

**I Corinthians Lesson # 10**  
**The Church Must be Pure, Continued**  
**Pentwater Bible Church**  
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*I Corinthians 4:14 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you.*

God as warned us of much if not all the evil in this world and told us we must avoid it. Consider the Proverbs for example. God has provided much for the person of God to see in this world's ways and how to avoid them. Here Paul is telling them that even though he was being strong and sarcastic in the previous verses he did it for their own good. He did not want to shame them; he wanted to bring about a change of heart so they could avoid the repercussions of the sins of this world. His motivation was love like a parent trying to reach their children.

*I Corinthians 4:15-16 For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me.*

Paul is making his role here very clear. Though many ministers might teach them and us too only one person usually leads us to Christ. Paul planted the seed of the Gospel in them and therefore Paul had their true interests at heart. Some in this world would make themselves out to be friends and even relatives. The person who shares the truth of the Christ and leads us to the new birth in the Spirit are truly seeking our best interest. After all when the light of this world dims and we are in our final hours we will know the comfort of the wonderful eternity we face with the Lord who bought us with a very high price. All else will be truly worthless. So then as Paul says, those people have begotten us in the Gospel and truly have our best interest at heart. Anybody that dismisses Christ and fights with us about it does *not* have our best interest at heart. Because of the true "best interest" Paul had for his converts he told them that they must imitate him. They could not go wrong in this life in doing so.

*I Corinthians 4:17 For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.*

God's plan was to leave the Gospel with His apostles then they were to pass it on to those responsible born again believers to pass it on to others as well as the next generation. Timothy accompanied Paul in his second missionary journey (Acts 16:1-3). He was a pillar in the early Church and was told to remind the Corinthians of the faith they had received after Paul left then report on the progress he was observing there. Timothy was Paul's spiritual child and he would remind them by example and precept. A minister of God's Word must set a Godly example worthy of following. This is in turn

the example of Christ, which He passed on to the apostles and now to the first non-apostolic generation.

*I Corinthians 4:18-21 Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills, and I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power. What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?*

Paul knew that the false teachers were arrogant and would not listen to him. Their attitude was the fundamental cause of the division. This can be observed in any Church split. Some people want their own way instead of God's way. Or they are masquerading their own way for God's way and leading the flock astray. These false leaders were telling the Church that Paul was not coming back. They were big talkers with nothing to back it up except empty false doctrine that was pure worldly sin. They did not have the power of God living in them and Paul would expose them. Paul had the gift of prophecy and was compelled to speak God's Word clearly to counter the world's ways, which are in direct contradistinction to His will.

Some can talk all they want but when it comes to living for Christ the fruit is how we tell their love for God and whether His Spirit lives within them.

*Matthew 7:20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

*2 John 7-11 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things, which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*

Paul warned them that when he came it would be in God's power and he would be fully equipped to deal with the situation. Paul was not afraid or weak and he was ready to deal with the situation. This is a shining example for us to see how sin is rooted out of the Church and how when it has been the result is purity and repose. The offenders had a choice: They could continue in their practices and false teaching which will result in Paul's punishment and scolding or their could repent and receive his love and gentleness. It was their decision. Paul knew that a loving father would not shy away from discipline (Heb 12:7).

## **I Corinthians Chapter 5**

Paul will commence a condemnation of pride in this chapter, which had blinded the believers at Corinth. Pride will cause a person to be self-deceived and not act in even his or her own best interest. It is like a mask that fills us and distorts our view of the truth.

Pride is the opposite of love because it produces self-concern, while love responds to the needs of others. The pride of the Corinthians produced disunity and an unwillingness to enact discipline on the members of that Church.

*I Corinthians 5:1-2 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.*

Paul is here speaking of a Corinthian man who was having an incestuous affair with his stepmother. This was clearly prohibited in the Scriptures and Roman Law (Cicero *Cluentes* 6.15 and Gaius *Institutes* 1. 63 as well).

*Leviticus 18:8 The nakedness of your father's wife you shall not uncover; it is your father's nakedness.*

*Deuteronomy 22:22 "If a man is found lying with a woman married to a husband, then both of them shall die—the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall put away the evil from Israel.*

We know from our culture that it is wrong to do these things but the Bible clearly make this case and the Romans affirmed this as well. These types of actions break down the family unit, which is the building block of a society. God judges sexual sins of any nature harshly. Paul interestingly does not speak to the woman who was involved. This is probably because she was not a Christian. This makes the sin even more heinous.

Seemingly this did not bother the offender or the leaders. If anything the affair must have bloated their arrogant pride. If they were truly in the Spirit they would have repented and felt grief for the person caught in this sin (Gal 6:1-2). This person should have been removed from the congregation until true repentance was witnessed.

*Matthew 18: 15- 18 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

Today tolerance has become so prevalent in our society that it has had an effect on the Church. Many misuse the Scriptures to say, “Who am I to judge?” We are to judge each other in the Church. We do it with God’s standards. We do not use worldly standards to judge our Christian brethren who are engaging in sinful behavior. They must be judged in order to avoid excommunication from us and harm to themselves. Next week we will see how Paul carries this out.

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