

### 3. JUDGMENT LEVELLED. vv. 12, 13.

a. By believers. The abrupt and forthright question is piercing. Those within the congregation are to be judged by those within itself! There are rules for this (Matt. 7:1; 18:15-20; Rom. 14:1-10; 1 Cor. 4:3-5, 2 Thess. 3:14, 15). It is not a mean matter, but one which must be exercised with carefulness. There must be mourning (v. 2) and excommunication from the fellowship (vv. 2, 7, 11, 13).

b. By God. It is clear that the Lord is the Judge of the world. He holds certain prerogatives in His hand alone. God is the One to whom those outside of the church must be responsible. To paraphrase the opening words of Paul (v. 12), he simply remarks: "for what business of mine is it to judge ... those on the outside?" That is God's work alone!

It is not to be concluded that the believer will not be judged by God, for this he will be (1 Cor. 3:12-23; 11:30-32; 2 Cor. 5:10).

Conclusion: What is the end of all this? It is simple. God wants purity in the house of God! This purity is to be the keen concern of all who know and love the Lord within the fellowship. Each one is responsible (v. 12). The world must know, through judgment in the church, that there is a judgment which hangs over them coming from God (John 3:36). Men will be held responsible for their deeds and relationship to an eternal God (1 Peter 4:17). Let everyone take heed and remember that God is not to be mocked (Gal. 6:7). Amen.

### BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

#### "Church Discipline"

1 Cor. 5:9-13

#### Introduction

1. Christian morality is a standard which must be maintained. It has lapsed into a dreadful apathy in modern times.

2. Taking his clue from an immoral situation in Corinth, Paul is instructed by the Holy Spirit to lay down a principle of action which involves major surgery and critical responsibility. He concludes that sinners must be judged within the church for a variety of reasons. Among them are the following:

#### 1. LETTER ADVANCED vv. 9, 10.

a. Noted, v. 9. The letter mentioned here is one which is not now available. Paul is not referring to the present letter by use of an epistolary aorist, but a simple historical aorist in reference to a letter previously written (cf. 7:1; 2 Cor. 7:8).

#### b. Detailed vv. 9, 10.

1) Generally. In the previous letter, Paul had indicated that the believers were not to "company" with "fornicators." This injunction should have been clear, but it needed clarification!

2) Specifically. The verb "company" (cf. v. 11) strictly denotes a living in an intimate and continuous relation with one. It is a compound verb emphasizing these two aspects. It obviously concerns private life, and not church life alone.

But there were exceptions to this basic idea. The phrase "not altogether" is better rendered "not in all circumstances." There are definite limitations to the basic rule. What are these? One is mentioned: you must stay in the world,

but not be identified with the world (cf. John 17:14-18 for the principle recorded again). The verb "needs" is an idiomatic imperfect expressing a logical conclusion and sequence. It actually expresses an unfulfilled condition of second class and notes that "if this were true, then you would actually have to exit from this present scene!" It is as if this argument had been seen and now answered by the Corinthians and in irony, but Paul also rejects the idea of a cloister as absurd.

Who are those with whom a believer will have to have a limited amount of contact? They are listed:

- a) Fornicators. This is a reference to the general matter of sexual sins. It obviously includes adultery, pre-marital sex, and the lot.
- b) Covetous. This is an old word for an overreached. It is the avaricious person who wants to have more. In the NT it is only here and 6:10 and Eph. 5:5. It always concerns bad company.
- c) Extortioners. This is the rapacious person (Matt. 7:15; Luke 8:11). It could well be rendered a robber (cf. 6:10). In view of the fact that this word is linked with the previous one by an "and" it is evident that this sin and that one are two species of the same genus.
- d) Idolators. This word comes from a root which means hirelings of an idol (cf. 6:9; 10:7; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 21:8; 22:15). Some have claimed this is a word of Christian formation only.

All of these persons named are "of this world." One cannot immunize himself from them. He must have some contact with them during his sojourn in life.

2. MEN DISTINGUISHED v. 11. A logical contrast is brought up in this verse as is noted by the phrase "but now." The Corinthians had disfigured Paul's words. He now makes a genuine attempt to straighten up the matter and make it clear. He does this in the following manner:

- a. A designation. The phrase "called a brother" is the virtual key to the whole case. The idea here is that there is a vital difference between the church and the world. Here is a man "named" a believer. He is apparently a professing child of God, but a public sinner! The Corinthians had acted as if the church belonged to the world. This Paul detests and denies.
- b. A description. The sins possible among professing believers is astounding (cf. Gal. 5:19-21). To the list given above (v. 10), two more are added: 1) railer. This is a person who is foul-mouthed and abuses others. 2) drunkard. This is a person who in earlier Greek was considered "tipsy" but later was considered one in serious problems.
- c. A decision. The end of the argument as far as Paul is concerned is "not to eat" with such a one described. Eating was considered (and still is) a sign of friendliness. It was to be utterly abhorred amongst children of God with those who practiced open sin! The eating here does not refer to the Lord's Supper for there was apparently a certain amount of liberty in connection with that (cf. 11:28, 29). Social contacts with a "brother" are absolutely disallowed.

Among the many reasons which might be advanced for this decision are two obvious ones gained from the context: 1) the sanctity of the church and its difference from the world. 2) The intended salvation of the sinner who might think that the standards of the church and the world were identical.

Hence, whereas one must have contact, albeit not intimate and continual, with the world, one is warned not to have contact with a child of God who is involved in public sin. Where a man's profession is will affect his treatment by the church.