

## Just A Minute! *With Scripture*

The King James Bible is used for all references. Verses may be made bold or numbered for emphasis.

Newsletter Theme: Application of I Corinthians 5

### Ungodliness in the Body of Christ

How can we respond to adult saints who purpose to live in ungodliness? The answer is found by looking at the Apostle Paul, who sometimes strategically handled issues in a tough manner in order to edify the Church.

He dealt with many matters in Corinthians, such as worldly wisdom, carnality, and the lack of love for saints. *Chapter 5* addresses an assembly who embraced fornication and didn't respond to the Truth of sound doctrine: *"It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you."* (I Cor. 5:1-2)

Paul recommended discipline to be implemented by Church leaders in the name and power of the Lord Jesus and by his own authority as their Apostle. The man was chastened and put out of the Church (I Cor. 5:5). Eventually he responds, repenting of his ungodliness & therefore taken back into the assembly (II Cor. 2:6-10).

Through this example, we see that strong correction is sometimes needed, but is to be done in love. It is the very mechanism God designed to help a carnal believer get on the road of edification. Sinful thinking (the leaven of corrupt doctrine) puffs men up and can spread to others in the assembly. Thus, it is important to deal wisely with ungodliness: *"Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleaven..."* (I Cor. 5:6-7)

**Within the Church:** This tough love option is to be used in this grace dispensation by Church leaders for the purpose of edification and to maintain holiness in the Church. **Outside the Church:** Carnal, weak saints, who are family/friends, may display ungodly rebellion toward God. Love with prayer would prompt gentle, direct encouragement to live as who they are in Christ. If this approach is unfruitful, it may be wise to consult a spiritual leader for advice. Be cautious to limit close, regular contact with those who live in ungodliness to avoid their influence upon you.

## Trusting Christ in Us

While 2020 brought unexpected challenges (COVID-19, widespread protests, and a contested presidential election), we made it through by God's grace. 2021 can be a great year of thankfulness, knowing that God's total provision is always sufficient. On Christ's behalf, we've been left here as ambassadors to manifest Christ in these trying times. God's Word teaches us how:

**\*I Cor. 5:8: Allow the Word written by Paul to be your guide to discern life issues.** We are to yield to God's wisdom within us to determine what to do as challenges come: *"For verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed."*

**\*II Cor. 6:1,3,17-18: We're to work together with God as ministers, and to be set apart:** *"We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain...Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed...Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."*

**\*II Cor. 7:1: God desires that we trust Him and what He says to live holy:** *"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."*

As ambassadors, we can manifest Christ (allow Him to work in us) to impact eternity. There are three main ways: **Application helps us mature:** *"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things..."* (Eph. 4:15) **Our life can manifest Christ to others:** *"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery..."* (Eph. 3:9) **God's Word in us teaches angels:** *"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God."* (Eph. 3:9-10)



Search it out!

Choose Something to Study in This Section

## I Corinthians 5: Look for Application

Examine verses!



Paul's epistles are written directly to the Body of Christ, the Church today. As we read Romans through Philemon, realize that it is instruction to live by each day. As you read, look for the application. This is a tool found on P. 18 of "Exploring the Bible Using Study Skills;" available to buy on Amazon.

**1. Fine tune your Scripture reading:** Read *chapter 5* and think about the verses. First, determine if you understand what is being taught, then, look for two ways to apply it in your life. Now, make a decision to live it.

**2. Read Verse 7 and its context for application:** As you read, think about the analogy of leaven. 1) Look up the word in a Bible dictionary and also in a concordance. You will find that Jesus defined it as false doctrine of the Pharisees (*Matt. 16:12*) 2) Think about doctrine or things you believe that aren't really true, that needs to be purged. It may be religious beliefs, tradition, etc.

**3. Think about Verses 9-13:** This section teaches how to look at/deal with believers and unbelievers. a) What can you learn that can be applied? b) As you think and meditate on these verses, if we are not to judge unbelievers, what interactions should we have?

*\*Newer students: Focus on 'reading' Scripture rather than on using many new study insights.*

### Do We Go Along or Stand Apart?

After reflecting upon this coming new year, how will you respond, not knowing what lies ahead? The year may settle down and be the best year ever, yet things will continue to wax worse and worse. Does God's will for us change? Absolutely not! Through Paul's epistles we see that we are to simply trust Him, yield, and walk by faith in whatever comes our way, not caught up in the flesh by fear, nor ungodliness. *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."* (I Corinthians 15:58)

Sometimes, we can be lulled to sleep in the 'easy times' and rely on ourselves, only 'crying out' to God when things get very difficult. This is dangerous! We develop a habitual pattern of trusting in ourselves, using self-effort and not accessing Christ, His power and wisdom, on a regular basis. In good times and bad we're to rely on Christ, otherwise we will trust in the flesh and our feelings.

It often seems easier to just go along with the course of this world as everyone else does. But we are positionally set apart (sanctified) once we trust Christ, and instructed to walk in a holy, sanctified manner to do works that please our Father. *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* (Ephesians 2:10) God has provided all we need by His grace (*Romans through Philemon*) to stand apart. We are to 'purge' ourselves of ungodliness, religiousness, and worldly influences (ungodly thinking/leaven) to be prepared to live in our new identity. *"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."* (I Corinthians 5:7)

If we are not doing this, why? To be honest, it is not always easy to live what we know by being fully persuaded in the Word (*Romans 14:5*). We live in a society that can vex (trouble) our very souls (*II Peter 2:8*), persecuting us even if we just express a different point of view. It will be challenging and overwhelming to stand apart **if we do it in our own effort**. Indeed, we need to yield and change our expectations. Know that we will be harassed and not fit into this ungodly world. This is not our home...we are to look above. Very soon we will be caught up to live with our Lord forever. *"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."* (Phil. 3:20) We can confidently walk by faith, knowing one day, God will make all things right! (*Romans 12:19*)

## I Corinthians 5: How Do We Love?

By Deborah Garner



### Make Your Spiritual Education a Priority

Paul wrote epistles to school the Corinthian Church i.e. how to deal with ungodliness in their assembly. *"To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."* (I Cor. 5:5) So too, God teaches and re-proves us by Paul's epistles, which were written to us, the Body of Christ.

Life is similar to the college experience, adult students determine their education and how it will be applied by decisions made; it is free will. Will we go to the lecture and pay attention to the teaching, or skip class to feed fleshly desires? Homework is given as merely another opportunity to learn, if time is given to do the assignments and apply the teaching.

Similarly, a saint's life is an opportunity to learn spiritually. In a way, life is our God-given, living laboratory to process and apply Scripture. This apprenticeship is designed to help us practice the Word in the details of life. The homework is to know sound doctrine, believe, and apply it. This can reveal opportunities to renew our thinking to mature life application.

Daily there are situations we can apply and refine the use of the Word. As we yield, the Spirit teaches our spirit doctrine, which is formed in us, enabling us to exercise it in life's details.

We're bought with a price and our life on earth is not our own (I Cor. 6:19-20). We're to live unto God and grow to be a helper of others joy (II Cor. 1:24), teaching and mentoring those in our circle of influence. In a way, we're Christ's trainees, gaining an experiential education for a grand purpose, that is, our eternal life in heaven. Our education is based on what we see as important: the flesh or pleasing God.

In *Chapter 5*, Paul is talking to those 'called to be saints' and how to deal with a particular **habitual** sin of a 'brother' (active member of the church). He instructs us 'not to keep company with them' to reprove their behavior: *"But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."* (Corinthians 5:11)

Paul is NOT talking about the unbeliever because he is 'without' which means, he is not a 'brother.' Here is how God deals with those 'without' or outside His body: It is the goodness of God (the good news of salvation) that leadeth them unto repentance (*Romans 2:4*) Also, Paul is NOT talking to you about your family member with whom God ordained for you to love unconditionally. Before confronting sin, meditate on Scripture to know God's TRUE heart on the matter.

I think we, believers, could be judging and avoiding the very ones God is asking us to love back to Him. *Verse 10* reminds us that we are still in this world to be a witness to those outside (without) the Body of Christ. If we don't company with unbelievers, how will they hear the gospel? *Verse 11* reminds us that we love a 'brother in Christ' to repentance differently than we would 'unbelievers' who commit the same act (*vs10*). Why? *1 Corinthians 2:14* reminds us that an unbeliever will not receive the things of the spirit because they are foolishness to him.

**Think on this:** Knowing who the writer's audience is and the context of scripture is VERY important. We could do some real damage to those seeking truth in their lives if we misinterpret a scripture that was meant for a "brother" and we apply it to an 'unbeliever' or 'family member.' *Proverbs 9:6-9:* *"Forsake the foolish, and live: and go in the way of understanding. He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot. Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning."* Selah

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To:

**“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...” (Romans 3:24)**

## **A Time to Refrain from Embracing** by Jeanette Scallan

Unity requires accountability. We see this all around us. Whether family or nation, unreasonable behavior left unchecked breeds suffering and dissent. The apostle Paul understood. Grace doesn't remove this principle, but instead amplifies it. The body of Christ is comprised of individuals, each with our own perspective, but we are all connected by one Spirit. We have liberty in Christ to make choices, but the consequences of our choices extend beyond ourselves. When we choose to walk in the spirit, we make edifying choices based on God's Word. However, when we choose to use our liberty for a license to sin, we cause damage. Not only to ourselves, our families, and our local assembly, but to the whole body of Christ.

It is a tragedy when families are separated because of destructive behavior. Infidelity, insatiable greed, abusive behavior, or alcoholism are often to blame. Oddly enough, these are some of the same behaviors Paul lists as grounds for separation among believers. *“But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat (1 Cor. 5:11)”*. We are a family, but love without accountability is culpability (i.e., participation in wrongdoing). We should do all we can to warn and restore a brother or sister taken in a fault, but continuing to embrace them in their rebellion makes us accomplices in damaging the body. If they are saved, their soul is secure (1 Cor. 5:5). We need not fear that they will be lost. In love there was a time to embrace them, and in love there is a time to refrain from embracing (Ecc. 3:5). Perhaps repentance will restore them to us.

## **Christian Life Coach Support Services**

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