostracism (John 8:31ff; cf. Matt 5:20; John 3:36).
 - D. A Judgement Rendered (vs.12b, 13b)

When a professing believer has been lovingly warned and confronted but still stubbornly and impenitently continues in his sinful behavior, the church must properly render a judgment (cf. 1 Cor. 5:2). That person is to be removed from the normal life of the assembled church body and is to even be removed from common activities of fellowship. The person is to be actively engaged by believers in a similar way to unbelievers (cf. Matt. 18:17).