

07

1 Corinthians 5:1-13



THE WISDOM OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE





WEEK 7

The Wisdom of Church Discipline

Chapter 5 continues Paul’s response to the “things he has heard” about the Corinthian church. In this case, Paul’s rebuke addressed a case of sexual sin taking place among people within the church. The problem is not only the sin taking place, but the failure to condemn it. The focus of the passage is not on sexual sin per se but how the church community ought to respond to such behavior. Notice that Paul does not address the man who is sinning; he addresses the community.

As you read, take note of the difference between the direction given in verses 1-5 and the direction given in verses 9-13. Paul expects the church to hold its members accountable and to represent Christ to the outside world. However, it is not the job of the church to hold the outside world accountable. There is an understood boundary here. Paul is defining a community that is responsible to each other. The unaddressed sin of individuals will negatively affect the entire community (verse 6). As a result, it is important to consider the role of the church in the lives of the individual members.

Daily Readings

- 01 1 Corinthians 5:1-13
- 02 Ephesians 5:1-20
- 03 Romans 1:24-27
- 04 Galatians 6:1-6
- 05 Matthew 7:1-5
- 06 James 4:16
- 07 Exodus 12:1-30

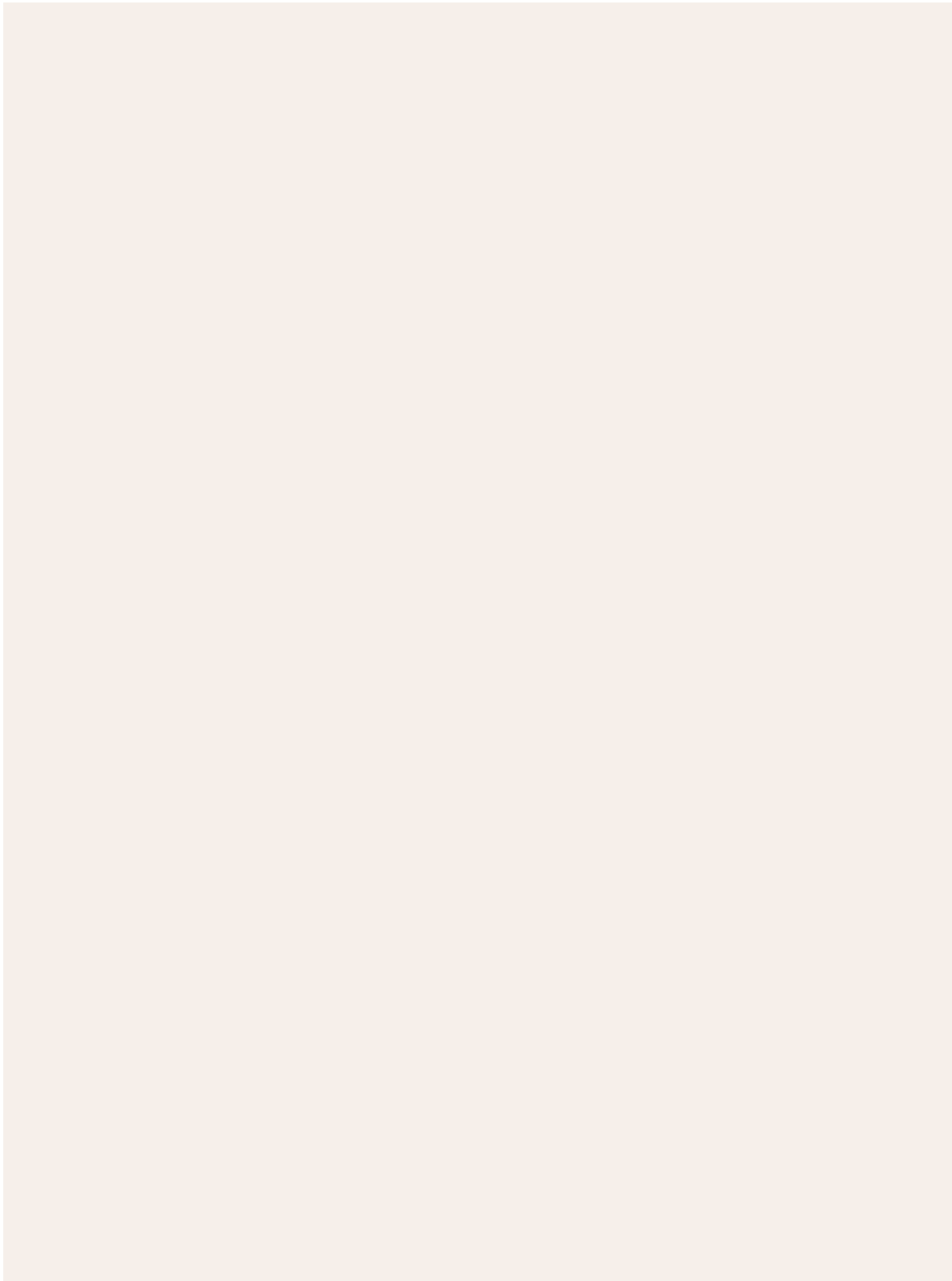
DEALING WITH A CASE OF INCEST

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that even pagans do not tolerate: A man is sleeping with his father's wife. ² And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have gone into mourning and have put out of your fellowship the man who has been doing this? ³ For my part, even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. As one who is present with you in this way, I have already passed judgment in the name of our Lord Jesus on the one who has been doing this. ⁴ So when you are assembled and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, ⁵ hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord.

⁶ Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? ⁷ Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸ Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

⁹ I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— ¹⁰ not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. ¹¹ But now I am writing to you that you must not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or slanderer, a drunkard or swindler. Do not even eat with such people.

¹² What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? ¹³ God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked person from among you."



Discussion Guide

WARM UP

All of us have been the recipient of discipline, or correction, at some point in our lives. Is there a particular instance in your life that immediately comes to mind?

What is the most beneficial discipline, or correction, that you have ever received?

EXPLORING 1 CORINTHIANS 5:1-13

The sexual sin the Corinthians are permitting in their church, which was not even allowed by the Romans, was unacceptable to Paul. Why do you think the church had not dealt with this sin appropriately?

How do you think something like this could happen? Had sin become so prevalent in Corinth that they were indifferent and unconcerned?

According to verse 2, what element is missing in their response to this sin? Does prevalent sin in the body of Christ cause you to mourn?

Read verses 6-8. How does prevalent sin affect the health of the church? Should sin be dealt with or ignored, hoping it will somehow go away? Do we really love someone if we aren't willing to confront their sin and help restore them?

How does Jesus instruct believers to deal with sin between brothers and sisters in Christ in Matthew 18:15-18?

The Scriptures are clear that repentance is the pathway to restoration with God and health within the church. However, if someone is persistent in willful disobedience to God, how should the church respond? Consider Galatians 6:1-6.

APPLICATION

In Matthew 7, Jesus reminds us to remove the log from our own eye before trying to remove the splinter from someone else's eye. Are there "logs" that you need to remove from your life?

PRAYER

Pray for someone this week who is struggling in their walk with God.

List one or two prayer concerns to share with your group.

“Be killing sin, or sin will be killing you.”

JOHN OWEN, *OF THE MORTIFICATION OF SIN IN BELIEVERS*

After the publication of the Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis was asked how he knew so much about temptation. He replied, “I just look into my own mind and heart.”

