



## Daily Verse and Comment

### 1 Corinthians 5:11-13

(11) But now, I have written to you not to associate with anyone who is called a brother, *if he be* either sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a person *you are* not even to eat. (12) For what *responsibility* do I have to judge those who are outside *the church*? Are not you yourselves to judge those who are within? (13) But God judges those who are outside. So then, put the wicked person out from among yourselves.

*A Faithful Version*

Paul explains that we have to evaluate—discern, judge—immorality of all kinds in the church, and he advocates the practice of disfellowshipping those who continue to practice such sins. The presence of unrepentant sinners in the congregation only causes trouble and creates divisions, as they had in the incident he had written about earlier in the chapter.

But what about grace, mercy, and [patience](#)? What about demonstrating the [love](#) of [God](#)? Some might ask, “What's wrong with Paul? Doesn't he understand that we live under grace? Did he not understand that we all need to co-exist and be tolerant of one another? Did he not know that he would have everyone pointing the finger at each other and bringing chaos into the church? Isn't that what's going on in [the world](#) as we speak?”

In [II Thessalonians 3:6](#), 14, the apostle gives the same advice:

But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord [Jesus Christ](#), that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us. . . . And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed.

Some might think, “Paul needs to stop! He's going to destroy the church!” But that is exactly the opposite of what he is trying to do. He urges church members to use the gift of discernment to root out the weeds—call them tares, if you will—among them so that good fruits of righteousness could be produced in the ensuing peaceful environment (see [James 3:18](#)). Remember, God gives the gifts of His Spirit—including discernment—for the improvement and growth of the body ([I Corinthians 12:7](#)).

In fact, what Paul commanded the Corinthians and Thessalonians to do is an expression of godly love. Admonishing Timothy and Titus to guard the truth falls into the same category. It is far less harsh than what many militaries have done to guards who fell asleep while on watch duty! The principle is the same—getting rid of those who demonstrate dereliction of duty—but disfellowshipping is far kinder and more effective spiritually.

Moreover, Paul advises this seemingly harsh treatment to bring about a beneficial effect: It is intended to produce shame in the disfellowshipped individual and spur him or her to repentance—to a restored relationship with God. Is that not what God wants everyone to do, repent and turn to Him? Paul advises in [II Thessalonians 3:15](#), “Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish [caution, warn, and rebuke, if necessary, in love] him as a brother.” In the end, disfellowshipping turns out to be a loving, corrective measure, not a punishment.

Paul poured himself out admonishing, warning, and even rebuking the brethren, imploring them to exercise discernment and judging, if need be, to keep the spirit of the world out of the church. In these times, the need is all the more pressing.

— Ronny H. Graham

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