



"It is actually reported that there is immorality among you and of such a kind that does not even happen among the Gentiles, namely, that a man has the wife of his father. ²And you are arrogant! Should you not rather be grieved? Put the man who practiced this deed out of your midst. ³For even though I am absent in the body but present in spirit, I have already judged the man who has so committed this as if I were present. ⁴When you come together and I am with you in spirit with the power of our Lord Jesus, ⁵in the name of our Lord Jesus deliver this man to Satan for destruction of the flesh that his spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord." 1 Corinthians 5:1-5

In this teaching, Paul has been told that someone in the Corinthian assembly is committing incest but that the members of this group have not properly dealt with him. Paul had earlier warned the Corinthians not to associate with immoral people, but they decided to ignore this command from God by now accepting incest. Paul instructs them to remove this man from their midst and deliver him to Satan. Indeed both the man, because of incest, and the entire assembly, because of failure to impose discipline, are guilty of sin before God.

Why did they accept sin?

Without sugar-coating it, Paul bluntly tells them in v. 2 because "you are arrogant" (proud, stubborn and rebellious)! This was a continuing problem with the Corinthians as we see from chapter 4:6, 18, 19. They think they have the right to do anything they want (1 Cor. 6:12, 10:23) and that they claim to possess superior knowledge (3:18 and 8:1-2). This is a problem for most still today!

Even Paul, their own apostle, has difficulty trying to convince these haughty, disobedient people to deal with unrepentant sin and that when they don't, they themselves are guilty of sin!

Paul is telling them that this decision is not his personal opinion or personal doctrine, but is pronounced with authority on behalf of Jesus, with His approval (v. 4-5).

Jesus said, "treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector" Matthew 18:17.

Paul is directing this entire assembly to turn from their compromising rebellion, be grieved, put this man out of their midst, deliver him to Satan and repent for not doing so sooner, in order to receive God's forgiveness.

If the Corinthians refuse to follow God's instructions, the Christian community itself will be placed under divine condemnation as outsiders are (v. 13). Those who claim to be Christian must be characterized by holiness and obedience to God's Word and must remove blatant, unrepentant sinners from their midst and turn them over to Satan or find themselves in deliberate, unrepentant sin and under judgment!

Paul tells them that this man is found guilty of unrepentant sin in God's court, (as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5) and the sentence is 1. To be put away from them and 2. Delivered to Satan for the sentencing process to be carried out.

That sounds ominous... delivered to Satan!

I've never in my life heard of anyone or any assembly ever doing that... all I've ever seen or heard any Christian or group do or say is they ignore or accept sin or they pray for unrepentant sinners, and/or bless them, and/or intercede for them and/or have the "we don't judge 'em, we just love 'em" philosophy... and hope one of these personal doctrines will change their minds, stop their sin and they'll repent, thinking that unrepentant sinners mingling with "loving, moral" Christians will rub off on them perhaps! Some also say, "I'm not led by God to do that". **"A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough" Galatians 5:9.** All of these man-made procedures, although good-intentioned, are stubborn, rebellious opposition of God's will! **"Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft and stubbornness as bad as worshiping idols" 1 Samuel 15:23** (People declare themselves god when they ignore or overrule God's Word.)

We read where Paul delivered two others to satan in **1 Timothy 1:20** **"Among these people are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan in order to teach them not to dishonor God"** God's Word translation. These men were once faithful leaders who became false leaders and were leading others astray. They had to be dealt with according to God's will.

As common sense tells us this isn't a physical handing over such as handcuffing and taking a person or an entire group to prison... it is a spiritual sentencing... a spiritual action... although there are physical repercussions!

As God removed the hedge of protection around Job to allow satan to attack him (with restrictions), so too, when we deliver an unrepentant sinner to satan, God removes His protection **"for destruction of the flesh that his spirit may be saved."** **1 Corinthians 5:5.** The destruction of the flesh serves the purpose of making possible the restoring of the sinner's soul before they die (i.e. the prodigal son). I know many of you are not liking God's discipline instructions, but we must remember that we are God pleasers, not people pleasers and we don't want to fall into satan's trap like Eve did that Paul warns the Corinthians about in **2 Corinthians 11:3-4** **"But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. 4 For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough".**

How God allows the sentence of the unrepentant to be carried out is His responsibility, not ours. We don't see Paul praying for, interceding for or pleading/reasoning/compromising with Hymenaeus and Alexander. Paul is done with them unless they repent. Paul's position and relationship with Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, his destiny and his eternity are taken seriously... so should ours be.

As we aren't given directions on how exactly to deliver the unrepentant to satan... how can it be done? Can anyone do it or can only an apostle or large group do it? What if a leader, group or even a denomination of millions are like the Corinthians and refuse to listen to one person following the Word of God?

God tells us through Paul in **1 Corinthians 2:15**, **"But he who is spiritual, judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?"-But we have the mind of Christ".** God says that just one led by the Holy Spirit **"judges all things"**. **God's Word with the authority of Jesus Christ backs up just one Holy Spirit-filled person, to judge others of sin!** All who refuse to repent or rebel against God's discipline, preferring the Corinthian ways, will be guilty of sin themselves and must be put away from you and delivered to satan. An entire unrepentant, sinful leadership and/or group are highly unlikely to leave the building if you judge them so you will have to do as God directs... 1. Put yourself away from them (leave) and 2. Turn them all over to satan! I've done this by verbally judging, as Paul did, and saying something like, "I deliver him/her/them to satan in the name of our Lord Jesus for destruction of the flesh that their spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord"! The sentencing process then commences and moves forward and continues until repentance or their death! I'm done! What happens if you don't or won't follow God's will? After this teaching, do I really need to answer that question?

Whoever reads this Biblical teaching and is involved in unrepentant sin and/or stubbornly refuses to obey God in how to discipline unrepentant sinners and/or is rebelling against God and His Word, I judge you now and deliver you to satan in the name of our Lord Jesus for destruction of the flesh that your spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord!

What classifies as sin and how to deal with it, is what God says, not what people or a man-made doctrine says!