

The Royal Route to Heaven

1 Corinthians Chapter 5

In Chapter 3 Paul spoke to the Corinthians of the carnal nature, pointing out the actions in the church that revealed the flesh ruling over the spirit. Now, in Chapter 5, Paul addresses the evidence of the carnal spirit infiltrating the church as he calls them to address their lack of concern over a blatant sin being committed by one of their members.

Pray that as you dig deeper into this chapter and read of Paul's instructions on how to deal with sin in the church you will be reminded of the proper view of sin to keep you on the Royal Route.

Key Word(s)

Read through the entire chapter, looking for words or themes that are repeated. You might want to underline them in your Bible.

1. One word that is new in this chapter and used several times is "*leaven*".

a. Write a dictionary definition below.

b. Now look for a biblical definition and write it below.

2. Make note of any other words that are repeated or that you feel are significant here and include a definition.

Read 1 Corinthians 5:1-5.

1. Paul challenges the church in Corinth to address the sin in their midst.

a. From 1 Corinthians 5:1, what is the sin committed in this church?

b. What would the Old Testament penalty for this sin be from Leviticus 20:11?

2. Consider the two attitudes presented in verse 2. The first, “...*you are puffed up*...”, refers to the original issue Paul addressed in Chapter 3, arguing over who is the best or most spiritual. Consider the second attitude, “...*have not rather mourned*...”.

a. Why should they have mourned over the immorality?

b. From verse 2, what does Paul say should happen to the one committing this sin?

3. Look again at 1 Corinthians 5:4-5. Paul says to “*deliver such a one to Satan.*”

a. By what power should they do this?

b. For what purpose should they do this?

c. What does 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15 say about this?

William Barclay wrote, “An easy-going attitude to sin is always dangerous. It has been said that our one security against sin lies in our being shocked at it. The nineteenth-century Scottish historian and moral teacher Thomas Carlyle said that we must see the infinite beauty of holiness and the infinite damnability of sin. When we cease to take a serious view of sin, we are in a perilous position.”

4. What do the following scriptures say about sin?

a. Isaiah 59:2

b. Romans 6:23

c. 1 John 3:8

d. 1 John 3:10

5. Have we reached a place where we take the committing of sin too lightly?

a. Look at the world around you, at our current culture. Where do you see sin taken lightly or even see it presented as right?

b. Now look at your own life. Are there areas where you have been desensitized to sin? Stop and confess these to the Lord and ask Him to help you to see sin as He sees it.

c. Write your thoughts on how our view of sin can be distorted.

d. How we can avoid allowing this to happen in our lives?

6. Realize that the man they are talking about has not repented, but he is living in this sin and still fellowshiping as a member of the church. Paul sees the danger of accepting sin in the body of Christ. What dangers do you see?

7. Paul is calling for serious discipline for this sin of immorality. Our world today shies away from discipline and calls it grace or tolerance. This is a wrong view of grace. What do the following scriptures have to say about discipline?

a. Proverbs 3:12

b. Proverbs 13:24

c. Romans 6:1-2

Read 1 Corinthians 5:6-8.

1 Corinthians 5:6 starts with, “*Your glorying is not good.*” Remember that Paul is having to correct the Corinthians for comparing themselves to others and “*glorying*” or being “*puffed up*” in what they see as their own spiritual superiority. (1 Corinthians 3:3-4) Paul called them “*carnal*” because of this.

1. Write a definition for carnal below, either from Lesson 3 or from a dictionary.

In their “*carnal*” state, they are more concerned with popularity than with the immorality of the blatant sin in their midst. In verses 6-8 Paul explains the danger of allowing this sin in their fellowship. In these three verses of Chapter 5 we need to look back at the Key Word from the beginning of this lesson – *leaven* and review your definitions.

2. Verse 6 states what may be a familiar saying: “*Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?*” Considering that “*leaven*” is yeast and in this case represents sin, explain what this statement means.

3. We read in 1 Corinthians 5:7 of “*purging out the old leaven*” and “*you are truly unleavened.*” Again, consider leaven to be the type of sin.

a. How would we “*purge out the old leaven*”?

b. What does it mean to be “*truly unleavened*”?

4. Verse 8 gives us further descriptions about leaven.

a. How is leaven described here?

b. How is unleavened bread described in 1 Corinthians 5:8?

c. Define the terms from your answer above.

Read 1 Corinthians 5:9-13.

1. In this section of Chapter 5 Paul differentiates between the way we look at sin in the church and in the world.

a. What did Paul previously write to this church in verse 9?

b. What different perspective did he give in verse 10?

c. How does he continue to instruct them about dealing with sin within the church body in verses 11-13?

2. In 1 Corinthians 5:11 Paul lists sins which, if not repented of, are not to be tolerated in the body of Christ. List each sin below.

a. How do these sins effect the church if allowed in their midst?

b. How do these sins within the church effect the world who looks on them?

The body of Christ does live in this world, but we are not to live of this world. There is a real purpose for the presence of Christians in this world.

3. Matthew 5:13 describes a role of the Christian in this world, as well as the problem if we do not fill that role due to sin. Read this verse and share what you see.

4. What reason does Matthew 5:14-16 give for not isolating ourselves from the sinners in this world?

5. What reason did Jesus give in Luke 5:30-32 for associating with unbelievers?

6. We do have a purpose in this world, but we must also be careful that we keep ourselves in Christ so we are a good example, walking the Royal Route. What instruction do you find in Romans 12:1-2?

In closing...

1. This is not the last we hear about the man practicing sin within this church. It seems that the discipline Paul called for produced the desired result in him. Once the man repented, what does 2 Corinthians 2:6-8 tell us about how the believers should act toward him?

2. How does Philippians 2:14-16 apply to the issues Paul is addressing in the Corinthian church?

3. In applying the lessons of this chapter to our personal lives, there are some things to consider. It is difficult and complicated when there must be discipline for a sinning Christian. The discipline must be from a motive of love and restoration. What do the following scriptures say about what our attitude needs to be when we are dealing with a Christian who is choosing sin?

1. Matthew 18:15-17

2. Galatians 6:1

Sin within the church is a reality, but it should not be ignored or accepted. We must be sure it is the Lord who directs the discipline, the motive being love and the purpose always being restoration.