

BRIARCLIFF CHURCH

Small Group Study Guide: 1 Corinthians

Week of September 8 (Week 6)

1 Corinthians 5: Challenge and Change (moral issues)



1 CORINTHIANS 5: SUMMARY

1 Corinthians 5 issues a strong call for moral integrity within the church, demanding vigilance against sin and complacency. Paul's disciplinary instructions challenge us to hold each other accountable, recognizing that a community's spiritual health can be jeopardized by the unaddressed sins of individuals. The metaphor of leaven reminds us of our call to purity, sincerity, and truth, living as the new creation in Christ. While we live in the world, we are not to adopt its moral standards, but embody the values of God's kingdom, applying judgement appropriately within and outside the church. (Bible Hub, 1 Corinthians 5: Summary).

OBSERVING & APPLYING THE TEXT

God's Temple is Holy, and you [church] are that temple

1. In 1 Corinthians 5 Paul deals with a serious moral issue present in the Corinthian church – the temple of God. What does Paul say about the sin and the attitude of the Corinthian church in verses 1-2?

Reflection:

- a. *On complacency:* Complacency in a church can stem from two opposite tendencies. It may arise from being a "pure" church where all dissenting opinions have been driven out, or from an overly tolerant church where anything goes without question. If judgmentalism breeds one type of complacency and over-tolerance breeds another, how can we navigate a safe course between the two?

- b. *On giving undue attention to the wealthy and influential:* Was a desire to retain the financial benefits from the immoral man part of the problem in Corinth? Might churches today show undue deference to wealthy or influential Christians?

5. What analogy does Paul use in 1 Cor. 5:6-8 in dealing with sin in the church? How does Paul's use of Christ as the 'Passover' illustrate what the church must do? What is the significance?

Reflection: To refuse to judge sin in the church is to obscure the gospel. That means that we end up harming ourselves, especially the weakest and most vulnerable among us – those who are trapped in their sin. But why do many Christians instinctively don't want to think about discipline or confront public sin? (Mark Dever, *The Good Book Guide to 1 Corinthians 1-9: Challenging Church*, 33 & 35).

Judgment Leads to Restoration – it is the goal!

6. What is the purpose of judging or disciplining the sinning believer according to verse 5b?

Reflection: Paul's goal in this harsh correction is to purify the church so that it would not lose its testimony among the pagans in Corinth. Compare Paul's harsh correction with what Jesus said in Matthew 18:8-9. Regardless of your "personal beliefs and philosophies" the church is to maintain its' standards so that we can be a place of sanctuary from all the craziness of this world. (Dave Wilson, Sermon Notes on 1 Cor. 5).

PRAYER

PRAYER GUIDE

September 9-13, 2024

Read 1 Corinthians 5

Monday: 5:1 *"It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife."* Is there sexual sin or any sin in your life that even people who don't know God will not tolerate?

Tuesday: 5:1b-2 *"for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn"* Examine your heart and see if there is any sin that you have not repented of or mourned for.

Wednesday: 5:6b *"Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened."* Consider the pervasive nature of sin and ask God to help you cleanse yourself from it and live a sanctified life.

Thursday: 5:9-10 *"I wrote to you ... not to associate with sexually immoral people – 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."* Reflect and pray daily seeking God's help to live a life of purity in an impure world.

Friday: 5:12-13 *"For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. Purge the evil person from among you."* Pray that we will learn to withhold judging people who are outside God's family, but learn to lovingly judge and discipline sinning believers.