

Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 221 – August 9th – 1 Corinthians 5:1-13

Works frequently referenced in these notes on 1 Corinthians

John Drane	<i>Paul</i> , Lion Publishing, Berkhamstead, 1976
Leon Morris	<i>The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians</i> , Tyndale New Testament Commentary, 2 nd Ed., IVP, Leicester, 1985
Anthony C Thistleton	<i>The First Epistle to the Corinthians</i> , The New International Greek Testament Commentary, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 2000

Chapters 5&6

"Chapters 5 and 6 expound what for Paul constitute clear-cut moral and ethical issues. In this respect this main block stands in contrast to the material in 7:1-11:1, which no less concerns matters of ethics, but in the latter case 'grey areas' where much depends on situations and circumstances." Thistleton.

On the contemporary relevance of these chapters Thistleton writes, "The issue of community boundaries and of the dialectic between 'mixed' church and church discipline as a condition for the corporate identity of the church as Christ's body remains as relevant today as ever it was, as can also be perceived in the history of interpretation. How do they retain a corporate identity as God's holy temple (3:16) and Christ's body (12:27) without manifesting an exclusiveness not characteristic of Christ's own identity?"

Verse 1

Ὅπως ἀκούεται ἐν ὑμῖν πορνεία, καὶ τοιαύτη πορνεία ἣτις οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, ὥστε γυναῖκά τινα τοῦ πατρὸς ἔχειν.

ὅπως adv actually

The passive ἀκούεται suggests continuing oral report.

πορνεία, ας f sexual immorality
 τοιοῦτος, αὐτῆ, οὗτον pronoun and adj. such,
 of such kind, similar, like
 ὅστις, ἣτις, ὅτι who, which
 οὐδὲ neither, nor, not even
 ἔθνεσιν Noun, dat pl ἔθνος, οὗς n nation,
 people; τα ἔ. Gentiles

Requires the addition of an implied verb e.g. 'such as is *not tolerated* even among the Gentiles'

ὥστε so that, with the result that

"His father's wife probably does not mean 'his mother', else Paul would have said so. But whether it means that the offender had seduced his step-mother, or that she was divorced from his father, or that the father had died leaving a widow, is not clear. What is quite clear is that an illicit union of a particularly unsavoury kind had been contracted." Morris

Chow and Clark (cited by Thistleton) suggest that the culprit was a significant patron of the church at Corinth and that this *marriage* secured access to family assets from which the Corinthians had enjoyed benefit – maybe even property in which the church met.

ἔχειν denotes a continuing relationship

Verse 2

καὶ ὑμεῖς πεφουσιωμένοι ἐστέ, καὶ οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἐπενθήσατε, ἵνα ἀρθῇ ἐκ μέσου ὑμῶν ὁ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο ποιήσας;

πεφουσιωμένοι Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom pl
 φουσιω see 4:18

"A significant body of opinion in Corinth (cf. 6:12ff.) thought that this was rather a fine assertion of Christian liberty, of emancipation from Jewish Law and Gentile convention alike." Bruce

Paul therefore addresses two problems:

- The immoral act of the person concerned;
- The corporate sin of the church in accepting and tolerating this situation.

οὐχὶ (emphatic form of οὐ) not, no; used in questions expecting an affirmative answer.

μᾶλλον adv rather, instead

πενθεω mourn, be sad, grieve over

"The first aorist indicative ἐπενθησατε is likely to carry the nuance of a past act (ingressive) of entering into a state of mourning." Thistleton

ἀρθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s αἶρω take,
 take away, set aside

Thistleton suggests "a formal state of mourning would stamp the life and worship of the church objectively and publicly in a way which would thereby make it intolerable for the offender to remain, and would then in all probability have made his own choice to leave (or to change his lifestyle). He would know that he had blighted the church's life."

μεσος, η, ον middle
πράξας Verb, aor act ptc, m acc s πρασσω
practice, do

Most minuscules read ποιησας rather than πραξας. Regarding the balance of probabilities Thistleton concludes "the issue is finely balanced and of little material substance."

Verse 3

Ἐγὼ μὲν γάρ, ἀπὸν τῷ σώματι παρὼν δὲ τῷ πνεύματι, ἤδη κέκρικα ὡς παρὼν τὸν οὕτως τοῦτο κατεργασάμενον

ἐγω μεν an emphatic contrast with και ὑμεεις of v.2.

ἀπων Verb, pres ptc, m nom s ἀπειμι be
away, be absent
σωμα, τος η noun body
παρων Verb, pres ptc, m nom s παρειμι be
present

Thistleton follows Fee in suggesting that the reference is to the Holy Spirit. "Paul does not express a mind-body contrast as such, but uses τῷ πνεύματι to refer primarily to the Holy Spirit, even if there is a secondary allusion to πνευμα as the human self in its capacity to be open to the Spirit. It is in the power of the Holy Spirit that Paul is present, as one who integrally forms part of the one holy temple at Corinth which is threatened with defilement and destruction ... but is sanctified by the common bond of the Spirit, who indwells the corporate body."

ἤδη adv now, already

ὡς παρων 'as one who is present' Fee

κέκρικα Verb, perf act indic, 1 s κρινω
judge, pass judgement on, condemn

"The perfect indicative active κέκρικα I pronounce judgement, implies that Paul has already (ἤδη) reached a settled public verdict, as part of the community, upon the man (τον with the participle) who has perpetrated such an act." Thistleton

κατεργασάμενον Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m acc s κατεργαζομαι do, bring about

Verse 4

ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ, συναχθέντων ὑμῶν καὶ τοῦ ἐμοῦ πνεύματος σὺν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ,

ὄνομα, τος η name, person, authority

'In the name of the Lord Jesus' probably belongs with the later verb παραδουναί (v.5) rather than with συναχθέντων. It may be that it qualifies both in the sense that it is the name of the Lord Jesus that gives authority to the assembly and its decisions/actions.

συναχθέντων Verb, aor pass ptc, gen pl
συναγω gather, gather together
δυνάμει Noun, dat s δυναμις

'with the power of the Lord Jesus' probably belongs with συναχθέντων. "The apostle is there in spirit and the Lord Jesus is there in power." Morris – Though note the comment of Thistleton on the previous verse.

Verse 5

παραδοῦναι τὸν τοιοῦτον τῷ Σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῆ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου.

παραδοῦναι Verb, aor act infin παραδιδωμι
hand over, deliver up
τοιουτος see v.1

"The idea underlying this is that outside the Church is the sphere of Satan (Eph 2:12; Col 1:13; 1 Jn 5:19). To be expelled from the Church of Christ is to be delivered over into that region where Satan holds sway." Morris

ὄλεθρος, ου m destruction, ruin
σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human nature

"What is to be destroyed is arguably not primarily the physical body of the offender (although this may or may not be secondarily entailed) but the 'fleshly' stance of self-sufficiency of which Paul accuses primarily the community but surely also the man... If consigning to Satan means excluding him from the community, this spells the end of self-congratulation about their association with such a distinguished patron; while for the offender himself sudden removal from a platform of adulation to total isolation from the community would have a sobering if not devastating effect." Thistleton

σωθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s σωζω save

Thistleton argues that "the salvific purposes embrace both the community and the man." He continues, "I concede that this makes the translation of το πνευμα difficult... After some deliberation I have left the word as it stands: in order that the spirit may be saved leaves open, as the Greek does, whether Paul means the *stance of the man, the man under the mode of his openness to God, the stance of the church, the animating principle of the church* (which would not be characteristic of Paul, but no writer need always use terms 'characteristically'), or simply *that mode of being of the community and the man which is purged of its fleshly, self-sufficient complacency*. Cambier sees πνευμα as characterising 'the whole person' here. Only the exegetical context can determine the semantic boundaries and reference of πνευμα here."

The idea of a curse judgement (possibly ending in death as in the case of Ananias and Saphira) is to be rejected.

Verse 6

Οὐ καλὸν τὸ καύχημα ὑμῶν. οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι μικρὰ ζύμη ὅλον τὸ φύραμα ζυμοῖ;

καυχῆμα, τοσ n boasting, pride

'Your self-satisfaction is ill-placed.'

οὐκ οἴδατε seems here to introduce a well-known proverb or metaphor (cf. Gal 5:9).

ζυμη, ης f yeast

Mitton makes much of the distinction between leaven and yeast – leaven is a bit of the old batch kept back and added to the new. Thistleton, citing Mitton's work says, "Sometimes leaven is used as a symbol of dynamic vitality and as a source of unstoppable effects disproportionate to its size (e.g. Matt 13:33); sometimes it signifies the consequences of these qualities when it has become tainted. Paul sees the disastrous consequences of letting the church become distorted and misshaped by a tainting element which permeates the whole, and calls for a reshaping based solely on the 'new,' unleavened bread of the Passover, namely; the body of Christ which absorbed sin and perished on the cross, to be raised as a new bodily reality the likeness of which gave identity and shape to the church. Hence Mitton concludes, any 'infected' piece no longer has any influence on the new batch, and through death and resurrection with Christ 'the new quality of life awakened in the heart of the new believer' prevails."

όλος, η, ον whole, all, complete, entire

φύραμα, τοσ n lump

ζυμοω cause to rise, 'leaven'

"Paul calls attention to the unstoppable, spreading, disastrous influence on the nature and identity of the whole community which is out of all proportion to what those who were self-satisfied evidently imagined could spring from a 'little' case of one immoral relationship, even if one of an utterly outrageous nature." Thistleton

Verses 7-8

"These two verses are full of fundamental theology, which provides the basis for ecclesiology and ethics." Thistleton

Verse 7

ἐκκαθάρατε τὴν παλαιὰν ζύμην, ἵνα ἦτε νέον φύραμα, καθὼς ἐστε ἄζυμοι. καὶ γὰρ τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν ἐτύθη Χριστός·

ἐκκαθάρατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl

ἐκκαθαίρω clean out, make clean

παλαιος, α, ον old, former

νεος, α, ον new, fresh, young

ἄζυμος, ον without yeast

This is their true identity. They are to be what they are by putting away that which they are not.

πάσχα n Passover, Passover meal, Passover lamb

ἐτύθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s θυω

slaughter, sacrifice, kill

"The Christian church is not just the old society patched up. It is radically new ... Christ has put away sin by his death. He has made them to be unleavened." Morris
The new life is founded on Christ as "the passover lamb... the symbol of the Messiah who was sacrificed as the unblemished lamb. The leaven which is removed from all of the houses during the night of Nisan 13/14 is the symbol of the evil and wickedness which characterise the old world. The unleavened bread is interpreted eschatologically ... as the purity and truth which characterise the new world (1 Cor 5:8), and as new dough they symbolise the redeemed community (1 Cor 5:7a)." Jeremias

"In Jewish traditions, partly through an interpretative reading of Zeph 1:12, the purging of the house of all leaven was understood as a symbol of moral purification, with candles to look into corners. By analogy, the church is to clean out what defiles its identity and purity. Especially in view of the first person plural in v.8, Chrysostom and many others interpret the old leaven as applying more broadly than to the offender alone, although certainly including the offender." Thistleton

Verse 8

ὥστε ἐορτάζωμεν, μὴ ἐν ζύμῃ παλαιᾷ μηδὲ ἐν ζύμῃ κακίας καὶ πονηρίας, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀζύμοις εἰλικρινείας καὶ ἀληθείας.

ὥστε so that, with the result that
ἐορτάζω observe a festival

The present tense implies that the Christian life is like a continuing festival – continually living out the reality of having a part in Christ's death and risen life. "Our passover feast is not for a week, but for a lifetime." Godet
Though some suggest that Paul may have been writing at passover time.

παλαιος, α, ον old, former
μηδε negative particle nor, and not, not even
κακια, ας evil, wickedness
πονηρια, ας f evil, wickedness, evil intention

'Not with the leaven that ferments wickedness and evil' (Thistleton)

εἰλικρινεια, ας f sincerity

'transparency of motive', hence, 'purity.'

ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality

Verse 9

Ἐγραψα ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι πόρνοις,
ἐπιστολη, ης f letter

"Some have understood '*I wrote*' as an epistolary aorist, in which case it would refer to the letter now being written. But there seems little in favour of this, and it is better to see a reference to an earlier letter, now lost." Morris

συναναμιγνυμι associate with, have dealings with
πορνος, ου m man who practices sexual immorality

Verse 10

οὐ πάντως τοῖς πόρνοις τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἢ τοῖς πλεονέκταις καὶ ἄρπαξιν ἢ εἰδωλολάτραις, ἐπεὶ ὠφείλετε ἄρα ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου ἐξελεθεῖν.

παντως by all means, in all circumstances

Is the sense of οὐ πάντως here 'not altogether', 'not entirely' or 'not at all' (NIV)? Thistleton thinks the latter, translating the phrase 'in no way does this refer to people in secular society who ...'

πλεονεκτης, ου m one who greedy or covetous

The vices Paul lists correspond with the characteristics of Corinthian society. "Many at Corinth were obsessed with the *ambition to achieve*, i.e., to *gain more* social status, power, or wealth." Thistleton

ἄρπαξιν Adjective, dat pl ἄρπαξ, αγος
grasping, greedy

Perhaps particularly 'swindler' or one who practices extortion. "Someone who kicks others down the ladder in order to advance upwards." Thistleton

εἰδωλολατρης, ου m idolater

Cf. 8:1-11:1 where Paul addresses the issue of idolatry at Corinth.

ἐπει since, because, for
ὀφειλω owe, ought, must

Rosner argues that Paul is making use of Deuteronomic material (cf. Deut 22:21; 17:3,7; 24:27). The list of vices is to be interpreted in terms of Deuteronomic covenant identity and covenant obligation.

Verse 11

νῦν δὲ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι ἐάν τις ἀδελφὸς ὀνομαζόμενος ἢ πόρνος ἢ πλεονέκτης ἢ εἰδωλολάτρης ἢ λοιδορὸς ἢ μέθυσος ἢ ἄρπαξ, τῷ τοιοῦτῳ μηδὲ συνεσθίειν.

νυν δε ἔγραψα This is more likely to be an epistolary aorist (so Thistleton), but even here Morris argues for a simple past tense saying, "The sense will be, 'But now (you see) I wrote ...'" Morris

ἐαν if, even if, though
ὀνομαζω name, call; pass be known
ἢ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἰμι
λοιδορος, ου m slanderer

"Here he refers to people who cannot open their mouths without putting others down in a way *which causes hurt* and implies a *scornful, superior attitude* on the part of the speaker.

This can become a habitual style of communication which betrays self-importance and insensitivity, and escalates pain into grievance and a legitimate desire to withdraw from verbal communication on the part of the person to whom the abuse is directed."

Thistleton

μεθυσος, ου m drunkard

"λοιωρος and μεθυσος, drunkard, occur in Deut 19:19 and 20:20-21, where they characterise people who excluded themselves from the covenant community as the holy people of God. Both on theological grounds of the corporate identity of the community and on pastoral grounds of what might cause the community to disintegrate, Paul draws a boundary which defines these qualities as belonging to 'outsiders,' not to Christians, at least as habitual characterisations of their conduct. Drunkenness not only repels others from the company of the drunkard; in turn it may lead to verbal and even to physical abuse. It excludes the possibility of respect and concern for the welfare of others while it holds sway. But ἀγαπη, *respect, regard, love*, for others is a hallmark of Christian identity. What is said about drunkenness in the literature of first-century Judaism places more emphasis on the unacceptable behaviour to which it gives rise than to the consumption of alcohol in itself." Thistleton

τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον *such, of such kind*

"These vices are ... listed as *characteristics*, or *continuous practices*, as against lapses from which the offender subsequently turns away." Thistleton

μηδε negative particle *nor, not even*
 συνεσθιω *eat with*

"The detailed application of this injunction is not easy. But the principle is plain. There is to be no close fellowship with anyone who claims to be a Christian, but whose life belies his profession." Morris

Verse 12

τί γάρ μοι τοὺς ἔξω κρίνειν; οὐχὶ τοὺς ἔσω ὑμεῖς κρίνετε,

τι γαρ μοι 'what business of mine is it'

ἔξω *out, outside*; ὁ ἔξω *outsider, unbeliever*

κρινω here in the sense not of make moralistic judgements (which Paul clearly did) but 'formulate a verdict'.

οὐχι (emphatic form of οὐ) *not, no*; used in questions expecting an affirmative answer.
 ἔσω *inside, within*; ὁ ἔσω *one inside the church, believer*

"The disclaimer about outsiders makes sense only as a way of understanding the importance of responsible household rules for those inside. Once this has been established, Paul adds that if people wonder about those outside, outsiders do not escape responsibility for their lifestyles; they have God as their judge, but it is not for the church to try to impose its corporate house rules upon them. This does not imply that the church should keep silent about what God has ordained for the welfare of humanity. But it places its imposition of 'rules of conduct' for the internal affairs of the church and the external affairs of the world on a different footing. Against the laissez-faire, consumerist culture of today, Paul asserts that to become part of the Christian community is explicitly to place oneself under the discipline of a Christian lifestyle." Thistleton

Verse 13

τοὺς δὲ ἔξω ὁ θεὸς κρίνει; ἐξάρατε τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν.

κρινεῖ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s κρινω
 ἐξάρατε Verb, aor imperat, 2 pl ἐξαιρω
remove, drive out

πονηρος, α, ον *evil, bad, wicked*

Cf. Deut 17:7. They are to safeguard the identity and purity of the covenant community.