

Small Groups @ TBC

Sermon Discussion Notes

Date of Sermon: September 6^{30h} 2018

Speaker: David Lawrence

Title: Taking Sex Seriously

Introduction: In these readings Paul writes to the Corinthians to confront them over a serious sexual sin within the church: someone is sleeping with their step-Mother. As his teaching develops, other sexual sins (and other sins too) are mentioned as examples of behaviour that is incompatible with being a part of God's new creation society (i.e. the Church!).

Review: Invite one or more who have heard the talk to give their own brief review.

Read: 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 6:9-20

Reflect :

- In verse 2, Paul confronts the fact that the Christians are proud of the situation described in verse 1. It seems that a mindset was at large in the Corinthian church, which made such a big thing of their freedom in Christ, that they imagined they were free to do anything. (Perhaps they were misunderstanding Paul's teaching as found in 2 Corinthians 3:17).
 - How does Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 6:12,13 expand our understanding of Christian freedom? What does Galatians 5:13,14 add?
 - What are Christians free FROM? And what are they freed FOR?
- In verses 3 and 4 Paul tells them how they should respond to the man sleeping with his step-mother. What is his advice?
 - Note: 'handing the man over to Satan' is another way of saying, 'put him outside of the church and back into the world': 'the flesh/sinful nature' being destroyed' signifies Paul's hope that his self-centred wrong thinking will be corrected.
 - What is Paul's ultimate hope for this man (v5)? What does this tell us about our attitude to those in the church who fall into sin?
- Throughout this passage Paul's concern with personal sin in the church, is not so much focused on the individual, as on the community of the church (see v 12). He understands that the church is God's new society and consequently needs to show the world a different, God-centred way of life.
 - How does he express his concern for the impact of sin in the church in verse 6? What point does the 'yeast working through dough' illustration make?

Leaders: feel free to be selective and creative with your use of these notes.

Don't feel you have to use all of the material, but
do try to keep the shape of Review – Read – Reflect – Respond
and DO make room for the 'And Finally' questions!

- What principle does he give to the church about its daily life in verses 9-10?
 - How does this apply to people in the group?
- In 6:9-10 Paul lists a number of sins, all drawn from Old Testament moral law.
 - Is there a hierarchy of sins here? (i.e. does Paul suggest some are worse than others?). Do we sometimes do that? Why?
 - What is the effect of these sinful behaviours (9, 10b)? Why are these behaviours incompatible with the Kingdom of God?
- In verse 11 Paul indicates that something had happened to the Corinthian Christians. What?
 - Note 'washed' refers to their baptism - their moment of initial cleansing and entry into God's household; 'sanctified' means that God has made them holy (note how Paul addresses them in 1:2); 'justified' means put in a right relationship with God. Notice that these were done TO and FOR the Corinthians. They now have to live up to their new identity.
 - How do members of the group understand their new identity in Christ? Does these verses help? What does it mean for people in the group to live up to the people God has made them to be?
- In the final verses Paul gives three reasons to keep away from sexual sin. What are they and in what ways are they helpful in keeping our moral compass fixed on the kingdom of God? (14; 19a; 19b,20)

And finally:

As you conclude, ask each person:

- What is the main thing you are taking away as an action point?
- How can we pray for you?
- Is there anything we can check on next time we meet?

Final Note: In the talk David gave some teaching about a Biblical response to those who experience same-sex attraction. He showed a video from the Living Out website, which is run by same-sex attracted Christians. There is a lot of useful information and video material there if members of the group wanted to follow up that particular issue more.
<http://www.livingout.org>

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