

THE HARD SIDE OF HOLINESS 1 Corinthians 5:9 - 6:11

Warren Wiersbe finds four similarities between yeast and sin:

1. It may be small, but it's potent.
2. It works secretly.
3. It creates corruption.
4. It spreads.

OUR FATHER IS HOLY, AND HE TELLS HIS FAMILY TO LIVE IN THE WORLD WITHOUT BECOMING LIKE IT.

I. BE CAREFUL OF YOUR ASSOCIATIONS. (5:9-12)

- A. "Do not associate with sexually immoral people."
- B. What does it mean?
- 1) Separation is not isolation from the world. (v. 10)
 - 2) Separation is an expectation within God's family.

Six specific lifestyles that are of concern:

"Calling oneself a Christian while continuing to live an immoral life is reprehensible and degrading, and gives a false testimony to Christ. If the true Christian has intimate association with someone who does this, the non-Christian world may assume that the church approves such immoral, ungodly living and thus the name of Christ would be dishonored." (NIV Study Bible note)

That's the hard side of holiness: be careful about who you associate with.

II. BE AGREEABLE TO SETTLE DISPUTES IN GOD'S FAMILY. (6:1-8)

- A. Problem: God's children were seeking legal remedy for petty offenses.

So what? What if they went to court? Four results:

- 1) It degraded their testimony. (vv. 1, 6)
- 2) It exposed their greed. (v. 8)
- 3) It dishonored their position. (vv. 2-5a)
- 4) It defeated their case anyway. (v. 7)

B. Proposal:

- 1) Settle with arbitration. (v. 5b)
- 2) Suffer loss if necessary. (v. 7)

Basic problem: demanding their own rights rather than yielding them to God.

Question: IS IT ALWAYS WRONG FOR A BELIEVER TO GO TO COURT?

Four guidelines (Charles Swindoll):

- 1) When the dispute with a fellow Christian is not related to the local church.
- 2) When the motive is not pride (or greed) but justice.
- 3) When the issue does not bring shame to the church of Jesus Christ in the eyes of the world.
- 4) When you are absolutely confident that it is the will of God...and have complete peace in the inner-person.

That's the hard side of holiness: settle disputes whenever possible outside of court, even if it means loss.

III. BE MINDFUL OF THE KINGDOM TO WHICH YOU BELONG. (6:9-11)

- A. The lifestyle of one who is in the kingdom of darkness:

Specific but partial list of lifestyle dominating sins (same as 5:11, but with four additions that expand it).

- 1) adulterers
- 2) male prostitutes
- 3) homosexual offenders
- 4) thieves

- B. The transformation of one who is in the kingdom of God. "Some of you WERE ... BUT ..."

- 1) "you were washed."
- 2) "you were sanctified."
- 3) "you were justified."

The hard side of holiness: God's children no longer practice the patterns of the past as a lifestyle.

OUR FATHER CALLS ME AS A CHILD IN HIS FAMILY TO COME OUT OF THE WORLD SO THAT I CAN GO BACK TO THE DARK KINGDOM AS LIGHT.