

Tolerating Sin

"To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."
1 Corinthians 5:5

It is difficult to determine which of the biblical commands Christians most frequently neglect, but certainly disciplining believers who willfully violate the commands of God rates close to the top. This is especially true in an environment where tolerance is considered the queen of virtues.

This chapter in Paul's letter to the Corinthians gives the following principles pertaining to the application of church discipline:

- It includes all who call themselves Christians
- It includes all who violate the negative commands and refuse to repent/change
- All association with them is severed until they repent
- It is done with a two-fold motive: the saving of the sinner and the purity of the church
- No exceptions are made for members of the family or their age

All men know and attest that behavior has its limits. When Paul says, "And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you,"¹ he is teaching that pride in being tolerant is a form of arrogance that God hates. To sin and repent is common to all believers; to sin and refuse to repent is to repudiate Christ.

¹ 1 Corinthians 5:2