

Review: What is the four-stage process for reconciliation when someone has wronged you?

- 1) [Talk to the other person alone](#)
- 2) [Take one or two others with you](#)
- 3) [Take it to the church](#)
- 4) [View him as an unbeliever](#)

Matthew 18:15-17 (NIV)

"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. ¹⁶ But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

What should the church do if someone refuses to repent and continues in a sinful direction?

What do you think Jesus means when he says to treat such a person as you would a pagan or a tax collector?

Read 1Corinthians 5:1-13

1 Corinthians 5:1-13 (NIV)

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife. ² And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? ³ Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present. ⁴ When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, ⁵ hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

⁶ Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough?

⁷ Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast--as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸ Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.

⁹ I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people-- ¹⁰ not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. ¹¹ But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.

¹² What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? ¹³ God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."

1 Corinthians 5:1-13 (NIV)

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife.

What is the nature of the man's sin?

He is being sexually immoral with his step-mother.

Leviticus 18:7 (NIV)

Do not dishonor your father by having sexual relations with your mother. She is your mother; do not have relations with her.

² And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? ³ Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present.

Why might the church have been proud of such a situation?

Perhaps they were proud of the fact that they were tolerant.

Perhaps they believed that since they were forgiven by grace, it didn't matter how you lived.

In this passage Paul doesn't say very much about the man's sin itself, he is more shocked by the church's reaction or lack of response to the man's sin. The church is headed in a very dangerous spiritual direction that will destroy it unless they repent and embrace God's holiness. **Holiness demands a separation from sin, not a proud embracing of it.**

⁴ When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, ⁵ hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature[flesh] may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

What is the ultimate goal of handing the man over to Satan?

The goal is that he might truly repent, submit to the lordship of Jesus, and be saved.

The goal of church discipline is ALWAYS restoration.

What does it mean to "hand someone over to Satan"?

The community of Christ is to be a place of love, support, encouragement, strengthening and safety. By separating the man from the community of Christ, he is being unleashed into the spiritual and physical realm that is under Satan's influence and control. The contrast of experiencing life apart from the body of Christ and left to the destructive life of the world would hopefully cause the man to repent and turn back to Christ. The goal being that he would put away/off the sinful self, destroy it, and embrace the holiness of God.

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⁷ Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast--as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸ Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.

What is the comparison to the Passover Feast?

The NIV uses the word "yeast"; the actual word used here is "leaven".

Leaven is different from yeast in that leaven is a portion of dough that is kept from the previous loaf in order to influence the new loaf. The old fermented dough blends with the new dough causing it to ferment and rise.

In the Passover Feast the Israelites were to entirely clean their house from any **leaven** whatsoever. Leaven became a picture of the old sinful life and Paul is saying that they must get rid of the man who is living out that old sinful life in their midst.

The association with the **Passover lamb** is the understanding that it is the sacrifice of the Passover lamb that made the new life possible.

Get rid of the old life so that you can live the new life. This applies in a personal way, but also within the family of God. The church could not live out their new identity as the new community, or the people of God, if they kept embracing the old sinful life.

Paul is concerned about the man's sin, but what is his greater concern?

Paul's ultimate concern is the health of the church.

Paul is concerned that the church's holding on to the old sin would cause it to blend with the new community of Christ causing every aspect of it to become tainted with sin. Sin spreads through a community causing the entire community to become infected, much like a contagious virus.

By getting rid of the "old leaven" they are now free to start a "new loaf" of bread without all the harmful bacteria of the old dough.

Paul is concerned that the church be a new and holy community.

Have you seen situations where you could see sin sweeping through a community of people?

What would happen if the church continued to turn a blind eye to this sin?

If the church continued in this course of action it would become no different than the sinful community around it. The freedom that comes through repentance and holiness would be lost. The victorious life Christ made available through his death and resurrection would evade them. They would continue to remain trapped in their sin, set apart from the Lordship of Jesus Christ in their lives. The community itself would become fragmented.

Worst of all there would be leading of the Spirit, no unity in the Spirit, and no blessing from the Spirit. It would be a church where Christ was absent. In Revelation Christ threatens removing churches that embrace sin from his presence.

How damaging would it be to the representation of the church if they allowed evil to run through it unchecked?

The name of Christ would be slandered and there would be no true representation of Christ in that community. In fact, the name of Christ would become a mockery. One of the world's biggest complaints about the church is hypocrisy, where we teach one thing, but live another. Why would someone embrace Christ when there is no difference reflected.

⁹ I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people-- ¹⁰ not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. ¹¹ But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.

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How should we relate to a person who claims to be a Christ-follower, but defiantly chooses to continue sinning?

This is a difficult passage to know exactly what the parameters are Paul is setting in place. Does it just mean the person is to not celebrate the Lord's Supper? Does it mean that individual believers should not even have this person over?

It does at least imply that whenever the community of Christ gathers as an "identity", this person should not be included in that group. In the New Testament that would have included the Love Feasts, the Lord's Supper, prayer gatherings, etc. He is not to be considered part of the Christ-community.

If we are not to dissociate with non-believers, why should we dissociate from a believer acting like a non-believer?

It is important that the rest of the church family understand that this type of continuous, defiant sin is unacceptable within the family of God.

It is important that the rest of the world understand that the church does not embrace the values being proclaimed by that person; that his actions do not represent the character of Christ. It is important that they understand the church does not view this way of living as being "righteous".

How many times in this entire passage does Paul say they are to put the man outside the community of faith?

1Cor 5:2 *put out of your fellowship the man who did this*
1Cor 5:5 *hand this man over to Satan*
1Cor 5:7 *Get rid of the old yeast*
1Cor 5:13 *Expel the wicked man from among you*

How are we to reconcile the above passage with Matthew 7:1-5?

Matthew 7:1-5 (NIV)

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. ² For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. ³ "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ⁴ How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

Paul is not addressing a situation where someone is arrogantly finding fault with another while at the same time being oblivious to their own sins. This is a situation where a "believer" is flagrantly sinning and has no intention of abandoning the sinful old life. He is defiantly rejecting the holiness of God in his life.

The "church" is to judge within the family of God; we are to hold one another accountable; we are to call sin - sin. We all sin; we all struggle; we all stumble and need help getting back on solid ground. However, when one "brother" chooses to unrepentantly continue in sin, that puts everything into a whole new scenario that potentially affects the entire church and the name of Christ.

Why do we find it hard to apply this teaching?

**Has anyone seen this practice of church discipline applied in a church?
How was it applied and how did it conclude?**

The following passage may or may not refer back to the man in 1Corinthians 5, but it does reveal how the church is to respond to the believer who repents of his sin.

2 Corinthians 2:5-11 (NIV)

If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you, to some extent--not to put it too severely. ⁶ The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient for him. ⁷ Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. ⁸ I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him. ⁹ The reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. ¹⁰ If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven--if there was anything to forgive--I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, ¹¹ in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

If the person eventually repents, how are we as a church to respond?

We are to embrace that person, forgive them, and restore them to full standing within the family of God. We need to assure that person of our love and complete acceptance.

What are Satan's schemes?

Satan's schemes are always to permanently separate people from Jesus Christ.

He does this both through:

- 1) tempting us to embrace sin and
- 2) condemning others without a concern for restoration
- 3) withholding forgiveness and discouraging reconciliation

How do you think the church community would be affected if we had to exercise discipline within the church?

Church Discipline is always a last resort after every other step has been pursued to bring the person into a healthy walk with Jesus Christ.

Personal Reflection:

Is there some area in my life where I am giving into Satan's scheme?