

How Churches Can Deal with Sin

1 Cor 5:1-13

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. Illustration about Eskimos, *The More Excellent Way* by Echols, pp 59-60.
- B. Church discipline is not a popular topic.
 - 1. We in the churches of Christ have seldom used church discipline.
 - 2. However, if we are to be true to Scripture, we need to take such actions when necessary.
- C. This passage dealing with church discipline is a part of Scripture.
 - 1. Therefore, it is inspired (2 Tm 3:16).
 - 2. Therefore, it originated with God, not man (2 Pt 1:21).
- D. Let's examine this text & see how churches can deal with sin.

II. CHURCHES CAN CONDONE SIN, vv 1-2.

- A. It had been reported that there was serious sexual sin in Corinth.
 - 1. "It his reported" shows that this was something widely known.
 - 2. Other congregations as well as others in the community knew what was going on.
- B. This type of sexual sin did not even occur among the pagans--a man was married to his father's wife.
 - 1. The law pronounced a curse on those who had sexual relations with their stepmothers (Deut 27:20).
 - 2. Roman law even prohibited this relationship.
- C. The Corinthians were puffed up rather than mourning.
 - 1. The church was proud of what was taking place.
 - 2. Instead of being proud, the church should have mourned.
 - a. The word for "mourned" refers to mourning at a funeral.
 - b. The church should have viewed this brother as though he were dead & mourned for him.
- D. The one living with his father's wife should have been put away from the church.
- E. Churches dare not condone sin.
 - 1. Prov 17:15.
 - 2. Rv 2:20.
- F. Are you condoning sin?

III. CHURCHES CAN CONDEMN SIN, vv 3-5.

- A. Paul judged the man living in sin as though he were present with the Corinthian church, v 3.
- B. The church was to deliver this man over to Satan.
 - 1. Paul tells the church how to deliver this man over.
 - a. They were to do so in the name of the Lord Jesus--this means by his authority.
 - b. They were to do so when they had gathered together.
 - 1) The church as a whole was to come together to discipline this man.
 - 2) One person couldn't take it on himself to disfellowship this brother.
 - c. They were to do so with Paul's spirit--Paul would be supporting these brethren.
 - d. They were to do so with the power of the Lord Jesus--the Lord would be standing behind this church.
 - 2. The church was to deliver this man over to Satan.
 - a. This means the church was to disfellowship this man & give him over to the world.
 - b. The world, after all, is Satan's domain.
 - 3. The church was to disfellowship this man so that his spirit might be saved--the purpose of church discipline is to see people saved.
- C. Church discipline means cutting all ties with those who have been

disfellowshipped.

IV. CHURCHES CAN CATCH ON TO SIN, vv 6-8.

- A. The boasting of the church was not good, for the church could learn from sin.
- B. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.
 - 1. Paul was warning the church of learning by example.
 - 2. Just as a small amount of yeast can leaven a whole lump, a small amount of sin can influence individuals to sin.
 - a. 1 Cor 15:33.
 - b. Solomon's heart was turned away from God by his wives (1 Ki 11:4).
- C. The church was to purge itself of the old leaven.
 - 1. This refers to the Passover practice of the Jews--The day before the feast, the Hebrews were to go through their house & throw away every bit of leaven.
 - 2. In the same fashion, these Christians were to purge themselves of sin.
- D. Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us--Therefore, we can't blink at sin.
- E. These Christians did not need to keep the Passover with the leaven of malice & wickedness--The leaven of malice & wickedness was in the church.
- F. These Christians needed to keep the Passover with the unleavened bread of sincerity & truth--This church needed to be one filled with sincerity & truth.
- G. Are we learning to sin by keeping bad company?

V. CHURCHES CAN CUT THE KNOT WITH SIN, vv 9-13.

- A. Paul had written an earlier epistle to Corinth in which he told them not to associate with the sexually immoral.
- B. Paul did not mean that we were not to keep company with the wicked who are outside the church.
 - 1. Otherwise, we would need to leave the world.
 - 2. We must have contact with the world so that we can teach them the Gospel.
 - a. Jesus himself was a "friend of tax collectors and sinners" (Mt 11:19).
 - b. We, too, must be a friend of sinners--Otherwise, we can't reach them.
- C. We are not to keep company with someone called a brother who is immoral.
 - 1. We are not even to eat with such a person.
 - 2. Eating was a great symbol of friendship in the ancient world--We cannot extend fellowship or friendship to a brother who lives in sin.
- D. We are not to judge those on the outside; we are to judge those on the inside.
 - 1. We can judge a brother by his actions.
 - 2. If his actions are not Christian, we need to take action.
- E. God shall judge those on the outside.

VI. CONCLUSION.

- A. These Christians were to put themselves away from the evil person.
- B. They also needed to put away sin from their lives. Have you put away sin from your life?