

1 Corinthians 5

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[0 : 00] was going to the book of 1 Corinthians. We've been making our way through 1 Corinthians last week. We took a break, really not necessarily in practice.

We took a break from it because we stepped out and we looked at the individual Timothy. Sure, we did it. It was Mother's Day. We saw the importance and the role of the home. But it had application to our text because the fourth chapter of 1 Corinthians tells us that Paul is sending this letter to an individual or by an individual's hand of that individual is Timothy.

He said that Timothy was like-minded in all of his ways and all of his practices. Timothy is being sent to a church with major problems. And we took time last week to look at that individual whom Paul entrusted with such a letter, with such a responsibility to go to such a people that he referred to as saints.

They were saints by calling. They were saints by appointment. God had called them and appointed them as saints. They were not necessarily saints in practice because who they were positionally was not how they were living practically.

And yet Paul sent this letter of rebuke and correction and sometimes really just upsetting, you know, upsetting the spirit and uncomfortableness. And he sent it by the letter of an individual named Timothy.

[1 : 11] So we took some time last week to see Timothy. But we're going to get back into 1 Corinthians. So 1 Corinthians chapter 5 will be our text this morning. 1 Corinthians chapter 5.

I will preface this that you understand. I told you when we got into 1 Corinthians that we would come upon things that would be hard pills for us to swallow. We would come upon things that would make us uncomfortable.

We would come upon things that we don't necessarily see applied in churches today. We don't see being lived out. When we open up the pages of the Old Testament, there are some truths that God gives his people that we never see his people applying.

One of those being if someone brings shame to their father or mother or if they speak against their father or mother or if they disobey their father or mother, the penalty for that disobedience was stoning.

They were to be stoned. But we never see that actually taking place in the Old Testament. Does that mean that it never happened? No, we just never see it taking place. This was a high standard that we know that no man can meet.

[2 : 11] So I jokingly but wholeheartedly also say that I would not have lived past Leviticus chapter 5 if I'm living in the Old Testament covenant because before I get into the fifth chapter, I've already been stoned three or four times.

I've broken the law that many times. And I don't say that just about me. I also say that about you because you wouldn't live past it either because none of us can live according to such a high standard. That's the point.

We see that a lot in the Old Testament. We would expect to see similar truths that are hard statements, hard sayings that maybe we never see actually being applied in the New Testament, things that, yeah, God said it, but did he really mean it?

I would think that naturally one of those things that we would like to see kind of being passed over would be this thing called church discipline. But God does not allow it to be that way because we see it actually being applied later on.

The first mentioning of the church, Matthew 16, upon the confession of Peter, Jesus speaks of the power of the church. Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

[3 : 20] We read later on and we see the first mentioning of the church. You have the law first mentioned. The church is to be on the offensive. It is to be pushing back darkness. It is to go forward in power and it will be built upon the confession of who Christ is.

Not upon the man, Peter, but upon the confession. That's the rock. We're not going to rehash it. We looked at it when we made our way through the gospel. Matthew 18, the second mentioning of the church.

Speaks of church discipline. When your brother has sinned against you, you go to him and you confront him. If he repents, great. You've won your brother. If he doesn't, go get another one. Two or more are gathered together. I'm there as well.

And you go and approach him in quietness and sincerity and in truth. And if he repents, great. If he doesn't, you bring him before the church. All of a sudden Jesus brings up that word church again, which is the ecclesia, the called out ones.

And he begins to speak of the church's role in that individual's life. And those are the things that say, oh, I wish maybe that didn't happen. Maybe Jesus didn't say that because it makes us uncomfortable.

[4 : 18] But yet we see that being applied here in 1 Corinthians 5. We'll get into the text. But I want to caution you. Or caution you. Because never separate what follows in Matthew 18 after the application of church discipline in Matthew 18.

Because immediately after speaking of discipline within the body, Peter asked Jesus a question, same chapter, just a couple verses later. And how often should my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Right?

He says, really, it's an endless number of times. So what he is saying is, even though discipline is a part of it, love is the motive and the goal behind it. It's not a matter of being judgmental.

It's not being judgmental. It's a matter of concern, a matter of lifting up, a matter of raising up your brother. He emphasizes you have won your brother back. It is concern for the individual involved in the matter rather than concern for your own personal well-being, your own personal standing.

Oh, well, you've sinned against me, so I have a right to defend myself. Jesus says, no, your brother is sin, so you want to restore him. It's not about who you are in that moment. It's about who he is in Christ.

[5 : 28] Now, we bring that application over into our text this morning. So if you are physically able and desire to do so with me, it's a long introduction. We're going to read all 13 verses of 1 Corinthians 5, so would you stand with me if you can?

The word of God says in 1 Corinthians 5, it is actually reported that there is immorality among you and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles that someone has his father's wife.

You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead, so that the one who has done this deed would be removed from your midst. For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present.

In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are, in fact, unleavened.

[6 : 39] For Christ, our Passover also has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us celebrate the feast not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people. I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world.

But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler, not even to eat with such a one.

For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from among yourselves.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day you've given us. We thank you for the opportunity we've had to gather together as your people and lift up our voice in song.

[7 : 42] Lord, we pray now as we've opened up this passage of Scripture that you would speak to us in all humility, in all honesty. Lord, that you would help us not to look around, but to look within.

Lord, we ask that in all these things you would be glorified and honored, Lord Jesus, through your church and the power that exists therein.

And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. We've come to, quite possibly, one of the most difficult passages in 1 Corinthians.

A passage which Paul seems to say in 2 Corinthians has fulfilled its purpose. He tells us in 2 Corinthians, when writing to the church once again, that this admonition, this rebuke created a godly sorrow within the church.

And he said that that sorrow, though he was not seeking to make them sad, he said that sorrow fulfilled its purpose. That godly sorrow is beneficial because it brings about repentance and it brings about restoration.

[9 : 11] If we want to know, as Paul Harvey would say the rest of the story, we would know it seems to imply in 2 Corinthians that Paul says that the godly sorrow has brought about its course to restore this man back to the fellowship.

That what Paul had intended actually took place. But before we could get to the end of the story, we need to see what was taking place in the midst of it. Now I want to caution you that when you read this passage, you want to point a finger at the man in the passage.

But the reality is that Paul is pointing past the man and he's pointing to the congregation. He's writing the church a letter. He's not writing that man a letter. He's writing the saints that are at Corinth a letter.

He's not writing this individual a letter. The rebuke is to the church, not just to the individual. Just because one individual's sin had been made manifest doesn't mean that he is any worse, any greater, or any less than anyone else present.

The problem, as we will see in just a moment, was in the church. It was not just in the individual. Now we've often said we know we're in a messed up church when there's people in it.

[10 : 30] Because the church is messed up because we as people are messed up. But we do not use that as an excuse to remain a messed up church. Because the church is also the bride of Christ.

It is being purified. It says, he is making his bride spotless. He is preparing her for that wedding day. He is dressing her in the righteous robes of the saints.

He is calling her to a great feast. It tells us that husbands ought to love their wives as Christ loved the church. That he gave himself up to her to purify her, to make her holy.

The people of God are called saints and they're called to holiness. And that's something that we have separated from our modern day Christianity. We would call that the spiritual discipline of holiness.

We don't like to speak of spiritual disciplines much anymore. We don't like to speak of things that happen. Someone asked me this morning, pastor, how do you make your way through this book of the Old Testament, this particular book of the Old Testament?

[11 : 29] And I gave the only honest answer I could. I said I had to discipline myself to read it. Because quite honestly, it didn't make me feel good when I read it. It wasn't very easy to read.

It wasn't a very pleasant read at times. I butcher so many names that are in that particular book because in case you haven't figured it out, my name is Billy Joe Calvert. I'm from Bell Buckle, Tennessee.

I currently live in Wartrace, Tennessee. And I'm pastor of First Baptist Church of Wartrace. You don't get more Southern than that. Okay? You just don't. So my tongue, it betrays me quite often when I read Old Testament passages.

But yet I disciplined myself to get in the Word because God contained it within the Scripture. And therefore, if it's there, I must read it. And if I must read it, then there must have an application to me in it.

And it was only after years of discipline that I began to see the fruitfulness thereof. See, we don't have much of that today. We'd rather have easy Christianity, easy believism, and easy churchism.

[12 : 27] When we speak of discipline, we feel like we're going to run people off. We've made it easier to be a part of the church. We've made it easier to be included in the church than any other time in history. And my friend, I'll tell you the end result of that, we have weaker churches.

You say, oh, that's hard, pastor. Well, it's true, too. We see this reality. What we see in the passage before us is the disciplined church.

The disciplined church. Number one, we have the existence of a problem. There is the existence of a problem.

Now, Paul is writing the letter of 1 Corinthians in response. Now, this is the second letter he has written to them. He said in the previous letter that I wrote to you. He will say that later on.

We don't have that one. It's not included in the canonization of Scripture. It's not part of our Bible. So we have 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians. But there was a third letter which preceded either one of these.

[13 : 30] But we don't need to know what it says. But Paul has written them another one. But evidently, in response to his first letter, the church wrote back. Paul had spent some time at Corinth. But he was only there for a limited amount of time.

And the church had some questions as to how they should handle certain issues. And the letter that they had sent to Paul, Paul was responding to that letter with a work which we have entitled 1 Corinthians.

And he's addressing some of their questions and their concerns. But here he brings up something the church didn't talk about. See, because the letter they sent him didn't say, And Paul, we also have this man doing this.

Paul says, It is reported. Now, that ought to catch our attention all of a sudden. Because while the church was asking Paul how to handle certain issues, the church really wasn't dealing with the one main issue that Paul wanted to address here.

Paul says, It is reported. Now, the wording there implies that Paul has heard this from people outside the church. That Paul had heard this news from others.

[14 : 28] Friend, pay attention to this. The world knows more of our problems than they do of our profession. I promise you. As a church, the world knows much more of our problems than they do of our profession.

That is, they know the issues we have. And the reason being is because they are looking for them. The world wants us to mess up. The world wants us to fail. The world wants us to fail.

You name the name of Jesus Christ. It isn't just the pastor and his family who live in a glass house. You name the name of Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. You claim him as your Redeemer and people want you to fail.

They do. Because it makes them feel better about themselves. And the world knows more of our problems than they know of our professions. Paul says, It is reported.

I have heard from other sources that there is a problem in the church. And he speaks of this reality. He says that there is a man who is committing an immorality.

[15 : 29] The word there is a sexual immorality who is committing such an immorality that it is not even accepted in the pagan society in which you exist. As a matter of fact, the Old Testament very clearly says that a man shall not have his father's wife.

Now this was not his mother. This was his stepmother. Evidently she was not a member of the church because Paul does nothing to rebuke her. Never says anything to her. He only says it to him. And so we just have to ascertain from scripture that she is not a part of the church.

But he is. The Old Testament says that a man shall not have his father's wife. Even Greek culture and Roman society as wicked and as rapid as Roman society was says that a man shall not have his father's wife.

It is just impractical. It is immoral. It should not take place. These things ought not be. And we see this. And Paul said it is actually reported that this is going on. He said this is happening.

Such that even the city of Corinth is in shock. I mean think about this just for a moment. We have talked about the city of Corinth and how it was such an instrumental city in the trade of the Roman Empire.

[16 : 34] But with that role of importance also came rampant immorality. There were things taking place in Corinth that to say one was Corinthianizing was to essentially say one was living such a rampant life of sin that they were living in utter debauchery and those things that it was kind of a slang word to go Corinthianize meant just to go do whatever you wanted to.

It's kind of like what we would say in America what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas. But evidently what happened in Corinth didn't stay in Corinth right? Because Paul had it reported to him while he wasn't in Corinth. But what was taking place in the church was shocking the inhabitants of the city.

Oh we got a problem. We got a big problem. But see we say well that man's got an issue. Well Paul moves beyond the man because look at what he says.

This letter is written to the church. I've told you that every New Testament promise every New Testament rebuke that you read is directly connected to a local church body. It is no name it and claim it theology.

You can read through the New Testament and you can claim it all you want to. And some people say well I don't have to have the church. Well the problem I have to have with that is many of the promises that people who say they don't have to have the church or claim it or promises that were written to a body of believers called the church.

[17 : 50] You'll see it in just a moment. So Paul is writing this letter to the church. He says this is what's going on. This has been what has been reported. He has his father's wife. But look at verse 2.

You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead. Oh not only is there a man with a problem there's a church with a problem. See the man's got an issue that he's dealing with.

It's a personal battle. It's a personal struggle. It's a sin of temptation that he has succumbed to. But the big problem is Paul says you.

We would say y'all here. Right. As a church. You've become arrogant. You're puffed up. You haven't mourned. He says the problem is the church thinks they're so free in Christ that they can do whatever they want to do.

They know the sin is taking place. They know these things are happening. They know that it's a matter that probably shouldn't happen. But yet they have such a freedom in Christ. Oh we can do whatever we want to do.

[18 : 54] Paul also said do not use your freedom in Christ as an excuse to sin. He said the church was so proud of the fact. That oh we're free in Christ to do things even the world can't do.

Be careful. Be careful. He says you haven't mourned. See the great problem is and I know it makes us uncomfortable is the church isn't weeping over the sin of its own body.

I have a piece of paper folded up in one of my Bibles. It's given to me by my mentor in faith. I remember going at that time he was dean of admissions at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College in Pikeville, Kentucky.

Nobody knows where Pikeville, Kentucky is. You're not missing much other than a great place to go visit and get lost. I was pretty new in the faith and young.

Really hadn't even, I was wrestling with the call to be a pastor and my wife and I would go up and spend some seasons with him in Kentucky and we would be there.

[19 : 55] Sometimes she would just send me, she'd say just go to Kentucky. I guess I was getting on her nerves. I was all this wrestling. So she would send me to Pikeville where there was nothing, nothing but coal mines that are there in a little bitty Baptist Bible College.

And I remember being up there in his office and he handed me a Bible and I brought that Bible back. And in that Bible there's a piece of paper that he used to have framed in his office and it's folded up and it says in there, he who has not wept over his own sins can never weep over the sins of another.

The reason the church isn't weeping over the sins of the world is because we have not wept over our own sins. We rejoice in our arrogance that we're free to do whatever we want to do.

We rejoice and we are puffed up. Oh, nobody can judge me in here. Oh, there's no judgment in Christ, right? Oh, wait a minute. We are not to be judgmental.

We are not the judge. We are not the judge. I cannot condemn you. Now by the judge there's a word we need to understand. I cannot condemn you to eternity or condemn you to heaven or reward you with heaven.

[21 : 02] I don't mean condemn. I cannot appoint you to heaven. I cannot condemn you to eternity and you cannot do that to me. That is to take the place of the judge. But we are to judge one another with righteousness.

We'll see why in just a moment. There was a problem in the church. The existence of the problem was that the man had a sin that he succumbed to and the church rejoiced over it.

You say, well, that's his problem. No. Look around the room, my friend. Peter says that we are spiritual stones united one to another, built up upon one another that we may become a spiritual house of his praise.

Paul refers to the church as the body of Christ. Ephesians 4 says, from what every joint and ligament supplies. There's no unnecessary parts.

Each and every part is needed. Paul tells us here that the sin of an individual affects the corporate body. A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough.

[22 : 12] Just a little. Some of you know I like to make bread. You pick on me about that. That's fine.

I like to make cinnamon rolls. I like to make cinnamon rolls because they're not good for me. And I like to eat cinnamon rolls, right? So I like to make them. I just like to watch them. I like to see how they grow and rise. And I like to put a little leaven and a little yeast in there.

And I like to see it. And I'll have all of this flour. You can laugh at me if you want to. Tell me, hey, I can make bread like a man, okay? It's okay. Nothing wrong with that. It says man should not live by bread alone.

But it doesn't say cut all the bread out. Some of you know, yeah, it's not good for you. It's good, okay? I'll just leave it right there. But we go on a little bit. So I like to watch it. And I'll have all this flour.

And I'll have all this. And just a little leaven. And all I'm wanting is that little leaven to affect everything. And it changes everything. It begins to grow and it begins to change.

[23 : 07] And everything's completely changed. Everything's completely different. Sourdough bread, I can't make that. But boy, that's good stuff. But you've got to have a starter, right? You've got to have a starter that sometimes is, I've heard of them, being 100 plus years old.

It's been growing bread for years and years and years and years. And it's just passed on. And all you need is just a little bit. Because you can continue to add to it. And you can feed it. And it will continue to grow. Because the small part affects the whole part.

And when the individual has a problem, guess what? The church has a problem. And the existence of a problem calls for action.

It says you ought to be mourning instead of rejoicing. Which leads us to the second thing. We don't like this word. I thought about changing it. But I can't.

Because I think it's the right thing. You have the existence of a problem. You have the essential punishments for the problem. Oh, a penalty is a softer word, right? But I think that's the problem.

[24 : 09] So when we deal with sin softly, we get soft results. So you have the essential punishment. Paul says you are rejoicing. And you're arrogant. And you're puffed up. You're not mourning.

He says, but as for me, on my part, I've already passed judgments. For those of us who say that we can't judge as believers, we need to be careful. Because Paul, who wrote more books of the Bible in the New Testament than any other author.

Not more verses. I said books. Because John wrote more verses. Paul says that he is already judged. Paul also says that we are to imitate him as he imitates Christ.

Christ himself tells us to judge righteously. Paul says, as for me, on my part, I've already cast my votes. When you are gathered together and I am with you in spirit because I can't be there in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Because where two or more are gathered together, I am there as well, Jesus says. And the presence and the power of Jesus is there. This is what you must do. And he proclaims the judgment.

[25 : 09] He says, as for me, and this text sounds hard, but we'll flesh it out. He makes this great, great statement.

In verse 5. I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

You say, oh, that's terrible. Well, let's flesh it out a little bit. It's essential. He says, I've decided to have such a one and I'm going to deliver him to Satan.

Now, that doesn't mean just to give him over to a red-tailed, red-horned, pitchfork-carrying individual and say, there you go, Satan. Do what you want to with him. Even though we know that Jesus gives Satan permission to sift Peter, we understand that.

This sifting would do a purpose. It would bring to light his weaknesses. The book of 1 John, chapter 5, verse 19. Near the end of 1 John. In 1 John 5, 19.

[26 : 12] In the middle of that verse, it says, For we know that this world lies under the power of the evil one. That all of the world lies under the power and the sway of the evil one.

So essentially what Paul is saying. Paul says he wants to live like the world, so I'm going to let him go live in the world. He wants to behave like the world.

Then I'm going to give him to the world. I'm going to let him live in the realm where Satan reigns, not to exist among the people where God reigns.

Now there's a great implication here. Because the implication is, is that the church is a place of divine security. The implication is, is there is a divine realm of protection upon the people of God as long as they're connected to the church of God.

And that there's greater harm that's taking place being put outside the church than there is to be a part of the church. We don't want to misuse that and, and then go into malpractice and claiming authority, which we don't have.

[27 : 23] But Paul is reminding us that the activity of Satan is restricted by the body of believers called the church. Satan can't have his way in here. Because greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world.

And when Jesus manifests his presence in such a supernatural way, Satan does not have his way in here. Out there, that's his realm.

He operates in the realm of the world. So when Paul says, I'm going to hand him over to Satan, he says, I'm going to put him outside the church and let him go live how he wants to live in the world.

And the wages of sin is death, right, for the destruction of his flesh. Essentially what Paul is saying is, I'm going to let him live however he wants to live out there so that it becomes so miserable, God brings him to a place of brokenness and repentance in order to call him back to himself.

You say, well, that's unloving. That's so unkind. Max Lucado wrote a book, Jesus Loves You Just the Way You Are. But read the rest of the title because the subtitle is, but he doesn't want you to stay there.

[28 : 36] Sure, the church is to be a welcoming place to whosoever, whensoever, wheresoever. Come as you are. But my friend, I've read scripture through and through and I've never found anyone that had an encounter with a holy God who left as they were.

You may come as you are, but you better expect as you're in his presence that he's going to change you. He's going to mold you. He's going to shape you.

He's going to renew you. See, the word of God tells us that we do great disservice to believers if we make them comfortable in their sin. One of the greatest disservices we as a church have ever done.

Now, I say we. It's a Western church problem that we have in our own society, and I know this doesn't make me popular as a whatever, live stream, and I try not to think about that stuff. It's okay. One of the greatest disservices we've ever done is to lighten the reality of sin and to make the church members comfortable in their sins.

We make it easy to be sinners. But yet, when I read scripture, see, the book of Leviticus, I shared with the Logos group this past Friday night.

[29 : 55] The book of Leviticus says, be holy as I am holy. That's why I don't live past the fifth chapter. The theme of Leviticus is holiness. But you know what I found?

That's just not an Old Testament verse. The book of Hebrews says that we ought to be holy as he is holy. The book of 1 Peter says we ought to be holy as he is holy.

Oh, it's repeated multiple times in the New Testament. Holiness is the expectation of God for his people. But unfortunately, it's very seldom looked for among his people.

Well, we just want you here. The pastor, if we did that, it would run people off. It might. But it also might change those of us that are still here.

Why so unloving and so unkind? Well, you don't have to, you don't go to me with that. Go to the scripture. Peter says that you ought, in 1 Peter, the first chapter, he says that you ought to cast off your former ways. No longer be conformed to your former lusts and former temptations.

[31 : 03] That you ought to lay them aside. Why? Because you have been redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus Christ, not with the worst of things of silver and gold. Your redemption is with the blood of Jesus Christ, my friend. And if that is not powerful enough to change us, then what is?

Nobody has bought us with gold or silver that's going to tarnish. We've been bought with the spotless, blameless, precious blood of Jesus Christ. Shouldn't he expect something different out of us? And then in case they missed it, the first letter in 2 Peter, the first verse, he tells them to cast off again their former ways.

That they ought to push forth and they ought to supply godliness and patience and loving kindness and all of these things. And then perseverance, this word he said, you ought to be so pressing into Christ. You're persevering and trying to change.

Are you going to fail? Yes. Why? Matthew 18, 70 times 7, right? 70 times 7, I'm going to fail. But don't make me comfortable in my sins. We ought to have such an expectation among one another that the spirit has the freedom to bring conviction.

And if he doesn't have the freedom to bring conviction in here, then my friend, then put me out there so that Satan can have his way. Because my soul is worth it. Let Satan have his way in me so that my body is wrecked by the choices I make.

[32 : 22] Because I'm worth it. Because I'm worth it. Paul says, the soul of the man is worth it.

If he must pay the penalty in his flesh, then we need to do it so that his soul may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus. You know there will be a day where I stand before my Lord and Savior and I give an account for what I've done in my body that he has purchased and redeemed with his blood.

There will be a day where I have to give an account for every deed I've done. There will be a day where you do as well. And on that day, if you don't love me enough to call me to a standard where I can stand before him unashamed, then do you really love me?

And if I don't love you enough to call you to a standard, do I really love you? Don't look at me and say, Pastor, live however you want to live.

It'll be all right because I've read the word of God. It says it won't. It says that there will be no immoral person there. No idolater, no swindler.

[33 : 45] It says all of those things. They won't be there. Don't tell me it'll be all right when my Lord and Savior says that it will not be. It'd be better for you to hand me over to Satan and let me go live in the world however I want to live so that at least then God has the freedom to make me uncomfortable in my misery.

And hopefully in my misery, he will call me to repentance. Don't soften the blow. Don't weaken the word. Don't love one another enough to call us to a higher standard.

This is the essential punishment. Which leads us to our third and final thing. It's the Lord who will allow me to get through it. Not only is there existence of a problem in the essential punishment, there is an expectation of purity.

We've already touched on this one so we don't have to spend very long. There's an expectation of purity. The word of God has called us to holiness.

He's called us to live lives of complete devotion. Is it hard? Yes. But Paul reminds us in verse 7, clean out the old leaven.

[35 : 03] Peter says it this way. Do not be conformed to your former lust. Paul says that you cannot be enslaved again to the things which used to hold you captive. You ought to cast them off.

You say, well, I don't have the authority or the ability to do that. Not on your own. You don't. But in Jesus Christ, you do. You have the ability in the church to go to one another and pray for one another.

You say, well, there's a temptation that I cannot overcome. Well, good. The scripture says that when your burden gets too heavy, go to someone and let them pray with you. The word of God tells us you're to carry your own lunch sack.

But that rock that's on your shoulder, someone's supposed to come and bear your burdens with you. Proverbs 18.1 says it's a fool who isolates himself. Why?

Because the expectation is purity. Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump just as you were. Look at this. He speaks of their position again. He speaks of their position because who we are in Christ is not always displayed in how we live in practice.

[36 : 10] He says start living like a new lump. Why? Because you are, in fact, unleavened. This isn't a condemnation message.

This is a restoration message. He says you are, in fact, unleavened. And the reason you are, in fact, if you've trusted in Jesus Christ, is because our Passover lamb has already been slain.

For Christ, our Passover has already been sacrificed. When the Passover was instituted, they were told to celebrate the Passover and they were to get rid of all the leaven in their house. Tradition shows us that the Jewish people would take such great measures, going to every nook and cranny of their house and with the broom sweeping their house.

And they would turn their house upside down to make sure there was no little bit of leaven still in the house. And they would throw it all out just so they could celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days.

All that effort, all that work to make sure that they did it in purity. Paul tells us that our Passover has already been sacrificed. So it's time, time has passed to have already cleaned out the house.

[37 : 15] But we don't have a seven days of unleavened bread. We live in an eternity of unleavenedness. Because Christ, our Passover, has already been slain, yet he lives.

This is the expectation that we are to be pure. That we're to cast it off. That we're to put it beside us. There's something in each and every one of us. It needs to fall on our face before. Because just in case you think it's this one immoral practice, look at what it says.

He says in verse 9, I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people. Well, I'll do that. Yeah, it's hard. He said, but I did not mean at all the immoral people of this world. We like to say it in here this way.

Don't be surprised when sinners act like sinners. Right? But the thing that surprises us is when believers act like sinners. He says, I did not mean at all not to associate with immoral people in the world.

I mean, you're going to come into contact with people out there. Right? People that do whatever they want to. It surprises us. I can't believe the way the world is went. I can't believe what the world accepts. I can't believe. I can't have anything to do with that. Well, we're here.

[38 : 14] God has put us here for this season at this time so that we can have something to do with that. And the something we can have to do with that is if we live differently in here than they do out there, all of a sudden we begin to set the standard for society instead of conforming to society.

And we can degrade society all we want to. But that's the people God's called us to go associate with. The problem is we're too busy trying to take care of our own problems in here. And we're trying to make each one another comfortable in here that we don't want to get out there.

And if we're just to be honest, I mean, just to really be honest with us, when we associate with people out there in the world, what it does is it begins to reveal to us who we are. And it removes our facade a little bit.

And so it makes us uncomfortable as individuals. And we get really, you know, we don't know how to respond because what we find are temptations that we ourselves have not overcome yet. That got preachy for a minute, didn't it?

And so we don't know how to offer them hope. The reason that we don't know how to offer them hope is because we've made it so easy in here that there seems to be no hope, but there is hope in Christ.

[39 : 12] Clean out your own house. Because when this house is in order, I promise you, we'll have something to bring them out there that they've never known. He says, I did not mean it all the world because you need to associate with the world.

He says, but then you'd have to go out of the world. And God has not called us to go out of the world. The prayer of Jesus for us in John 17 is that he prayed for us while we were in the world, right? He says, Father, I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but I pray for them while they're in the world.

This is who we're supposed to be around. I don't like it. Again, don't take it up with me. This is who God called us to be around. What a great opportunity. But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person.

Oh, yeah, that immorality. But then Paul expands and elaborates, right? We wish that he would just talk about that. Like, well, I don't know anybody that took his father's wife. I do, actually. I know someone that did that. It was a church member.

Not here. So don't look around. Okay, don't do it. I actually do. I know something. I know this. I mean, I know this story verbatim.

[40 : 18] I do. They were in a worship team in church, both of them. The pastor had to struggle with that. They were asked to leave. I'm not going to elaborate anymore.

I mean, I know exactly this story. He said, well, I'm glad I don't know that. I'm glad it's not me. Wait a minute. Paul expands that, right? Because we cannot confine it to the sins of that individual. Again, the problem's not the individual. The problem is the body.

And look at what he says. He said, any so-called brother, if he's an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler.

And that list, you know what he spoke of? People who degrade other people with their words. I was like, oh, man. That's what a reviler is. So I didn't take my father's wife.

Well, yeah, but do you revile people? See how I said we all need to fall on our faces? Or covetous?

[41 : 19] The standard's high, right? Scripture. He says, not even to eat with such a one. Now, this doesn't mean that, oh, well, I don't want you to leave here going, well, I'm falling short.

I'm not worthy. None of us are worthy, right? The problem comes when we know it's wrong. We condone the wrong that we know as a church or as individuals.

And we say, but we're going to do it anyway. That's the problem. Old Testament refers to that as a high-handed sin. It's to look at God and go, God, I know you said this is wrong, but I don't care.

That's a high-handed sin. In the Old Testament, by the way, God does not give an atoning sacrifice for a high-handed sin. But praise be to God, we don't live in the Old Covenant.

Jesus Christ is our ultimate sacrifice. Even for those things where we've thumbed the nose at God and said, but God, I'm going to do it anyway. Paul says there's restoration available. For each and every one of us.

[42 : 24] Restoration available. He says, for what have I to do with judging outsiders? I'm not here to tell the world they're wrong. I'm here to set a standard for the world that they can see they're wrong.

I can call sin, sin, and I can speak truth in love. But I'm not here to cast judgment upon the world because they're living according to the one who rules their realm.

All of this world is under the sway of the evil one. They're just doing what comes naturally. But do you not judge those who are within the church? When the church acts like the world, we are doing what's unnatural because we are made new.

We are made new. But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from among yourselves. This is a disciplined church.

Hard? Yes. But absolutely necessary. Because God has called us to holiness. When I read this passage, and we look at this passage, and I'm concluding here.

[43 : 30] It would be real easy to read this and go, yeah, God, you need to take care of this one, this one, this one. I'm going to start naming people. But honestly, when I read this passage, I say, oh, God, take care of me. I want to be a part of a church like that.

I want to be a part of a church, a body of believers that would have the boldness. And this word I used to use too much, but I don't anymore. The audacity even to look at me and say, pastor, if you don't change, we're going to put you out.

Why? Because it sets a standard greater than anything else. That doesn't mean coming and going, pastor, if you don't change what you're preaching, I mean, we can deal with that later.

I'm talking about my personal practice. I want that. I don't want it because it's going to make me feel good. I don't want it because it's going to tickle my ears. I don't want it because it's going to make it easy.

I want it because I know there's coming a day where I stand before Jesus Christ who spilled his precious blood from my soul. And I want to be able to stand before him in confidence, knowing that the life I lived after he redeemed me was to the greatest of his glory.

[44 : 45] So when we read this, don't look around and go, oh, well, we need to take care of them, them, them. No, Paul says, address yourself first. Jesus said it this way, take the plank that is in your own eye out.

Then you can see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. Do we need to help him out? Sure. We've got to take care of us first. We've got to take care of us first. Let's pray.

Lord, I thank you for your word. Thank you for this day. And God, I realize these are hard words, hard passage. Lord, but we also know that it comes to us.

The reason it's so hard is because there's so much power in it. Lord, this is what you're calling us to do by the power and presence of the spirit. To be a people for you.

A people in this world, but not of this world. A people set apart, set aside for your glory. And Lord, we know that the only way we can do that, Lord Jesus, is if our lives reflect your precious blood.

[45 : 50] So, Lord, break my heart. Break my mind. Call me to a greater devotion and greater commitment to the things of Christ. Lord, for your glory so that I may call others for your glory and their good.

Have your way now, Lord, as we go into this time of invitation. Work on every heart, every mind, and every soul. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[49 : 04] Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen.