

When You Discover Sexual Immorality in the Church

Considering the spotlight that homosexuality, transgenderism and various sexual deviances have demanded, we must engage in a conversation about the ramifications such activity—in the church.

In fact, the so called “gay Christian” movement is gaining traction all over the world as is the sanctioning of homosexual marriage in some of the largest denominations.

Unfortunately, immorality has always infected the church. In the book of Revelation we see a severe example of this, and an equally severe reaction by God:

“I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience, and that your last works are more than the first. But I have a few things against you: You permit that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat food sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, but she did not repent. Look! I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. I will put her children to death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the hearts and minds. I will give to each one of you according to your deeds” (Rev. 2:19-23).

The church in Thyatira was on God’s radar for their works, love and faith, but also for tolerating sexual immorality in the church.

So many have fallen for an unbiblical definition of true love that is devoid of correction or standards. It feels more like warm, fuzzy, emotional highs and affirmation of people

regardless of their lifestyle, which is not biblical love. Love can feel quite repulsive and alienating at times. God is love. He can't avoid it! This God of love, in the above passage, refused to play games with the issue of sexual immorality in the church. His response? Repent or be thrown into great tribulation!

Consider this question: "If you were a pastor and someone who identified as a 'gay Christian' started attending your church, or someone didn't feel it was sinful to have sex with their boyfriend or girlfriend outside of marriage, what would you do?"

People most always respond by saying, "Love them."

OK, but what does that look like? Again, most would say that we should encourage, share the truth with them and pray that they would stay connected in church and eventually see the error of their ways.

This counsel is in contradiction with the Word of God. I asked this question on Facebook just a moment ago, and I'm so proud of my son Skylar who, on a lunch break at work at Silver Dollar City here in Branson, Missouri, responded by typing in: *1 Corinthians 5*. He's right:

"It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles, that a man has his father's wife. But you are arrogant. Instead you should have mourned, so that he who has done this deed might be removed from among you. For indeed, though absent in body but present in spirit, I have already, as if I were present, judged him who has done this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. When you are assembled, along with my spirit, in the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver him to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 5:1-5).

This passage also uses a form of the word “tolerate.” Sexual immorality is not to be tolerated. Jezebel and the sexual perversion she promotes is not to be tolerated. The demand in today’s culture is for tolerance in the midst of sexual perversion. This has crept into the culture of the church and it is time to act.

God is not tolerant. His is longsuffering, but certainly not tolerant of perversion—especially within the church. This is His bride!

What is the loving reaction that leaders must have when unrepentant sexual immorality is discovered in the church? That person is to be removed. He is to be delivered to Satan for the destruction of their flesh—so that his spirit may be saved!

This is love!

Of course, there are significant differences between someone who is struggling with, for example, pornography and someone who indulges in it freely without repentance or any plan to change.

There is also a difference between a professing Christian who refuses to repent of sexual sin and a heathen who refuses to repent. The former is to be removed from the church while the latter should be welcomed with open arms in hopes that they are radically, gloriously saved! And, yes, at that time they will be held to an entirely different standard.

The passage in 1 Corinthians 5 continues:

“Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch? Therefore purge out the old yeast, that you may be a new batch, since you are unleavened. For even Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old yeast, nor with the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened

bread of sincerity and truth. I wrote to you in my letter not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I did not mean the sexually immoral people of this world, or the covetous and extortioners, or the idolaters, since you would then need to go out of the world. But I have written to you not to keep company with any man who is called a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner. Do not even eat with such a person. For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? But God judges those who are outside. Therefore 'put away from among yourselves that wicked person'" (1 Cor. 5:6-13).

If one who calls themselves a brother or sister in Christ are sexually immoral, greedy, idolatrous, a reviler, drunkard or swindler—we can't even sit down at Starbucks with them! We can't invite them over for a barbecue on the Forth of July!

This is love!

If we don't take swift action the entire church will become infected. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

"And do not let sexual immorality, or any impurity, or greed be named among you, as these are not proper among saints" (Eph. 5:3).

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