

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 5

In this chapter the apostle blames the Corinthians for conniving at a sin committed by one of their members; declares what he was determined to do, and what should be done by them in this case; and in general advises to shun conversation with wicked men; in (~~418~~1 Corinthians 5:1) mention is made of the sin committed by one among themselves, and which was publicly known, and commonly talked of; and which in general was fornication, and particularly incest, a man lying with his father's wife; and which is aggravated by its being what was not named, or could not be named among any virtuous persons among the Gentiles without offence: and yet the members of this church, at least the majority of them, were unconcerned at it, and were so far from mourning over it, and taking any step to remove the person from them that had done it, that they were swelled with pride, and gloried on account of their gifts, and perhaps on account of this man, who had committed the iniquity, (~~418~~1 Corinthians 5:2). This affair being related to the apostle, though at a distance; and he well knowing all things concerning it, as though he was present, resolved what should be done in this case by himself, (~~418~~1 Corinthians 5:3) and that was to deliver the man to Satan, in the name, and with the power and authority of Christ, when the members of this church were gathered together, and his Spirit with them; the end of which was for the destruction of the man's body, and the salvation of his soul, (~~418~~1 Corinthians 5:4,5) and then the apostle returns to blame them for their glorying in men, and in external gifts, and pleading these as a reason why the man should be continued, and not removed from them; not considering the danger they were exposed to, and which he illustrates by the simile of leaven, a little of which affects the whole lump: suggesting thereby the danger they were in by continuing such a wicked person among them, (~~418~~1 Corinthians 5:6) wherefore pursuing, the same metaphor, taken from the Jewish passover, he exhorts to remove from them the man that had sinned, as the Jews at the passover removed the leaven out of their houses; that so they might appear to be a church renewed, and purged, and clear of leaven, keeping the true and spiritual passover, which they were under obligation to do, since

Christ, the antitype of the passover, was sacrificed for them, (~~4187~~1 Corinthians 5:7) wherefore it became them to keep the feast of the Lord's supper; and indeed, to have the whole course of their conversation so ordered, as to avoid sin and sinners, and to behave in truth and uprightness, (~~4188~~1 Corinthians 5:8) when the apostle goes on to put them in mind of what he had formerly written unto them, as suitable to the present case, which was, that they should not keep company with wicked men, particularly with fornicators, such as this man, though in a more heinous manner, (~~4189~~1 Corinthians 5:9) and explains what was his meaning; not that they were to have no manner of conversation with persons of such a character, and of such like evil characters, in things of a civil nature, for then there would be no living in the world, (~~4190~~1 Corinthians 5:10). But his sense was, that they should keep no company with persons guilty of the sins mentioned, who bore the name of Christian brethren, and were members of the same church state with them, from whose communion they ought to be removed; and indeed, so much familiarity with them should not be indulged, as even to eat with them, (~~4191~~1 Corinthians 5:11). The reason of this difference, which he made between wicked men, who were not members of the church, and those that were, is because he had nothing to do, nor they neither, with them that were without the church, as it was their business only to take cognizance of them that were within, (~~4192~~1 Corinthians 5:12) but neither of them had anything to do, to judge and censure those that did not belong to the church, but should leave them to God, the righteous Judge; and then closes all, (~~4193~~1 Corinthians 5:13) with what he had chiefly in view throughout the whole chapter, and that is, that they would remove from their communion the wicked person who had been guilty of the sin first mentioned.

Ver. 1. *It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you,* etc.] The apostle having reproved the Corinthians for their schisms and divisions about their ministers, proceeds to charge them with immoralities committed among them, and which were connived at, and took no notice of by them; and particularly a very notorious one, which he here mentions with its aggravated circumstances. It was done among them; not only by one of their citizens, nor merely by one of their hearers, but by one of their members, and so was cognizable by them as a church; for though they had nothing to do with them that were without, yet they were concerned with them that were within: this was a public offence; it was known by everyone, and it was in everybody's mouth; it was heard in all companies;

it was “commonly”, **ολως**, “universally” talked of, and reported; it was generally known at Corinth, and in all Achaia, so that the church could not plead ignorance, nor could they be excused from blame in not as publicly declaring their abhorrence of the fact, as it was committed, which was fornication: fornication, **ολως**, “generally” taken, might be committed among them in all the branches of it, as that may include simple fornication, adultery, incest, and all acts of uncleanness; wherefore the apostle proceeds to describe that particular instance of fornication, that one of their members was guilty of:

and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife; not but that such unnatural copulations were practised, as among the Indians, Moors, Bactrians, Ethiopians, Medes, and Persians, as reported by sundry writers ^{f47}; and among the Arabians, before prohibited by Mahomet ^{f48}; but then such marriages and mixtures were not allowed of among the more civil and cultivated nations, as the Grecians and Romans, and never mentioned but with detestation and abhorrence: and if this man was a Jew, it was an aggravation of his sin, that he should be guilty of a crime decried by the Gentiles, as well as it was a violation of a known law of God given to the Jews, (^{<ORIG>}Leviticus 18:7) and, according to the Jewish writers ^{f49}, such a man was doubly guilty: their canon is,

“**ba tça I [abh** he that lies with his father’s wife is guilty, on account of her being his father’s wife, and on account of her being another man’s wife, whether in his father’s life time, or after his death, and whether espoused or married;”

and such an one was to be stoned. Of this kind was this man’s crime; he had his father’s wife, not his own mother, but his stepmother; for there is a distinction between a mother and a father’s wife, as in the above canon.

“These are to be stoned, he that lies with his mother, or with his father’s wife.”

Whether this man had married his father’s wife, or kept her as his concubine, continuing in an incestuous cohabitation with her, is not certain, and whether his father was dead or living; which latter seems to be the case from (^{<ORIG>}2 Corinthians 7:12) his iniquity was abominable and intolerable, and by no means to be winked at in church of Christ.

Ver. 2. *And ye are puffed up*, etc.] Either with the gifts, learning, and eloquence of their preachers, and particularly of this man, who, by some, is thought to be one of their teachers; and though he was guilty of so foul a crime, yet they still applauded him, and cried him up for a wonderful preacher: or one party was puffed up against another; that which was opposite to the party this man belonged to, boasting over the other as free from the scandal that was exposed unto; or the other were puffed up with their lenity and forbearance, boasting of it as an act of humanity and good nature, and an instance of charity, showing that they were not severe upon one another, for mistakes in life: or else were puffed up and gloried in the thing itself, as an instance of Christian liberty, and their freedom from the law, through a sad mistake of it; and in which they might be strengthened by a notion of the Jews, that it was lawful for proselyted Gentiles to do such things, for so says Maimonides ^{f50}.

“The sentence of the law is, that it is free for a Gentile *wma ačyç*, “to marry his mother”, or his sister that are made proselytes; but the wise men forbid this thing, that they may not say we are come from a holiness that is heavy, to one that is light.”

But this writer concludes that a proselyte might marry his father’s brother’s wife, and his father’s wife; and so says his commentator ^{f51}, and observes, that it was the opinion of R. Akiba, which Rabbi was contemporary with the Apostle Paul: so that this notion prevailed in his days, and does in some measure account for the commission of such a sin by a church member, and the church’s negligence about it:

and have not rather mourned; not only personally, and separately, but as a body; they ought to have met together as a church, and humbled themselves before God for this scandalous iniquity done in the midst of them, and pray unto him,

that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you; not by excommunication, for that they could and ought to have done themselves; but by the immediate hand of God, inflicting some visible punishment, and taking him away by an untimely death, which the Jews call *tyrk*, “cutting off”, by the hand of God; and such a punishment, they say, this crime deserved; according to them, there were six and thirty cuttings off in the law, or so many things which deserved death by the hand of God;

and the two first that are mentioned are these, he that lies with his mother or with his father's wife ^{f52}.

Ver. 3. *For I verily, as absent in body*, etc.] As he really was, being now at Philippi, if any dependence is to be had upon the subscription of this epistle; or rather at Ephesus; however, wherever he was, it is certain he was not at Corinth:

but present in spirit; in his affection to them, care of them, and concern for their good, and the glory of God:

have judged already; he had considered of the matter, thought very deliberately about it, and was now come to a point, to a determination concerning it, what to do in it:

as though I were present; upon the spot, in person, to do what he had resolved upon:

to him that hath so done this deed; this infamous one, and in so scandalous a manner, and which was continued in: what that was which the apostle, upon mature deliberation and judgment, determined to do with this wicked man, is expressed in (~~ARTS~~ 1 Corinthians 5:5) which is to be connected with this, the whole fourth verse being to be read in a parenthesis, and that was to deliver him to Satan.

Ver. 4. *In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*, etc.] These words contain an account of the several things and circumstances, that should attend the awful act of the apostle, in delivering this man to Satan; it would be done "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"; by his command, power, and authority, and for his glory; in whose name all miraculous actions, as this was one, were performed:

when ye are gathered together; as a church, in a public manner, in one place; not to do this business, for this was purely apostolical; but to be witness of this wonderful operation, to acknowledge the justice of God in it, and that they might fear and take warning by it:

and my spirit; meaning that though he was absent in body, he should be present in spirit; and that the extraordinary gift of the Spirit of God bestowed on him would be visibly exercised upon this man before them all, as if he himself was in the midst of them; and this not by any power of his own, but

with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ; to which all such miraculous effects, as this hereafter related, are to be ascribed.

Ver. 5. *To deliver such an one unto Satan*, etc.] This, as before observed, is to be read in connection with (~~48B~~ 1 Corinthians 5:3) and is what the apostle there determined to do with this incestuous person; namely, to deliver him unto Satan; by which is meant, not the act of excommunication, or the removing of him from the communion of the church, which is an act of the whole church, and not of any single person; whereas this was what the church had nothing to do with; it was not what they were to do, or ought to do, but what the apostle had resolved to do; and which was an act of his own, and peculiar to him as an apostle, (see ~~502~~ 1 Timothy 1:20). Nor is this a form of excommunication; nor was this phrase ever used in excommunicating persons by the primitive churches; nor ought it ever to be used; it is what no man, or set of men, have power to do now, since the ceasing of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which the apostles were endowed with; who, as they had a power over Satan to dispossess him from the bodies of men, so to deliver up the bodies of men into his hands, as the apostle did this man's:

for the destruction of the flesh; that is, that his body might be shook, buffeted, afflicted, and tortured in a terrible manner; that by this means he might be brought to a sense of his sin, to repentance for it, and make an humble acknowledgment of it:

that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus; that he might be renewed in the spirit of his mind, be restored by repentance, and his soul be saved in the day of Christ; either at death, when soul and body would be separated, or at the day of the resurrection, when both should be reunited; for the flesh here means, not the corruption of nature, in opposition to the spirit, as a principle of grace, but the body, in distinction from the soul: nor was the soul of this man, only his body, delivered for a time unto Satan; the end of which was, that his soul might be saved, which could never be done by delivering it up to Satan: and very wrongfully is this applied to excommunication; when it is no part of excommunication, nor the end of it, to deliver souls to Satan, but rather to deliver them from him. The phrase seems to be Jewish, and to express that extraordinary power the apostles had in those days, as well in giving up the bodies to Satan, for a temporal chastisement, as in delivering them from him. The Jews say, that Solomon had such a power; of whom they tell the following story^{f53}:

“one day he saw the angel of death grieving; he said to him, why grievest thou? he replied, these two Cushites have desired of me to sit here, “he delivered them to the devil”; the gloss is, these seek of me to ascend, for their time to die was come; but he could not take away their souls, because it was decreed concerning them, that they should not die but in the gate of Luz, μυρυ[ç]l hml ç whnyrsm “Solomon delivered them to the devils”, for he was king over them, as it is written, (~~<39D>~~1 Chronicles 29:12) for he reigned over them, that are above, and them that are below.”

The phrase is much the same as here, and the power which they, without any foundation, ascribe to Solomon, the apostles had: this is their rod which they used, sometimes in striking persons dead, sometimes by inflicting diseases on them themselves; and at other times by delivering them up into the hands of Satan to be afflicted and terrified by him, which is the case here. And it may be observed, that the giving up of Job into the hands of Satan, by the Lord, is expressed in the Septuagint version by the same word as here; for where it is said, (~~<8B6>~~Job 2:6) “behold, he is in thine hand”; that version renders it, “behold, παραδιδωμισοι αυτον, I deliver him to thee”, that is, to Satan; and which was done, that his body might be smote with sore boils by him, as it was; only his life was to be preserved, that he was not suffered to touch.

Ver. 6. *Your glorying is not good*, etc.] Their glorying in their outward flourishing condition, in their riches and wealth, and in their ministers, in their wisdom and parts when under such an humbling dispensation; and especially if their glorying was in the sin itself, and their connivance at it, it was far from being good, it was very criminal, as the consequence of it was dangerous:

know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? This, in nature, is what everybody knows; and the proverb, which is much used by the Jews ^{f54}, was common in the mouths of all, and the meaning of it easy to be understood: thus, whether applied to the leaven of false doctrine, nothing is more manifest, than when this is let alone, and a stop is not put to it, it increases to more ungodliness; or to vice and immorality, as here; which if not taken notice of by a church, is not faithfully reprov'd and severely censured, as the case requires, will endanger the whole community; it may spread by example, and, under the connivance of the church, to the corrupting of good manners, and infecting of many.

Ver. 7. *Purge out therefore the old leaven*, etc.]] Meaning either the incestuous person, whose crime might well be compared to sour “leaven”, and be called old because of his long continuance in it; whom the apostle would have removed from them; this is properly the act of excommunication, which that church was to perform, as a quite distinct thing from what the apostle himself determined to do. The allusion is to the strict search the Jews made ^{f55}, just before their passover after leaven, to purge their houses of it, that none of it might remain when their feast began; which they made by the light of a lamp, on the night of the fourteenth of the month Nisan, in every secret place, hole, and corner of the house: or this may be an exhortation to the church in general with respect to themselves, as well as this man, to relinquish their old course of sinning, to “put off concerning the former conversation the old man”, (~~402~~ Ephesians 4:22) the same with the old leaven here; it being usual with the Jews ^{f56} to call the vitiosity and corruption of nature *hsy[bç rwaç*, “leaven in the lump”; of which say ^{f57},

“the evil imagination of a man, as leaven the lump, enters into his bowels little, little, (very little at first,) but afterwards it increases in him, until his whole body is mixed with it.”

That ye may be a new lump; that they might appear to be what they professed to be, new men, new creatures in Christ, by their walking in newness of life; and by removing that wicked person, they would be as the apostles were, when Judas was gone from them, all clean through the word of Christ:

as ye are unleavened; at least professed to be. They were without the leaven of sin; not without the being of sin in their hearts, nor without the commission of it, more or less, in their lives; but were justified from it by the righteousness of Christ, and had the new creature formed in their souls, or that which was born of God in them, that sinned not. The apostle compares the true believers of this church to the unleavened bread eaten at the passover, for the grace of their hearts, and the simplicity of their lives; as he does the incestuous man to the old leaven, that was to be searched for, and cast out at the feast:

for even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. This is observed, to show the pertinency of the similes of leaven and unleavened, the apostle had made use of; and to make some further improvement of them, for the use,

comfort, and instruction of this church; saying, that Christ is “our passover”, the Christians’ passover; the Jewish passover was a type of Christ; wherefore Moses kept it by faith, in the faith of the Messiah that was to come; (see ^{<312>}Hebrews 11:28) as it was instituted in commemoration of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, so likewise to prefigure Christ, and the redemption of his people by him. The Jews have a saying ^{f58},

“that in the month Nisan they were redeemed, and in the month Nisan they will be redeemed;”

which was the month in which the passover was kept; and for the confirmation of which, they mention the following texts, (^{<3715>}Micah 7:15 ^{<2548>}Isaiah 54:8 ^{<1220>}Exodus 12:40). There is an agreement between the passover, and Christ, in the sacrifice itself, and the qualities of it; it was a “lamb”, as Christ is the “Lamb” of God, of his appointing and providing, and fitly so called, for his innocence and harmlessness, his meekness, humility, and patience; it was a lamb “without blemish”, as Christ is, without spot and blemish, without the spot of original sin, or blemish of any actual transgression: it was a male, as Christ is the son or man, the head of the body, and the “firstborn” among many brethren; it was a male of the first year; in which it might prefigure Christ in the flower of his age, arrived at man’s estate, and having had experience of a variety of sorrows and afflictions. There is also some likeness between them in the separation and slaying of it. The passover lamb was to be “taken out from the sheep, or from the goats”; as Christ’s human nature was chosen out from among the people, and, in God’s eternal counsel and covenant, separated from the rest of the individuals of human nature, and taken into a federal union with the Son of God, and preordained before the foundation of the world, to be the Lamb slain; it was also wonderfully formed by the Holy Ghost in the virgin’s womb, and separated and preserved from the infection of sin; and in his life and conversation here on earth, he was separated from sinners, from being like them, and is now made higher than the heavens. This lamb was kept up from the “tenth” of the month, to the “fourteenth”, before it was killed; which might typify preservation of Christ, in his infancy, from the malice of Herod, and, in his riper years, from the designs of the Jews upon him, until his time was come; and it is to be observed, that there was much such a space of time between his entrance into Jerusalem, and his sufferings and death; (see ^{<421>}John 12:11,12). The lamb was “slain”, so the Prince of life was killed; and “between the two evenings”, as Christ was in

the end of the world, in the last days, in the decline of time, of the age of the world, and even of the time of the day, about the “ninth” hour, or three o’clock in the afternoon, the time between the two evenings; the first evening beginning at noon as soon as the sun began to decline, the other upon the setting of it. There is likewise a comparison of these together to be observed, in the dressing and eating of it. The passover lamb was not to be eaten “raw nor sodden”; so Christ is to be eaten not in a carnal, but in a spiritual way, by faith; it was to be “roast with fire”, denoting the painful sufferings of Christ on the cross, and the fire of divine wrath that fell upon him; it was to be eaten “whole”, as a whole Christ is to be received by faith, in his person, and in all his offices, grace, and righteousness; not a “bone” of it was to be “broken”, which was fulfilled in Christ, (~~1~~ John 19:36) it was to be eaten “with unleavened bread”, which is spiritualized by the apostle in the next verse; and also with “bitter herbs”, expressive of the hard bondage and severe afflictions, with which the lives of the Israelites were made bitter in Egypt; and significative of the persecutions and trials that such must expect, who live godly and by faith in Christ Jesus: it was eaten only by Israelites, and such as became proselytes, as Christ, only by true believers; and if the household was too little, they were to join with their “neighbours”; which might typify the calling and bringing in of the Gentiles, when the middle wall of partition was broken down, Christ, his flesh and blood being common to both. The first passover was eaten in haste, with their loins girt, their shoes on, and staves in their hands, ready to depart from Egypt to Canaan’s land; denoting the readiness of believers to every good work; having their feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; their loins girt about with truth, their lights burning, and they like men waiting for their Lord’s coming; hastening unto the day of the Lord, being earnestly, desirous of being absent from the body, that they might be present with him: in a word, the receiving of the blood of the passover lamb into a bason, sprinkling it on the lintel, and two side posts of the doors of the houses, in which they ate it, which the Lord seeing passed over those houses, when he passed through Egypt to destroy the firstborn, whence it has its name of the passover, were very significative of the blood of sprinkling, even the blood of Christ upon the hearts and consciences of believers; whereby they are secured from avenging justice, from the curse and condemnation of the law, and from wrath to come, and shall never be hurt of the second death. Thus Christ is our antitypical passover, who was sacrificed, whose body and soul were offered as an offering and sacrifice unto God for us, that he might be proper food for our faith; and also in our

room and stead, to make satisfaction to divine justice for all our sins and transgressions.

Ver. 8. *Therefore let us keep the feast*, etc.] Not the feast of the passover, which was now ceased, though this is said in allusion to it; when the master of the house used to say ^{f59},

“everyone that is hungry, let him come and eat; he that hath need, let him come **j spyw**, “and paschatize”, or keep the feast of the passover:”

but rather the feast of the Lord’s supper is here meant, that feast of fat things Isaiah prophesied of; in which are the richest entertainments, even the flesh and blood of Christ; though it seems best to understand it of the whole course of a Christian’s life, spent in the exercise of spiritual joy and faith in Christ; he that is of a merry heart, as the believer of all men in the world has reason to be of, “hath a continual feast”, (^{Q1515}Proverbs 15:15) of spiritual mirth and pleasure, rejoicing always in Christ, as he ought to do: which feast, or course of life, is to be kept “not with old leaven”; in the old, vain, sinful manner of conversation, as before:

neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; not in malice to any man, or one another, nor in any sort of wickedness, living in no known sin, and allowing of it:

but with the unleavened bread of sincerity; as opposed to malice, of sincere love to God and Christ, and to his people: and of truth; of Gospel doctrine, discipline, and conversation.

Ver. 9. *I wrote unto you in an epistle*, etc.]. Not in this same epistle, and in (^{418D}1 Corinthians 5:2,7) as some think; for what is here observed is not written in either of those verses, but in some other epistle he had sent them before, as is clear from (^{418E}1 Corinthians 5:11) which either came not to hand, or else was neglected by them; and so what he here says may be considered as a reproof to them, for taking no notice of his advice; but continuing to show respect to the incestuous person, though he in a former epistle had advised them to the contrary: no doubt the apostle wrote other epistles to the Corinthians, besides those that are in being; (see ⁴⁷⁰⁰2 Corinthians 10:10, 11) nor does such a supposition at all detract from the perfection of Scripture; for not all that were written by him were by divine inspiration; and as many as were so, and were necessary for the perfection

of the canon of Scripture, and to instruct us in the whole counsel of God, have been preserved; nor is this any contradiction to this epistle's being his first to this church; for though it might not be his first to them, yet it is the first to them extant with us, and therefore so called: what he had written to them in another epistle was not

to company with fornicators; which he had not so fully explained, neither what fornicators he meant, nor what by keeping company with them; he therefore in this distinguishes upon the former, and enlarges his sense of the latter; declaring that they were not so much as to eat with such persons; which shows, that this prohibition does not regard unclean copulation, or a joining with them in the sin of fornication, they had been used to in a state of unregeneracy, for some sort of companying with fornicators is allowed of in the next verse; whereas no degree of a sinful mixture with them would ever be tolerated: but that it is to be understood of a civil society and familiar conversation with them; which might bring a reproach upon religion, be a stumbling to weak Christians, and be of dangerous consequence to themselves and others; who hereby might be allured and drawn by their example into the commission of the same sinful practices. The apostle seems to allude to the customs and usages of the Jews, who abstained from all civil commerce and familiar acquaintance with unbelievers. They say,

“that everyone that does not study in the law, *aj rwab hym [Ehml ç” kw atrwj s hyb db [ml w hybgl brqml rysa*, “it is forbidden to come near him, and to exercise merchandise with him, and much less to walk with him in the way”, because there is no faith in him^{f60}.”

Ver. 10. *Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world*, etc.] By “the fornicators of this world” are meant, such as were guilty of this sin, who were the men of the world, mere worldly carnal men, who were never called out of it, or ever professed to be; in distinction from those that were in the church, that had committed this iniquity; and the apostle's sense is, that his former prohibition of keeping company with fornicators was not to be understood as referring to such persons as were, out of the church, as if no sort of civil conversation and commerce were to be had with men of such, and the like infamous characters; or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters: that is, of this world; for this clause is to be understood of each of these; so we read^{f61} of *aml [d ^y [xb*, “the

covetous of the world”; by the covetous are meant, either such who are given up to inordinate lusts, who work all uncleanness with greediness, and can never be satisfied with their filthy enjoyments; or such who are greedily desirous of riches and wealth, and of increasing their worldly substance by any method, right or wrong; and who not only withhold that which is meet from others, but will not allow themselves what is proper and necessary: “extortioners” are either “ravishers”, as the word may be rendered: such who by force violate the chastity of others, youths or virgins; or robbers, who, by violence and rapine, take away that which is the right and property of others; or such who oppress the poor, detain their wages by fraud, or lessen them, and extort that by unlawful gain, which is unreasonable: idolaters are those who worship the false deities of the Heathens, or any idol, graven image, or picture of God, or men, or any creature whatsoever, or any but the one Lord God. The apostle, under these characters, comprises all manner of sin against a man’s self, against his neighbour, and against God; against himself, as fornication; against his neighbour, as covetousness and extortion; and against God, as idolatry: and since the world abounded with men guilty of these several vices, all kind of civil correspondence with them could not be avoided,

for then must you needs go out of the world; meaning not out of Greece, or of any of the cities thereof, into other parts, but out of the world itself; they must even destroy themselves, or seek out for a new world: it is an hyperbolical way of speaking, showing that the thing is impracticable and impossible, since men of this sort are everywhere; and were all trade and conversation with them to be forbidden, the families of God’s people could never be supported, nor the interest of religion maintained; a stop would soon be put to worldly business, and saints would have little or nothing to do in the world; wherefore, as the Arabic version reads it, “business would compel you to go out of the world”.

Ver. 11. *But now have I written unto you*, etc.] Which shows, that what he had written before was at another time, and in another epistle; but not that what he was now writing was different from the former, only he explains the persons of whom, and the thing about which he has before written:

not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator; or if any man that is a brother is called, or named a fornicator; or covetous, or an idolater; or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one, no, not to eat. The apostle’s meaning is, that in his

prohibition of keeping company with men of the above character, he would be understood of such persons as were called brethren; who had been received into the church, and had been looked upon, and had professed themselves to be such; and who might be mentioned by name, as notoriously guilty of fornication, covetousness, idolatry, and extortion, mentioned in the former verse; to which are added two other sins any of them might be addicted to, as “railing” either at their fellow brethren and Christians, or others giving reproachful language to them, and fixing invidious characters on them: and “drunkenness”; living in the frequent commission of that sin, and others before spoken of; and that such persons remaining impenitent and incorrigible, still persisting, in such a vicious course of life, after due admonition given them, were not only to be removed from their religious society, from the communion of the church, and be debarred sitting down, and eating with them at the Lord’s table, or at their love feasts, but also were to be denied civil conversation and familiarity with them, and even not suffered to eat common food at the same table with them: which though lawful to be used with the men of the world, yet for some reasons were not advisable to be used with such; partly for vindicating the honour of religion, and preventing the stumbling of the weak; and partly to make such offenders ashamed, and bring them to repentance. The apostle alludes to the behaviour of the Jews, either to persons that were under any pollution, as a woman in the days of her separation, when her husband *hm[I kay al* , “might not eat with her” off of the same plate, nor at the same table, nor on the same cloth; nor might she drink with him, nor mix his cup for him; and the same was observed to persons that had issues on them^{f62}: or rather to such as were under *ywdn*, “the sentence of excommunication”, and such an one was obliged to sit the distance of four cubits from others, and who might not eat nor drink with him; nor was he allowed to wash and shave himself, nor a sufficiency of food, nor any to sit with him within the space of four cubits, except those of his house^{f63}.

Ver. 12. *For what have I to do to judge*, etc.] To admonish, reprove, censure, and condemn:

them also that are without? without the church, who never were in it, or members of it; to whom ecclesiastical jurisdiction does not reach; and with whom the apostle had no more concern, than the magistrates of one city, or the heads of one family have with another:

do not ye judge them that are within? and them only? The apostle appeals to their own conduct, that they only reprov'd, censur'd, and punish'd with excommunication, such as were within the pale of the church, were members of it, and belong'd unto it; nor did they pretend to exercise a power over others; and it would have been well if they had made use of the power they had over their own members, by admonishing and reprov'g such as had sinn'd; by censur'g delinquents, and removing from their communion scandalous and impenitent offenders; and therefore they need not wonder that the apostle only meant fornicators, etc. among them, and not those that were in the world, by his forbidding to company with such: reference seems to be had to ways of speaking among the Jews, who used not only to call themselves the church, and the Gentiles the world, and so them that were without, both their land and church; but even those among themselves that were profane, in distinction from their wise and good men. They say ^{f64},

“if a man puts his phylacteries on his forehead, or upon the palm of his hand, this is the way of heresy (or, as in the Talmud ^{f65}, the way of the Karaites); if he cover'd them with gold, and put them upon his glove (or on his garments without, so Bartenora, or, as Maimonides interprets it, his arm, shoulder, or breast), lo, this is μυνωxyj h Aerd, “the way of them that are without”.”

on which the commentators ^{f66} say, “these are the children of men, who walk after their own judgment, and not the judgment of the wise men”: and Maimonides ^{f67} says, they are such who deny the whole law, and neither believe anything, either of the written or the oral law.

Ver. 13. *But them that are without God judgeth*, etc.] Or “will judge”, in the great day of judgment; wherefore though such persons did not fall under the censures and punishment of the apostle, nor of a church of Christ, yet they shall not go unpunish'd; God will call them to an account for their fornication, covetousness, idolatry, extortion, etc. and will judge, condemn, and punish them, according to their works; and therefore since they do not fall under the cognizance of the churches of Christ, they are to be left to the tribunal of God; and all that the saints have to do is to watch over one another, and reprove, rebuke, and censure, as cases require, and as the case of this church did.

Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person; not that wicked thing, as some read it, but that wicked one; meaning not the devil, who is sometimes so called; a sense of the words proposed by Calvin, not asserted; but that wicked man, that, incestuous person, whom the apostle would have removed from among them, by excommunication; which was what became them as a church to do, and which lay in their power to do, and could only be done by them, and was to be their own pure act and deed: reference seems to be had to those passages in (⁽⁵⁷⁰⁾Deuteronomy 17:7 21:21 22:21 24:7) where the Septuagint render the phrase, **εξαρεις τον πονερον εξ υμων αυτων**, “thou shalt put away that wicked one among yourselves”.