

Read 1 Corinthians 5. Some passages of scripture challenge us because they reveal the seriousness of sin and the holiness of God’s people. This is one of those passages. The situation in Corinth was heartbreaking: a member of the church was openly living in a sinful relationship, and the congregation had become proud of their tolerance rather than grieved by the sin. Paul’s concern was not simply that someone had broken a rule; his concern was that someone who belonged to Christ was choosing a path that was destroying his relationship with God and damaging the witness of the Lord’s Church. The local church, the local body of Christ, is meant to be a place where people experience the grace, holiness, and transforming power of God. It is unfortunate when that great blessing is taken for granted.

Paul’s instruction to “hand this man over to Satan” can sound harsh, but we must understand the heart (ultimately God’s) behind it. Satan’s permitted realm is outside the church, outside the body of Christ. He is an intruder in the Kingdom of God. The church is not a place where Satan has authority to rule; it is a place where Christ reigns. To remove someone from fellowship was not an act of hatred or rejection, but a final effort to help someone see the seriousness of walking away from the safety and blessing of life in Christ. The purpose was restoration. God’s discipline in this life is never meant simply to punish, it is meant to awaken hearts, to lead people to repentance, and bring them back into the joy of fellowship with Him.

This same truth reveals the beauty of the church. Remaining connected to the body of Christ is a place of safety, victory, and spiritual protection. The world may promise freedom, but life outside of God’s design leads to bondage. The local church, imperfect as its members may be, is where God shapes, strengthens, and restores His people. Just as the Israelites were to remove the leaven from bread for the Passover celebration, Paul called on the Corinthian Christians to remove the corrupting influence of unrepentant sin from among them so they could live as the new creation they had already become in Christ. Because of Jesus’ sacrifice, the church is called to live as a people marked by the sincerity and truth of holy living.

At the same time, Paul reminds us that discipline must always flow from love and humility. The church does not judge those outside and pretend to have no sin within. Rather, God calls His people to help one another walk faithfully in the light. When correction is necessary, it should always reflect the heart of the Father who desires His children to return home. God disciplines because He loves. He longs for every person to experience the wholeness, freedom, and joy found only in Christ. The goal is never merely to remove someone. The goal is to see them restored.

Prayerfully consider the following this week: How does understanding the church as a place of safety and victory shape the way I value my relationship with God’s people? How can I balance speaking truth about sin while still reflecting God’s heart of love, grace, and restoration? Are there areas of my life where God’s loving discipline may be calling me back into deeper fellowship with Him?

Weekly Memory Verse:

“For you have been bought for a price: therefore glorify God in your body.”

1 Corinthians 6:20

Weekly Affirmation:

TODAY I WILL SEEK TO BUILD UP MY BROTHER/SISTER

JUNE 2026 GROWTH GOALS

- Read the Book of 1 Corinthians
- Watch the Bible Project video on 1 Corinthians (*available on the website*).
- Memorize one of the weekly memory verses.
- “Plant a seed” with a friend, family member, and/or stranger by sharing a scripture or prayer for them in person.