

GRACE
in the
MESS



Restoring
Holiness

Restoring Holiness

*A Biblical Call to Purity, Conviction, and
Redemptive Discipline in the Church*

When the Church Begins to Tolerate What Even the World Rejects

There comes a moment when the Church must look in the mirror and ask: “*What are we becoming?*” In Corinth, Paul exposes a sin so blatant—an immoral relationship between a man and his father’s wife—that even the surrounding pagan culture wouldn’t tolerate it. Yet, instead of mourning, the church celebrated its “tolerance.”

This moment is a sobering reminder: when sin is normalized within the Body, the Church loses its prophetic voice. When holiness is replaced by complacency, the Church begins to blend in with the very culture it was sent to transform. What should have caused grief instead became a badge of progressive thinking—and that’s a dangerous exchange.

When Confrontation Becomes the Most Loving Response

The modern understanding of love often equates it with acceptance at all costs. But biblical love doesn’t overlook sin; it confronts it for the sake of the soul. Paul doesn’t ignore the issue—he calls the church to act. Not with hatred or judgmentalism, but with truth, clarity, and spiritual authority.

This discipline is not meant to shame or destroy, but to awaken. By removing someone from fellowship who refuses to repent, the Church acts in hope—not in anger. The goal is always redemption. Sometimes, it is only in separation that a person realizes the weight of their choices and turns back to God.

A Little Compromise Infects the Whole

Sin, when left alone, doesn’t stay isolated. Like yeast in dough, it spreads subtly, quietly, but completely. This is why Paul warns,

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“Don’t you know that a little leaven leavens the whole batch?” A church that allows unrepented sin to go unchecked is setting itself up for spiritual infection and eventual decay.

God calls His people to be holy, set apart. That doesn’t mean perfection—it means a refusal to normalize what God calls destructive. Just like families take out the trash to keep the home clean, churches must address sin to keep the body spiritually healthy. Ignoring it isn’t compassion—it’s negligence.

The Church Must Judge Itself Before It Judges the World

There is a clear line in Paul’s words: believers are not called to judge the world, but they are called to hold themselves accountable within the Church. This flips much of modern religious rhetoric on its head. While many Christians spend energy criticizing the culture, the biblical model is to first ensure holiness within our own community.

What Paul instructs is this: we do not expect non-believers to live like believers. But we do expect believers to live in alignment with the Gospel they profess. The standard is not legalism—it’s love that refuses to let sin distort our witness.

The Goal Is Always Restoration, Never Rejection

At the heart of everything Paul teaches in this passage is one powerful truth: the goal is always restoration. The sin must be addressed. The church must take action. But the ultimate hope is that the individual will repent and be restored to the body.

Church discipline is not about excommunication for the sake of control. It’s about the spiritual health of the whole body and the healing of the one who has gone astray. When handled biblically, it becomes a tool of grace—not condemnation.

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And when someone does return, when repentance happens, the Church's arms must be wide open, echoing the heart of the Father who rejoices over every prodigal that comes home.

Final Words: If You Call Yourself a Christian, Live Like One

The message is clear: sin is serious. It corrupts, spreads, and distorts what God has made sacred. But more than that—it separates us from the joy of walking in step with the Holy Spirit. If you claim the name of Christ, then the world should see it not just in your beliefs, but in your lifestyle.

This text isn't just about what to do with others—it's also about self-examination. Are there areas in your life where sin has been tolerated or hidden? Are you walking in holiness or excusing compromise?

Holiness is not outdated. It's not legalism. It's the life God calls us to. And when we pursue it together, the Church becomes what it was always meant to be—a light in the darkness, a beacon of truth, and a place of healing and redemption for all.

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