

**Men's Sunday Night**  
**The Book of 1 Corinthians**  
**Christian Conduct**  
**Lesson 5 - 1 Corinthians 5-6**  
**"Dealing with Immorality"**

Discipline in the church is not like a policeman arresting a culprit; rather, it is like a father chastening his son. The first motive is to help the sinner, to show Christian love in seeking to bring him to repentance. For us to allow church members to live in open sin hurts them as well as Christ and the church. This particular member of the Corinthian church apparently was living with his stepmother in an immoral relationship. The woman was apparently not a part of the church family, otherwise Paul would have had the church deal with her as well. What a terrible thing for a Christian to live in sin with an unsaved person while the church does nothing about it.

The church cannot change the world if the church is like the world. Read these verses carefully and note that Paul makes a distinction between sin in the lives of Christians and sin in the life of unbelievers. Sin in the lives of believers is worse. Paul had commanded them in a previous letter not to fellowship with Christians and church members who had sinful reputations as fornicators, coveters, or idolaters. He did not tell them to stay away from all sinners of this kind, otherwise they would have to leave the world. We expect the unsaved man to live in sin, but even the world expects the Christian to be different. One reason the church today has so little influence in the world is because the world has too much influence in the church.

How should Christians settle personal differences? They must first have the right spiritual values. Too many Christians have warped values, the things of this world are more important to them than the glory and praise of God. Matters between Christians should be settled quietly according to the principles of Matt. 18:15-17 and 1 Cor. 6:5.

This closes the first section of the letter dealing with the sins in the church. Keep in mind that all of these problems (division, immorality, disputes, and defilement with the world) come from one common source: the believers in Corinth were spiritual babes and were not growing in the Lord. They had their eyes on men, not on Christ, they were feeding on milk, and not the

meat of the Word, they were unwilling to admit sin and deal with it. Most serious church problems begin as personal problems and sins in the lives of church members.

**Read 1 Corinthians 5:1-8. Pray and answer the following questions:**

The city of Corinth was known for its immorality. At the temple of the Greek goddess Aphrodite, one thousand temple prostitutes made themselves available. The new Christians at Corinth were influenced by this pagan environment. Today our culture is infiltrated with a Playboy philosophy that portrays evil as good and good as evil. At times this philosophy infects the church, as it did in Corinth. Paul shows that the best way to deal with the problem is head on. In the process, we will learn what it will really mean to love one another.

1. What are some of the strongest influences toward sexual immorality we see in our world today?
2. At what point would you stop associating with a person who continued to do wrong?
3. Why is purity such a vital issue for a Christian and for the church?

**Read 1 Corinthians 5:9-13. Pray and answer the following questions:**

Paul presents his readers with a principle of New Testament church discipline. When a congregation, or the church at large, overlooks immorality, the moral fiber of the church is weakened. None escape the contamination. The whole lump is affected. No church or fellowship can celebrate deliverance from sin while sheltering sin among its members. Evil

can never be remedied by ignoring or hiding it. In fact, covering it up is the worst that can happen, for like yeast, evil does its terrible work from within.

The same is true of believers who live in consistent disobedience to God's expressed will. Their behavior will badly infect the larger groups of which they are a part. It can even lead to a distorted perception of sin in which the group tolerates. Paul challenged the Corinthians to confront the subtle deterioration they had allowed within their congregation. However, once the perpetrator had repented, they were then to seek his restoration. Even though corrective activity among believers may be severe, confrontation should always be to promote healing rather than to expel wrongdoers. There are no throw away people in the kingdom of God.

4. Why is Paul so firm about staying away from immoral Christians, but not from immoral people of the world? What is the main difference?

5. In Paul's culture, what was the significance of eating with a person?

6. Why do we sometimes find it easier to judge sin in non-Christians than the weaknesses of someone in our own Christian fellowship? How can we deal constructively and in love with the latter?

**Read 1 Corinthians 6:1-11. Pray and answer the following questions:**

Paul now turns his attention to personal disputes among the church members. Members of the congregation were contending about personal rights or business matters. Unable to resolve these differences, they were appealing to courts of law. Paul provides instructions for keeping the resolution of disputes among believers rather than taking them before pagan judges, where the witness of the gospel could be discredited.

7. How do you think that believers taking their grievances into civil court has affected their witness to unbelievers? Have you ever witnessed this personally? Explain.

8. If you have ever been wronged by another Believer, what was your attitude in seeking justice? In the light of Paul's instruction, how should a problem like this be handled?

9. What should you do if you feel you have been wronged by another Believer?

**Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20. Pray and answer the following questions:**

10. What was Paul's practical counsel for avoiding sexual immorality? What reason did he give for his counsel?

11. What does it mean that our body is the "temple of the Holy Spirit"? How does this influence your life as a Believer?

12. With what price have you been purchased? (See 1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Peter 1:18-19)

### **Life Application**

Compare your notes and daily Scripture references. Take some time to pray and meditate on what God showed you in a practical way this week and how you can apply it to your Christian walk. Write your takeaways down for review, group discussion and application.