

## **“The Need for Discipline”**

### **I Corinthians 5**

**The Problem & the Solution (5:1-5)...** Two problems are addressed in this chapter of Paul’s letter. The first problem is that a member of the church was having an incestuous relationship with his step-mother. The second problem is that this gross sin was being tolerated. Paul proposes a very simple solution: mourn over the sin and remove the sinful brother from the community.

**The Reasons Why (5:6-8)...** Paul gave two justifications for his radical instructions. First, he explained that sin is like leaven, which affects the whole lump of dough that it is applied to. In the same way, sin that is left unchecked will quickly pollute the entire culture of a church. Secondly, Paul taught that they must put away leaven or sin because they have already been made unleavened or pure by the sacrifice of Jesus, the Lamb of God. Paul is calling on them to actually become what God has already declared them to be – pure and holy.

**The Misunderstanding (5:9-13)...** In a letter that Paul had previously written to the Corinthians, he instructed them to not associate with sexually immoral people. Some in Corinth wrongly thought that Paul applied this rule to those both inside and outside of the church. Paul made clear that he only meant this rule to be applied to those inside the church who were unwilling to repent of their immorality.

#### **Questions for Discussion:**

1. What does it mean to mourn over sin? What is an example of such mourning in your own life?
2. In what ways does unchecked sin pollute the culture of an entire church?
3. How does it help you to live the Christian life knowing that God has already declared you to be holy and pure in Christ?
4. Why should Christians be more concerned about the integrity of those within the church than with “policing” the conduct of those without? Which are you more concerned about?