

God's Test to the Church (1 Corinthians 5)

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Introduction: What is the purpose of a test?

- A. It gives information to both the teacher and the student!
 - 1. Often we need to see where we are. **(2 Cor 13:5)**
 - 2. God already knows. **(Heb 4:12-13)**
- B. An improper spirit prevailed at Corinth among some. **(1 Cor 4:17-21)**
 - 1. They were proud and above authority.
 - 2. They boasted in their knowledge and "originality".
- C. God gave Corinth a test. **(2 Cor 2:9)**
 - 1. How we respond to this test will tell much about how we view the church.
 - 2. How does this church respond to the test?

I. Obstacles in the Way to Obedience (1 Cor 5:1-3)

- A. There was open immorality in the church. **(Gal 5:19-21)**
 - 1. John the Baptist did not hesitate to deal with this issue. **(Mark 6:17-18)**
 - 2. If one does not repent, they are lost!
- B. There should have been mourning in the hearts of these Christians.
 - 1. Somehow they had lost their urgency. **(Jude 22-23; Mat 5:3-4)**
 - 2. When sin is tolerated we are no longer on the Lord's side. **(Heb 1:9)**
- C. They were to remove this one from among them.
 - 1. The term "among you" means: "where association or intercourse is the topic, equivalent to among, intercourse with", Thayer's, p. 402
 - 2. One might cease attending the assemblies but still be "among you."
- D. The hindering spirit was one of pride.
 - 1. Paul uses the term "puffed up". **(1 Cor 4:6,17-20; 1 Tim 6:3-5)**
 - 2. Likely they viewed Christians in light of their party associations and not by the will of God!
 - 3. This pride would in time affect everything they did

II. Steps in Corrective Discipline

- A. A time of warning, teaching and rebuking. **(Mat 18:15-17)**
 - 1. This may start with one and then proceed to others.
 - 2. The purpose of others involvement is to bear witness to the action and become a part of the correction.
 - 3. It is important to involve spiritual men in this process. **(Gal 6:1)**
 - 4. There is a judgment on the amount of time given for response. **(Rev 2:20-21)**
- B. A Public Announcement to the church concerning the condition of this brother.
 - 1. The entire church is made aware of the situation with continued effort to exhort this one to repent. **(Mat 18:17)**
 - 2. Finally an announcement is made to "deliver such a one to Satan."**(1 Cor 5:4-5)**
 - a. Paul emphasised the importance of this action by key phrases: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ....along with my spirit...with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - b. When an apostle uses this language we need to listen carefully and obey!

(1 Cor 1:10)

- c. The place of this action is very specific “when you are gathered together.”
- d. When was the last time you witnessed one delivered to Satan in an assembly? When was the last time you witnessed one fall away from serving God?

C. The final action is an individual withdrawal of social company. **(1 Cor 5:9-11; 2 Thess 3:6,15)**

- 1. A certain kind of association is withdrawn, not all association. We can still “admonish him as a brother.”
 - 2. When this happens we can no longer have simple social company with this one.
 - 3. Many refuse to acknowledge this responsibility thinking they have a better way.
- D. These steps are difficult but essential to our Christian walk.
- 1. We must never stop exhorting our brothers in Christ. **(2 Tim 4:1-2)**
 - 2. There are occasions where I may act as an individual. **(1 Tim 1:20)**

III. The Purposes of this Action

- A. To protect the church. **(1 Cor 5:6-8)**
- B. To cause the erring to repent. **(1 Cor 5:5; 2 Thess 3:14)**
- C. To cause the members to examine themselves. **(Acts 5:1-11; 1 Tim 5:20)**
- D. To show our submission to Christ. **(2 Cor 2:9; 7:12)**
 - 1. God tells us "why" will we argue with Him? **(Rom 3:8)**
 - 2. If any of the above purposes are accomplished God's will is done!

IV. Who is Subject for this Discipline?

- A. Not the world but those who are Christians. **(1 Cor 5:9-11)**
- B. Who should we exhort and rebuke?
 - 1. Those who sin against another. **(Mt 18:15-17)**
 - 2. Those who will not repent of sin. **(1 Tim 5:20)**
 - 3. "Them which cause division." **(Rom 16:17)**
 - 4. "The disorderly." **(1 Thess 5:14)**
- C. From whom should we withdraw social fellowship?
 - 1. Those practicing the works of the flesh. **(1 Cor 5:11)**
 - 2. Those who - "walks disorderly... not after the tradition" **(2 Thess 3:6)**
 - 3. Those who will not work. **(2 Thess 3:10-11)**
 - 4. Those who will not obey the written word. **(2 Thess 3:14)**

V. A Necessary Key to Implementation — Judgment

- A. Are we willing to care for others? **(1 Cor 6:5; Jude 22-23; 1 Cor 3:1-2)**
- B. Some questions to consider.
 - 1. How long do we wait? What is the best way to express ourselves? How will we maintain unity in the congregation?
 - 2. Real leadership is required to take a principled, consistent stand in these areas.

Conclusion: How will we stand? The answer will determine if Christ is our head or not.

- A. Who will care enough to work with these fallen brethren? This is a major responsibility of our Shepherd's. **(Heb 13:17)**
- B. God's way will accomplish God's purposes. Do you believe this? **(Isa 55:8-9)**