

# **1 CORINTHIANS**

## **Lesson Eight: A Little Leaven**

**First Baptist Church Chappell Hill, July 25, 2021**

# A Little Leaven

**1 Corinthians 5:6** Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? **7** Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may **be a new lump, as ye are unleavened**. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: **8** Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

- “leaven” is yeast, and a little yeast permeates the dough
- Back ground is the Feast of Unleavened Bread, see Exodus 12:15-20, Leviticus 23:6-8
- Paul is saying to purge out this sin from the local church
- In the OT, they ate the “unleavened bread of affliction” but now should eat the “unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” **NOT LEVEANED WITH MALICE AND SIN**

# A Little Leaven

**1 Corinthians 5:9** I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: **10** Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then **must ye needs go out of the world.** **11** But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is **called a brother** be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one **no not to eat.**

- Paul's earlier letter covered the same ground but was misapplied — they took it to mean don't keep company with non-Christians who are fornicators
- If they were to avoid non-believers who do these sins, they would have to exile themselves from this world — monasticism
- Paul clarifies — if a person claims to be a Christian and does these things there should be no fellowship with other members (including Lord's Supper)

# A Little Leaven

**1 Corinthians 5:12** For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? **13** But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

- It was not Paul's business to judge those outside the church, nor is it our business! God deals with them.
  - What are the implications of this?
- But those within the church that continue in their sin should be excluded from fellowship (and the Lord's Supper)
- Does this mean they are disallowed from the services? If so, why are non-believers permitted in the services.
- Answer seems to be that they ARE excluded

# Suing Other Church Members

**1 Corinthians 6:1** Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? **2 Do ye not know** that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

- Paul continues address judgment but in a different context
- The lawsuits further show how divided they are
- “Do ye not know” means they should know but do not despite their elevated view of themselves
- Argument from greater to lesser — if the saints are qualified to participate in the judgment of the whole world then why not qualified to judge smaller matters

# Suing Other Church Members

**1 Corinthians 6:3** Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? **4** If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

**Alternative 4:** So if you have ordinary lawsuits, do you appoint as judges those who have no standing in the church? (NET)

- Saints will also participate in the judgment of angels
- If they are to judge supernatural beings surely they can judge the mundane disputes in this world
- But they abdicate their responsibility and assign it to those “least esteemed in the church,” meaning non-Christians outside the church
- The **Alternative** reading is support by verse 5

# Suing Other Church Members

**1 Corinthians 6:5** I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? **6** But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.

- Paul asks sarcastically if there is not ONE wise enough church member that can arbitrate a dispute
- Apparently the Corinthians don't believe they have ONE wise church member among them because they go to secular courts to resolve internal disputes
- Why is it such a problem if they sue each other?
- What is the alternative?
- How could this be done properly in a church?

# Suing Other Church Members

**1 Corinthians 6:7** Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather *suffer yourselves to be defrauded*? **8** Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that *your* brethren.

- Paul says they would be better to just let it go than sue over it in secular courts
- The worldly / material loss is better than the spiritual loss that will result from the lawsuits
- The true motivation for the litigation is they want to wrong and cheat / defraud their brethren, which reflects a worldly greed and division