

Apostolic Discipline | 1 Corinthians 5:1-5

- Verse 1 –
 - **reported commonly** - Literally, "heard everywhere."
 - Note that the KJV inserts the words **that there is**, while such words are not in the Greek.
 - A more literal translation would be, "Fornication is heard everywhere among you." That is, Paul is saying that fornication has become common talk within the congregation.
 - **the Gentiles** - Some commentators want to make **the Gentiles** a reference to "the lost," because Corinth is thought to be a gentile church. However, one must not interpret words by perceived meaning, but actual meaning. Furthermore, there are a number of verses in the letter that give evidence that the church at Corinth was actually heavily Jewish in ethnicity and background (while completely within the age of Grace).

Supplemental: Is the Church at Corinth a Primarily Jewish Congregation in the Age of Grace?

Reference	Argument
1:2	Paul speaks of saints in every place
1:12	Paul refers to Jewish preachers
1:14	Crispus is clearly Jewish (Acts 18:8), Gaius likely so
4:03	Paul is being examined as an apostle. A gentile wouldn't do so.
5:1	Paul compares them to gentiles...an odd illustration if they are gentiles.
5:6-8	Paul uses Jewish illustrations
6:1	Jews typically had their own law courts in the synagogue, but gentiles wouldn't have known what Paul was talking about. Their custom was the civil court. Were these Jews taking on Gentile practices?
6:02	Saints will judge the world...see Daniel & Matthew
6:04	Whoever "you" is must be the identity of the saints.
6:9-10	Paul uses Kingdom references
6:12ff	Why would Paul need to argue lawful food with a gentile?
7:18-20	With circumcision as a discussion, there was clearly a large Jewish populace, at minimum.
7:26	the "present" or "impending" distress...was much more Jewish than Gentile at this point.
7:29	Either Paul was wrong about the time, or he knew Jews were about to undergo the greatest tribulation they had ever experienced.
8:1ff	Only Jews would have these scruples
10:1	reference to "our fathers"
10:20	another reference to the gentiles
14:33-34	"all the churches of the saints" belongs with v. 34, and this was only a Jewish practice.
16:08	reference to Pentecost (not a strong argument)
16:19	"the churches greet you" instead of "the saints" ...because the churches were becoming gentile.
16:20	"all the brethren greet you" ...a reference to Jewish believers?
16:22	Paul uses the Aramaic word "Maranatha." Greeks in Corinth didn't speak Aramaic. Other Aramaic terms like "abba" were always translated by Paul, but this is not....perhaps the Corinthians spoke Aramaic?

12:2

This is an apparently BIG problem, but here is a possible solution: The Jews were called "ethnos" in Acts 10:22 and Israel was an "ethnos" in Luke 7:5, 23:2, John 11:48, 50, 51, 18:35, Acts 10:22, 24:2, 10, 17, 26:4, 28:19, as well as 1 Peter 2:9.

Apostolic Discipline | ...continued

- Verse 2 –
 - While the sexual sin was well known, nobody in the church wanted to deal with it.
 - The Greek word for **puffed up** is φυσιώω [physioō], and the same root is used in the Greek ἐμφυσάω [emphysao], both having the idea of breath.
 - In the first, the idea is of blowing up a balloon, thus (by implication) **puffed up** or arrogant.
 - In the second, the English word *emphasis* carries the idea of "more breath," such as, "the emphasis is on the first syllable."
 - The concept here is, "you are emphasizing yourselves too much rather than emphasizing that which is right."
 - Paul's consistent instruction is that those of a certain degree of sinful activity should be **taken away from among you**.
 - For other passages that teach the same concept, see 1 Corinthians 5:11 and 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14.
 - Other passages could be added which would instruct a church to do this with a desire to restore the individual, but with the understanding that the message of the Gospel is more important than the fellowship or wellbeing of any single individual.
- Verse 3 –
 - The evidence of the man's actions must have been so overwhelming that Paul felt no need to be present in order to make his own judgment on the matter.
 - Such cases are rare, and thus Paul's strength of conviction here should not become an encouragement for us to make judgments without hearing the case.
- Verses 4-5 –
 - The delivery **unto Satan** is perplexing, but one should note:
 - It was an action to be done by the church, **when ye are gathered together**. This is not something that should be done without a gathering of the congregation (though most church governance documents give this authority to a small group, which is an unbiblical and unhealthy situation).
 - It was done by the assembly because it was their matter. However, it was done only with the apostolic authority of Paul, who had **judged already as though I were present** (v. 3).
 - In other places Paul hands over to Satan with no congregational approval (1 Tim 1:20). This is an indicator that handing over to Satan is something of *apostolic authority* but not within the realm of *church authority* (and a reminder that doctrine is not to be built upon an historical incident).
 - Note that further in the chapter there is instruction to **judge them that are within** (v. 12) and to **put away from among yourselves that wicked person** (v. 13), so the question is not whether church discipline should take place, but whether *handing over to Satan* is within the authority of the church.
 - Paul said that the action was to be done **for the destruction of the flesh**. Sin, when unchecked by church and morality, always ends up in physical destruction. The sinner in a healthy church is often "saved" physically by the church simply because he/she does not carry out the full desires of the flesh. Remember that Satan devours, and the sinner released to Satan's ways will be devoured.