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Father, this Father's day, we specifically, as we celebrate here on earth, our fathers, we also want to celebrate you and give thanks to you for the good, good father that you are. Father, I pray as we go to your word now that you will hide us behind your cross. Lord, protect us from the distractions of the world around us.

Let us focus on you. Let us hear your message and have it seep into our hearts, Father, that you will be glorified as our lives are changed by your word. In Jesus name we pray. Amen. All right, first I want to say happy Father's day to all of the fathers in our church.

We love you. We're glad to have you with us, and we appreciate everything that you do. As we continue through our study of the book of first Corinthians, we are moving beyond the initial problems that Paul addressed and we're moving on to some other things. So we had a few. If we pull up our slides of the outlines here, Paul was writing for various reasons.

He wrote about wisdom and foolishness. We saw that through chapter one to four. Now we're going to have issues of impurity. I've actually revised that on my own list from not just impurity but also moral laxity as well. Then there'll be gospel freedom and love, community worship, resurrection and conclusion.

And so we're now going to deal for the next two to three weeks with issues of impurity. Specifically this week we're going to deal with sexual immorality. On our next slide here, you'll see that we have, sexual immorality will be chapter six. I don't have it here on the slides, but as we go through this section of Paul's writing, we'll also, Paul will talk about how we deal with lawsuits. Christians don't go to the law to deal with one another.

Rather they do it in a christian manner. We'll also see issues to do with fornication and marriage as we continue through this passage. So last week, as we finished with, as we finished with wisdom and foolishness and Paul began to move into the section a little bit, he says in chapter 18, sorry, verse 18 says, now some of you are arrogant, as though I was not coming to you, but I will come soon if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk but the power of those who are arrogant. And he says, he says, what do you want? Should I come to you with a rock or should I come in love in the spirit of gentleness?

So with that in mind, with that, as Paul addresses this church here, says, when I come, should I come with a rod or with love and gentleness? Keep that in the back of your mind. As we begin to look at some of the bigger problems in the church, we're going to start here with chapter five, we'll do verses one and two, it says. So Paul continues after he says, should I come with the rod or in love? He says, it is reported that there is sexual immorality among you and the kind of sexual immorality that is not even tolerated among the gentiles.

A man is sleeping with his father's womb wife and you are arrogant. Shouldn't you be filled with grief and remove from your congregation the one who did this?

So Paul, he wastes no words. He just jumps right in and he says, look, it's been reported to me, so this isn't news to Corinth. The church in Corinth knows that this is going on. It's not news to them today. A report's not as quick as it is right now.

I could have someone from Cedar send a report to me via text message or phone call and I might know what's going on in Cedar before someone else does. But this is 2000 years ago. A report was given in one of two ways. A messenger went and delivered it verbally, or somebody wrote it down, handed it to a messenger who had to travel to find Paul and deliver the message to him. So by the time Paul is hearing of this, this is going on in Corinth for some time, and what's going on is sexual immorality.

Now, sexual immorality is of the sins. If we were to rank sins, and I say weak as to goddess, all sins are equally condemning right to God, all sin is sin and will condemn you to hell. But if we were to look at sin and kind of rank it, sexual immorality is among the worst. And here is why sexual immorality is among the worst. There are very few sins as addicting as sexual immorality, very few things that grab ahold of you and keep you glued to it like a slave or a prisoner, they just don't exist.

If you look at what most people's, especially when it comes to sin, what most people's struggle points are, they're either drugs, which are very addicting, or it's sexual immorality. Whether it's pornography or it's masturbation or it's sleeping around, sexual sin has a way of grabbing you and not letting you escape from it. So now we hear that a church has sexual immorality within it, and this is a problem.

The other reason, real quick, that sexual immorality I would rank among the worst, is what sexual immorality does. Has anyone ever stopped and wondered why marriage is between one man and one wife.

Why did God set it up that way? Way, right. Why does God only want you to be sexual partners with one person? And it is because marriage and sexual relationships is the closest way to symbolize the relationship between God and his people.

Sexual immorality is the purest form of idolatry, adultery, or commit an adultery against God. So now here's what we see about the sexual immorality going on in the church. He says it's the kind of sexual immorality not even tolerated among the gentiles. Think about that for a minute. The gentiles were, especially when you look in places like Corinth or I in Asia or Asia Minor, as you look throughout the Middle east and the regions that we see the New Testament take place in, sexual immorality was absolutely horrible.

You have people sleeping. You have men sleeping with men, women sleeping with women. You have humans sleeping with animals as part of weird, cultist, ritualistic, religious things. You have some places that demand, some places if you want to work in the guilds, depending on where you could get. And you'll see this as look at some of the churches in revelation in chapters two and three.

Some of these places, if you wanted to work, you had to be a member of a trade guild. But to be a member of that trade guild, you had to adhere to their weird religious practices, which included sexual immorality. So the gentiles here, with their sexual immorality, it was bad. And Paul says, look, you've got stuff going on that not even the gentiles tolerate.

Here's what it is. A man is sleeping with his father's wife. There's two ways to look at that. Either the man is sleeping with his mother, which is incest, or the man is sleeping with his stepmother. If the man had been divorced and remarried.

And either way, this is the type of sexual immorality taking place in Corinth at the time.

Now let's look at the response of Corinth in verse two. He says, and you are arrogant. Shouldn't you be filled with grief and remove from your congregation the one who did this? So there's two parts to this verse here. First, you are arrogant.

What does arrogant really mean? We use that phrase a lot, and we use it in a wide range of context. So let's actually define what Paul is saying to them here. He's saying, you are proud. That's what this word means.

They're proud of what's going on. As we looked from chapters one through four, Paul spent four chapters attacking one thing and he was attacking their pride. Right? They were filled with pride because they had knowledge and lots of information, and they thought they had flattering speech, and they thought that they were everything because of that. Well, now we find out that their pride, their prowess here, blinds them to the sin of sexual immorality.

And we'll talk a little bit more here about that in a minute, how it might even be worse. So they're proud. He calls them arrogant, and he says, shouldn't you be filled with grief? Guys, when somebody among us, now, when I say among us, I don't mean our neighbors or coworkers. I mean somebody who is a Christian, who is a part of our church, who gathers with us every day or every week, and they are filled with deep sin.

We should be filled with grief.

That should make us sad. It should fill us with emotion both in what they are doing against God. They call themselves a Christian, and they're sleeping with their mother. That should anger us for the sin against God, but it

also should fill us with grief for them because they're not acting like a Christian. They're not living in a way that you can look at them and be confident that they have the spirit of Christ in them.

So you should be filled with grief. But further, he says, you should remove them from your congregation.

I'll be honest. If someone in our church is sleeping with their mother, there would be a talking to and likely an excommunication from this body of Christ.

We cannot tolerate that level of sin within the body of Christ. Now, I want to clarify that by saying we cannot tolerate any level of sin within the body of Christ. Sin is sin, and sin is bad, and we cannot tolerate it. And by that, I mean we cannot in any way condone or approve or an otherwise build up sinful actions. But there's a point at which you cannot allow somebody to remain within a body of Christ.

That is one of the reasons that God appoints pastors over churches. If you take the word pastor and actually look at the. At what it means, by definition, a pastor is a shepherd. And so we're getting into some imagery here of shepherds and flocks. What was the primary job of a shepherd?

To oversee the flock and protect it from wild beasts. The primary function of a shepherd today of a pastor has not changed. The primary function of a pastor today is to still do that same thing and to oversee the flock and protect it from wild beasts. Christ warns us about wolves and sheep's clothing, and there's a level of sin and disobedience to God. Carelessness that we cannot allow in the body of Christ.

And Paul will talk about that more in a minute. So we'll talk about when Paul talks about it. So let's look at verses three through five. So Paul tells us here that we should remove them. And he says this, even though I am absent in the body, I am present in the spirit.

As one who is present with you in this way, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who has been doing such a thing. When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus, and I am with you in spirit with the power of our Lord Jesus, hand that one over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. This is a difficult passage. Let's start with the non difficult part. He says, I am absent in the body.

We know by now that Paul is not physically with the church of Corinth. As of now, he's in another location doing ministry somewhere else. In chapter four, he says, if the Lord will allow it, I intend on coming to you, but for now, I'm absent. But even though I'm absent, he says, I'm present in the spirit. Now, the reason this can be slightly difficult is we're not sure in what way he means present in the spirit.

Does he mean I'm present in that the Holy Spirit is with me and with you? Or does he mean, you know, you're in my heart? So the exact meaning of I'm there in the spirit with you is unknown. However, what we do know is that Paul is even from where he's at now, remotely overseeing Corinth in a way, right? He's hearing reports, he's correcting those reports.

He's correcting behaviors. He's praying with them. And he still, however you want to interpret I'm present in the spirit. He has the Holy Spirit of God to lead him and guide him and direct him. And now look what he says.

He says, as one who is in the present, who is present with you in this way, as one who is with you in spirit, who is hearing the reports of what's going on, and who has a spirit of God, look what he says. I have pronounced judgment on the one who is doing this.

Just that sentence right there. When I read it and was studying, I had to circle that, that statement right there. I have pronounced judgment.

I want to talk about this, because if we start judging one another, inevitably somebody is going to misquote what Christ said in the sermon on the mount. Christ said, judge not lest he be judged. And the moment we begin passing judgment of any kind, somebody is going to say that, judge not, lest ye be judged. And they always stop it right there. They don't continue.

But the next verse says, for with the judgment that you judge, ye will be judged. So Christ does not say that we cannot judge. He is warning us that with the judgment that we judge, we will be judged. I'll break it down using an example from this morning's service. If I am addicted to pornography and I am condemning somebody who is an adulterer, I know enough.

If I know enough to condemn you, I know enough that to know that what I'm doing is wrong. And so with that same judgment that I condemn you, I will be judged. Right? That is what that scripture means. That scripture does not mean that we cannot judge.

That scripture is a warning to be careful in our judgment. However, there's also two types of judgments, and we need to be wary of that. There is judging whether or not somebody will enter the kingdom of God or the depths of hell. That is dealing with the heart, and that's dealing with whether or not they will be convicted or not in God's court of law. And then there's the judgment of actions.

Not one of us is able to judge in terms of a conviction. I cannot judge any person, regardless of who they are, whether or not they will enter God's kingdom. That is for God to judge. However, we can judge actions. We can judge and say, sleeping with your mother is wrong.

We can do that. We can also judge. Pat pronounced judgment and saying, we will no longer fellowship with somebody. That's a judgment that we are allowed to do. We are allowed to look at someone and say, your life and your way of living are not consistent with Christianity.

Therefore, we refuse to associate with you any longer. We call that excommunication. In no way are we pronouncing eternal judgment. That is only temporal judgment. And this is the type of judgment that Paul has pronounced here.

If you look what he says in verse four, he says, when you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus, and I am with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, hand that one over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord, that is his judgment. Now, this is where it really gets difficult if we look at it. So the first thing that gets difficult is the greek language. So verse four seems to begin a brand new thought. When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus, do this, however, there's a lot of confusion on what it means when you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus.

And the reason for the confusion is not the English, but the Greek. Depending on the version of Bible you have, it will be written different because the Greek can attach that sentence to one of four different other elements surrounding the structure. The first element actually suggests that it was a religious reason why this man was sleeping with his mother. The Greek is able to attach it to the man as if the man was sleeping with his mother in the name of Jesus.

Now, let's be honest. Would that be the oddest thing to happen in the name of God? It wouldn't. If you look in the Old Testament, in the. As you look through the history of the Jews, from Samuel, through the kings and the chronicles, you will notice women were boiling and eating their kids, their babies, in the name of God.

Now, doing something that is wrong is wrong, but doing something that is wrong in the name of God, God makes it worse.

And if this was done in the name of God, that would explain why Corinth is so proud about it, right? Because they're doing something in the name of God. It could also mean that when they gather, they will be gathered in the name of the Lord Jesus. It could also mean I, depending on the version of the Bible you use, because it will be written differently based on the version, it could mean that in the name of the Lord Jesus, Paul has pronounced judgment.

So there are several different ways that this could actually be written, and there is a lot of confusion and disagreement over the way. However, as we get past that difficulty, here is what is not confusing. He says, I am with you in spirit and in the power of our Lord Jesus. Hand that one over to Satan. Here's what we know about the power of the Lord and what we can do to judge.

In Matthew 18, Christ has given the church the ability to excommunicate members from the church.

We have the ability between our overseers, the spirit of God, and the body of the church to pass that type of judgment. And so it is hard in terms of, you know, it pierces the heart, and that's a hard pill to swallow, this part, but it is, there's no question about the intent of Paul, and the intent of Paul is to get rid of this person. However, verse five in and of itself is another difficult to interpret thing. He says, hand that one over to Satan for the destruction of flesh so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. When you first read this and you see, hand him over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh.

You might think that he's talking about this guy's death. It almost sounds as if he's saying, hand this guy over to be destroyed, to die physically, that his spirit might be saved. Right? Now, there is a story in the Bible where such a thing happens. It's found in the book of acts, and it's the story of Ananias.

For those who are familiar with the story, Ananias came to the body of Christ, the apostles, and told them that they sold everything that they had to donate it to the church and that they were making a donation. And then it is found out later, through the spirit of God, that they actually withheld a large portion of that and only donated a smaller portion. But they portrayed themselves as if they had sowed everything they had to make a donation to God.

Excuse me.

And the spirit of God struck him down.

However, what we see in this verse doesn't seem to be the same circumstances and have the same application. He says, hand him over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord. Is this man already saved? If we were to pass judgment right now, based on what we know about him, is this man saved? I would say not likely.

The lifestyle and the choices this guy is making, do not say that he has the spirit of God in him. So handing him over to be killed is not going to save a spirit. If he dies unsaved, he's unsaved.

So what does it mean?

We have a few other scriptures that can shed light on it, the first one being one Timothy, chapter one. In verses 19 and 20, we see Paul use a simulator language. He says, having faith and good conscience, which some have rejected and shipwrecked their faith. Among them are Himanias and Alexander, who I delivered to Satan so they may be taught not to blasphemy. So if you look here at what Paul did, this is Paul writing again.

Paul says that two people, Hymenaeus and Alexander, have shipwrecked their faith. Right? They're blasphemous. And Paul handed them over to Satan that they would be taught not to blasphemy. The intent behind handing them over to Satan was to correct them.

So Paul uses handed them over to Satan or delivered them to Satan in one Timothy one as a descriptor of saying, we excommunicated them, we kicked them out of the church and cut them back loose to the world with the intent that they would get saved. Right. Sometimes people caught up in sin are incapable of seeing it, realizing it, or changing if they remain affirmed in the body of Christ. So we have to kick them loose so that God could really get a hold of them, so that they could realize, hey, what I'm doing is not right. We also see some metaphorical references to death that Paul writes in Galatians 5:24.

In Galatians 5:24, Paul says, now those of you who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. In this case, crucify the flesh does not mean that we legitimately were crucified and died. But it is metaphorical that we, in a symbolical sense, we have put to death our body along with its desires. And also in Colossians three five, in Colossians three five, he says, therefore or put to death what belongs to your earthly nature. Sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil, desire, greed, all of which is idolatry.

So here again he says put to death and he's not put to death the yearnings of your flesh. This is not a literal YouTube will stab yourself and put your flesh to death, but a metaphorical death, as it were. And if we stay consistent with Paul's symbology, stay consistent with the way he uses language when he says hand that one over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, he is telling the church, the next time you gather, excommunicate that member of the church. Kick him out. He's no longer welcome here.

He's not part of this congregation any longer. Hand him back to the world. And here is the purpose for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. The idea is we're telling that guy we do not affirm your act and you need a wake up call. So this doesn't mean that we will never accept this guy back, but what it does mean is until his actions change, we don't gather with him.

Alright, let's look at the next verse or next passage. We're going to look at verses six through eight. Here he says, your boasting is not good. Good. Don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole batch of dough?

Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new unleavened batch, as indeed you are. For Christ, our passover lamb has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us observe the feast not with old leaven or with the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerest and truth. Okay, so there's imagery here he says, first year boasting is not good. The church in Corinthians boasted in many things.



They boast in their knowledge. In this chapter, we see that they're proud, right? Boasting in their sexual immorality. They're boasting in all sorts of things. And Paul says, this is nothing.

And then he says, don't you know, a little leaven. Leavens the whole batch of dough. What is leaven? Leaven is yeast. Right?

It's yeast. It's an agent that we use for making bread, for making various doughs. Various. Not just doughs, but even wine. You need leaven to make wine, to make alcohol.

But here's the thing about leaven. If you put. If you are making bread and you put yeast in that bread will only leaven a small portion of the bread. No, it'll leaven the entire loaf. The entire dough will become leavened.

Now, we have to look at what leaven means in the Bible. We know that the imagery of leaven is yeast in the dough. But leaven in the Bible is sin. That is what leaven represents. And he says, a little leaven leavens the whole batch of dough.

In this context, the church, the local gathering, is the dough. And a little bit of leaven, a little bit of sin leavens the entire batch. I've used this example before. If you get a group of people and you got ten people, and two of them are problem makers, and eight of them are upstanding people, who is more likely to become like, who? Will the two problem makers become more like the eight do gooders, or will the eight do gooders become more like the two troublemakers?

Contrary to what we would. What we would want to think? We would want to think, well, eight good doers will change to bad doers, but that's not how it works. The two bad doers will, 99% of the time, change the good doers. And so he says, a little leaven, a little bit of tolerated sin will destroy the entire gathering.

Therefore, he says, clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new unleavened batch. Right. We need to get rid of people who are. Are caught up in major sins. We either need them to repent and be changed, or we need them to not be part of the gathering.

Because if they remain in the gathering, it changes the whole gathering. He says, clean it out. But I also want to look at. He's talking in the corporate sense. In the corporate sense in the gathering.

But how about on the individual level? If we take it slightly out of context, but the application still applies on the individual level. Haven't you noticed? A little bit of sin in your own life will move you far from God?

Just a little bit. It doesn't have to be major. It can be very minor, but just a little bit of sin. That's when you quit praying, when you quit reading, when you quit going to church, because it moves you far from God. And then what happens?

It begins to leaven you and corrupt you more. That little bit of sin becomes a little bit more sin and it progressively gets worse. So even on the individual level, we have that command from Paul. He says, clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new unleavened batch. And he says, let us therefore observe the feast not with old leaven or leaven and malice and evil, but with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Right? Cleaning out that corruption in our churches and in our individual lives will allow us to live with sincerity and truth. And in sincerity and truth. Paul is going to continue to address the problem here in verses nine through 13. And the problem he addresses here.

Some pastors will call this an explanation of why he says what he's saying. But it's not an explanation. He's actually correcting a misunderstanding. But look what he says in verses nine through 13. He says, I wrote to you in a letter not to associate with sexually immoral people.

I did not mean the immoral people of the world or the greedy and swindlers or idolatators. Otherwise you would have to leave the world. But actually I wrote to you not to associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister and a sexually immoral or greedy, an idolatator, verbally abusive, a drunkard or a swindler. Do not even eat with such a person. For what business is it a mind to judge outsiders?

Don't you judge those who are inside? God judges outsiders. Remove the evil person from among you. So Paul indicates here at an earlier point in time, he wrote another letter or an earlier letter to Corinth. And in this letter he told them to not associate with sexually immoral people.

However, they took this to mean non believers. That they took this to mean don't associate with non believers. And here's what he says. I did not mean the immoral people of the world or the greedy people of the world or the swindlers idolatators of the world. Guys, two things about that.

First, there is no way at all for us to never associate with an immoral person in the world. We couldn't. We couldn't do it. We would have to. And Paul makes this point, we would have to leave the world to do that.

But the second thing, association with these people is necessary for evangelism. We cannot share the gospel with somebody if we refuse to associate with them. Christ associated with the sinner. Christ sat down and ate dinner with the sinners. Christ went to parties with the sinners.

Christ went to weddings with the sinners. Christ touched the sinners association with the world. And by with the world, I don't mean that we are of the world or act like the world, but we are in the world, and we have to communicate and deal with the world. That is a necessity, not just for living here, here, but to evangelize to them. However, here's what he does say.

He says, do not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister. So anybody who claims to be a Christian and is sexually immoral, or greedy, or an idolatry, or abusive, or a drunkard or a swindler, don't even eat with such a person.

Disassociating from a smaller group of people like insiders, is easier than disassociating with the world. But not only is it easier, if we allow, let's just say in our church we have somebody sleeping with their mother, and news of that gets found out. What type of image as a church do we portray for Christ and his kingdom?

We can associate with that. We cannot affirm it, and we cannot allow it to remain within us because it will corrupt us as well. So it's necessary to get rid of that person so that we don't become corrupted, and so that Christ gospel does not become corrupted, but also so that that person might, by the grace of God, get saved, that that person cut loose from us would finally be reached by God and come to salvation. Paul ends this message. He says, remove the evil person from among you.

This does not say that every person who sins, by the way, has to be removed from the church. This is specifically talking about very severe, extreme circumstances. But in those circumstances, especially where the believer is unrepentant, we have an obligation, first to the body of Christ to protect it, to get rid of them, and second, to that person that hopefully they might be saved.

As we, you know, as we come to an end tonight, I first want to put out there that if anyone in our church, or even outside of the church who hears or sees this message, if you are dealing with extreme sins like these, reach out to us, let us know you're not going to get excommunicated. If you reach out to me and let me know that you're dealing with this instead, you will get the loving, caring love of Christ to help you through it. What would get you excommunicated is your refusal to acknowledge the sin and repent of it. But if you're struggling with this, come and let us know. We want to love you and care for you through it and get you away from it.

I also want to say, if you are hearing this and you do not know God yet, Paul wrote to us in verse seven. He says, Christ has been crucified for us.

He also was crucified that you might be saved as well. He was crucified that the sin that corrupts you might be defeated, might be pulled out of you and removed, that you could go from corruption, which leads to death, to righteousness, which leads to eternal life. And you can have that. It begins with admitting what you already know,

that you're a sinner, that you have leaven inside of you, corruption inside of you, and that we can't get it out on our own with believing that Jesus Christ is the creator goddess, God, ruler of the heavens and the earth, and that he came down to this creation to live and die for you, that you might be saved. If you would believe in him, you would be saved and confessing him as your lord and God and savior.

And if you are ready to do that today, if you're ready to clean out the old leaven, that you may become a new unleavened batch, a new unleavened person, I'm happy to help you tonight. Verbalize that to God. Verbalize your belief in him and your confession of him. And after you do that, please let us know so that we can celebrate your newness of life. Immediately after the closing prayer, we'll partake of the Lord's supper, and I encourage everyone to stick around for that.

And then on Wednesday, we will begin in our new Bible study through the book of Luke. For those who like to read ahead, we'll be in Luke, chapter one this week. Let's pray. Father, I admit that I am a sinner, Lord. I admit that I cannot save myself.

And I admit, Lord, that I need you. And I believe, Lord Jesus, that you are the creator God, ruler of heaven and earth, that you lived and died for me, and that you rose again the third day. And I confess you as my lord and savior. I will remove my crown and submit to yours. And I ask you for this free and precious gift.

Father, I pray as we end tonight, that we would first examine ourselves, Lord, and see if we have anything in our life that is really leavening us and corrupting us. And father, would you make it evident to us and help us to remove it? And then, Father, would you help us as a church to restore one another, to love one another, and, father, even help us, if it ever comes to it, to protect your church as well. Father? Father, I pray that you're glorified not as as people with severe sins are removed, but as people with severe sins are redeemed and saved and repentant, as we can show how great your grace is.

Would you be glorified? In Jesus name we pray. Amen.