

Elder Ronnie Loudermilk



Delivered Unto Satan

1 Corinthians 5:4-5, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 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." My prayer this morning is for the children of God to have a better understanding of proper Church discipline. I realize that this subject is not one that finds popularity in the world in which we live, but the Bible teaches this subject to be one of the identifying marks of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. When a member of the Church is living and acting in such a way to bring reproach against the Lord and His Church, the Church body is commanded by scripture to exclude such a person from its membership. Someone may ask, 'Why do you think this is so important Bro. Ronnie?' I will offer these reasons: (1) The glory of the Lord (1 Cor 5:4, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ / with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ). If the Lord has commanded us to do anything, it will be to His glory for us to do so. Whether it's being baptized (Matt 28:19-

20, Acts 2:38), letting our light shine in the world by our good works (Matthew 5:16) or confessing the Lord with our lips and tongues (Philippians 2:11, Hebrews 13:15), by doing what the Lord has said for us to do, it will be to His glory and praise. (2) The Church must be different than the world (1 Cor 5:10, Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world). If the Church were to cease from practicing proper discipline, the body would eventually be no different than the world we are told not to be conformed to (Rom 12:2). (3) The spirit and peace of the Church body (1 Cor 5:5, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus). The spirit and peace of the Church, which is found in her fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ, takes precedence over any single person's wants or desires. I realize that some may say, 'you will offend them and they may never return', but the spirit of the Church is more important than any person's carnal feelings. If the Church does not practice scriptural discipline, they will stand before the Lord to be judged themselves, which could conclude with a loss of fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing is more heartbreaking than for a Church to fade and die because they have offended Jesus by their lack in keeping His commandments (Rev 3:20). (4) The goal we should have as disciples (1 Cor 5:7, Purge out therefore the old leaven that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened). We, the Church of Jesus Christ, should labor to be in practice what we are already in our position in Jesus Christ. By the shed blood of Jesus Christ on the Cross of Calvary, the entire family of God is just, holy and without blame before the

Father. And we, the Church and individual disciples, should aim for this goal with our everyday practical lives. Sure, we fail and fall short, but this does not change the goal and what we should strive to be everyday. If we are to labor toward this goal, we must practice scriptural Church discipline. (5) The person who has sinned and brought the reproach. In 1 Timothy 1:20 the Apostle Paul tells us of two that he "delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." In this verse of scripture, the Apostle is saying this was done that these two will know that the conduct that they had demonstrated was not acceptable for disciples of Jesus Christ. If the Church fails to exclude a person who has committed an open sin that brought reproach, they are essentially saying, 'that conduct is acceptable'. The conduct of the man in 1 Corinthians 5 should not have been "named among the gentiles", much less in the Church. The Church should exercise in this practice in prayers and hope of repentance and restoration. In Galatians 6:1 we read, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted", and I'm very happy to say that 1 Corinthians chapter 5 was not the end of this story, because In 2 Corinthians chapter 2 we read of the time when this man repented, and was restored to fellowship by the Church at Corinth. I trust that we all can see how Jesus was glorified, and the Church enjoyed a peace in both of these chapters. Amen !

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