

I Corinthians 5

We saw last time this is tantamount to radical surgery as we deal the illness of sin.

--This is a last resort when all other efforts to bring health from the sickness have failed.

Matthew 18:15-18— Steps to avoid surgery.

Step #1 -- A Private Meeting – We have to confront and deal with sin privately.

--Private means nobody else knows because you haven't told them: not your spouse, friend, or pastor.

Proverbs 26:20; Proverbs 21:23

--This is not a witch hunt and its not a game to win; it's a mission to bring health and restoration to the Body of Christ.

Step #2 is bringing two or three with you as witnesses—this is for accountability for them and you.

Remember, the most important aspect of any of these steps is that they all flow in the direction of restoration of relationships.

--This cannot be overemphasized: what are God's plans and purposes in our world today? —one word: **reconciliation**.

--Reconciling us to Him and us to each other.

Matthew 5:23-24

When we have sin against us then there is a problem with one of us but when we fail to follow the rules there is a problem with both of us.

--Remember how we treat each other tells the world who we are:

“by this will all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:35

--The world has conflict, separation, unresolved issues, hatred, selfishness—they are all bought up on those items; what they are in the market for is **Ephesians 4:1-6**

--Are you following these like commands? Because that is what they are! **Not suggestions**.

Step #3 – Tell it to the church when you've made every effort otherwise.

--What I have seen more often than not is that we reverse these steps and it causes tremendous damage.

--But what if we follow all the steps and there is still no change?

God is very serious about sin and those who bring sin into the fellowship of the church:

Revelation 2:18-23

--Our tendency is to excuse it or ignore it like Jesus doesn't care or like it's not our problem.

--A person may be the one sinning with no respect to Jesus and no respect for the Body of believers—but there is only one body.

--**You** are an individual, but **we are one!**

--The ear cannot afford to be unconcerned or tolerant of what the toe is doing—a damaged toe effects the whole body.

--“At least I'm not sinning” Are you sure? By your tolerance of it you are a participant in it!

--Remember how Jesus taught us to pray: “forgive us our trespasses...”

--Do you think of sin in terms of “our sin”?

Radical surgery is a last resort; but sometimes it has to be performed.

- One person's tolerated sin will destroy the whole church. **VV. 6-8**
- In those days, when a person made bread (they did this every day), they would save a tiny portion of bread after it rose and put it in water so that they could save it as a starter for the next loaf.
- That little lump would sour and become completely infested with yeast, and it would bring plenty of yeast to leaven an entire other lump tomorrow.

Yeast is a symbol of sin, and the Lump is symbol of the church.

- Notice it doesn't say "lumps" because we are only one lump.
- It doesn't matter where the yeast of sin enters, its effects will spread to all of us.

Radical surgery when all else has failed:

V. 3 – "judged" How does that square with **Matthew 7:1-2**?

- This is speaking of motives and heart issues—we don't know what's really in a person's heart.
- But we do judge sin, we are to call it exactly what it is.

V. 4 – This is a court proceeding judging sin;

There is no higher court in the land!

- "in the name of the Lord Jesus" that is, just like He would do if He were there—and He is!
- "With the Power of the Lord Jesus" – don't underestimate the potential and position of Jesus' church in this world. **Matthew 18:17-18**
- The only thing higher is the throne of God.

V. 5 – That little piece of soured dough it to be put off by itself to rot.

- The devil has been granted authority in this world to bring death, and this judgment puts the unrepentant sinner out from the protection of the church into the devil's domain.
- I Timothy 1:20** – If you won't listen to a fellow believer and you won't listen to 2 or 3 and you won't listen to the church--The devil is real and he's not nice!