

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Third Quarter 2026: *1 and 2 Corinthians*

Lesson 4 “Sin in the Church”

Read for this week’s study

1 Corinthians 5:1–13; 2 Corinthians 2:5–10; 1 Corinthians 6:1–13; 1 Thessalonians 4:1–8;
1 Corinthians 6:19–7:9.

Memory Text

“Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies” (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, NIV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Dissonance Between Faith and Practice
- III. Dealing With Scandals
- IV. Protecting the Church’s Identity
- V. Antidote Against Sexual Immorality
- VI. Marriage and Singleness
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Our brains are like sponges: whatever is brought to them through the senses, stays inside of them. Our entire past experience is all there and, to some degree, impacts everything we feel, think, and do. That’s why Christians have to reckon with the idea that they are impacted by all the evil that surrounds us. The church at Corinth certainly struggled with this.
2. In this week’s lesson, we focus on 1 Corinthians, chapters 5 and 6. In the first four chapters of his letter, Paul deals with the factions in the Corinthian church, urging unity. In 1 Corinthians 5-7, Paul is dealing with issues in the church which have either been brought to him by members of Chloe’s household (1 Cor 1:11), or questions raised directly with him by the church. They concern matters that had divided the church and even offended high-minded pagans outside the church.

3. Read 1 Corinthians 5:1-5. What scandalous situation does Paul describe in this passage and why is it so disturbing to him? Why do you think the church was OK with this behavior? Why didn't they act? Why did they seem to be proud of this inaction? What does Paul mean by delivering this member over to Satan? In dealing with situations like this, how much of a role should outside public opinion play? (Sunday)
4. Read 1 Corinthians 5:6-13. How does Paul tell the church to deal with the situation? The author of the lesson states "Paul makes it clear in 1 Corinthians 5 that sexual scandals require church discipline." Is that a fair assessment of what Paul wrote in this passage? Under what conditions should the church carry out such discipline? Is that always true? (Monday)
5. Read 1 Corinthians 6:1-11. What kind of court case does Paul have in mind here? Is this a criminal case or a civil case? What is the difference between the two options? If the Corinthians had the gift of discernment and judgment, why didn't they use it? Why are people who practice the kinds of things listed in verses 9-10 to be excluded from the church? (Tuesday)
6. The lesson takes a digression today to bring in a Pauline passage from an earlier letter that deals with sexual relations in the church. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8. What does holiness have to do with avoiding fornication? What does Paul mean by "defrauding" a brother or a sister sexually? What does Paul mean when he says that God is an "avenger" in sexual situations? (Wednesday)
7. Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20. When the Bible talks about freedom, it seems to be freedom within limits. Why does genuine freedom require limits? What kinds of damage do sexual sins leave behind? (Wednesday)
8. Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-9. With chapter seven Paul introduces a new topic: Marriage and singleness. How does he elaborate his admonition to "flee sexual immorality" (1 Cor 6:18)? When it comes to sexuality, why does the Bible limit people to just one partner? Read 1 Corinthians 7:17-20. What does Paul mean when he says, "Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called"? (Thursday)
9. In a time when many consider it old-fashioned, how can we show the world that marriage is really a gift from God? (Friday)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Now these are the ones Jesus calls hypocrites. Hypocrite is not a bad word. In ancient times, a hypocrite was an actor. *Hupa*, which turns into English *hypo*, means under, and the second half of the word hypocrite, means a mask. See, an actor is a person who performs under a mask. Well, a good actor, nothing wrong with that. But when a person pretends to be pious and inside

he's a cheat and a liar, then he's a fraud, he's an acting saint. And look at what Jesus said about hypocrites who practice their piety just as a mask. Ellen White says in one stunning place, "Pretentious piety is nauseating to the Lord." It makes Him sick.

So the universe looks down at these who have known the truth about God. God especially revealed Himself to them. People who've been privileged to have Moses live among them, and Abraham live among them, and Daniel and people like this, really trustworthy friends. And the universe notices that they not only are untrustworthy representatives of God, but these Gentiles in chapter 1, even blaspheme and mock the God of these people who claim to be God's spokesmen. Verse 24: "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of their pretentious piety and fraudulent worship of you who profess to be His people."

Well, you wouldn't trust the sinners in chapter 1, would you? You wouldn't trust the sinners in chapter 2. In fact, Paul says, "I have found that even when I know better, and I try to do better, and I really want to do what is right, I find I can't do it." And that comes up in chapter 7.

"Oh," he says, "every time I want to do what is right, evil lies close at hand. All the good that I want to do I don't do, and the evil that I don't want to do is what I do. Wretched man that I am who will deliver me from this doomed body?"

Of course, when he says that he knows the answer which he promptly gives. But Paul has surely made it clear that in the condition in which we find ourselves, we are above all things else utterly untrustworthy. It would be totally unsafe to turn us loose in the kind of society God has given His life to preserve. He takes it that seriously. It will remain a free universe, without prisons, and penitentiaries, and police, where everyone can be trusted and no one would do hurt to his neighbor. No one would lie, or steal, or cheat, He insists on that. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series Romans, chapter 5, recorded October 1977, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/9MMROMANS66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/10MMROMANS66> (Part 2)

Further Study with Ellen White

His angels are appointed to watch over us, and if we put ourselves under their guardianship, then in every time of danger they will be at our right hand. When unconsciously we are in danger of exerting a wrong influence, the angels will be by our side, prompting us to a better course, choosing our words for us, and influencing our actions. Thus our influence may be a silent, unconscious, but mighty power in drawing others to Christ and the heavenly world. {COL 341.2}

Every uttered word exerts an influence, every action involves a train of responsibility. No one can live to himself in this world, even if he would. Each one forms a part of the great web of humanity, and through our individual threads of influence, we are linked to the universe. Christ used His influence to draw men to God, and He has left us an example of the way in which we should speak and act. A person who is molded by the Spirit of God will know how to speak a “word in season to him that is weary,” and will realize the highest human blessedness—the joy of imparting to others the precious treasures of the wisdom and grace of Christ. But those who permit themselves to be controlled by the enemy of all good will speak words which should never be uttered.—RH Feb. 16, 1897. {VSS 49.3}

One of the strongest evidences of true conversion is love to God and man. Those who accept Jesus as their Redeemer have a deep, sincere love for others of like precious faith. {AA 262.3}

Our sanctification is the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is the fulfillment of the covenant God has made with those who bind themselves up with Him, to stand with Him, His Son, and His Spirit in holy fellowship. {7BC 908.11}

Sanctification means habitual communion with God (RH March 15, 1906). {7BC 908.16}

Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, or a day. It is a continual growth in grace. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. Satan lives, and is active, and every day we need to earnestly cry to God for help and strength to resist him. As long as Satan reigns we shall have self to subdue, besetments to overcome, and there is no stopping place. There is no point to which we can come and say we have fully attained (RH May 6, 1862). {7BC 947.5}

Christ’s perfect knowledge of human character fits Him to deal with minds. God knows just how to treat each soul. He judges not as man judges. He knows the real value of the material upon which He is working in fitting men and women for positions of trust.—Manuscript 168, Dec. 24, 1902, “The Sin of Evil-speaking.” {UL 372.7}