

Repairers

You shall be called the Repairer of the Breach (Isa 58:12)

To Those who Refuse to Judge

I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. For *what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge?* God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you." ... Do you not know that the *saints will judge the world?* And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? *Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life!* So if you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who have no standing in the church? I say this to your shame. *Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers, but brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers?* (1 Cor 5:9–13, 6:2–6 emphasis added)

1.

If a person calls him or herself a brother in Christ, but has deeds worthy of condemnation—is greedy, a swindler, an idolater, sexually immoral, a drunkard—the person is to be judged by the assembly and if the person is without a justifiable excuse (the weakness of the flesh is an excuse that on occasion can be valid), the person is to be removed from the assembly, the person delivered to the Adversary for the destruction of the flesh (1 Cor 5:1–5). However, the nature of the assembly is an unsolved, unresolved problem; for Paul also writes in this same epistle,

But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. (1 Cor 11:17–19)

If there were divisions among the holy ones at Corinth, divisions necessary so that those who are genuine might be recognized ... recognized by whom? Who is the

determiner of genuine disciples? Who is the person or persons with this sort of authority within a fellowship without hierarchal authority? Does the congregation “vote” on who is genuine and who isn’t? What if those who are not genuine outnumber those who are? If this were the case—and this now is the case within greater Christendom—then false disciples can exclude genuine disciples from fellowships, as was apparently happening when John wrote his third epistle:

I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, *he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.* Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God. (3 John vv. 9–11 emphasis added)

Those who would have authority in Christian assemblies have assumed that authority on their own, with all authority in this present world coming through the Adversary, the Prince of this world, even if that authority originates with God, Father and Son. Therefore, no hierarchal authority in any denomination, sect, or cult is of God, said without a qualifier; for any authoritative agent—person or administration—would stand as a human agent between the disciple and Christ. The preceding sentence is important, and perhaps the most important of what will be written. For a person in this present era that goes back to the Apostle Paul has a teacher that serves as a spiritual father to the person, but not as a priest, not as a judge. The one who teaches brings knowledge to the disciple but does not stand between the disciple and Christ Jesus. Following the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel, all will be taught by God (Isa 54:13); all will have the Law written on hearts and placed in minds so that all will know the Lord (Jer 31:31–34; Heb 8:8–12). No person will stand between the believing disciple and Christ Jesus. Even today, no one can so stand. Many have tried, and in this world, many have succeeded because they have morphed the role of being the disciple’s spiritual father into being the disciple’s priest. The positions are not the same. To make them the same, many have usurped authority they did not, do not have in their sometimes powerful, more often feeble attempts to insert themselves where they do not belong. And the most egregious example is that of the Roman Pontiff [the Bishop of Rome], who uses as his second title *Vicarius Christi*, Vicar of Christ, the phrase carrying as its original notion the *earthly representative of Christ ...* the Bishop of Rome admits that he considers himself the earthly representative of God, therefore a human person standing between the disciple and God, Father and Son.

The presumptive ecclesiastical authority claimed by the Bishop of Rome, or by any other Christian theologian or leader [including the authority of being “Pastor General” claimed by Herbert W. Armstrong] comes from the addendum chapter of John’s Gospel:

Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after He was raised from the dead. When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed

my lambs." He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to Him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." (This He said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this He said to him, "Follow me." (John 21:13–19)

Peter did what Jesus commanded him to do in writing his two epistles, the first by the hand of Silvanus (1 Pet 5:12), and his second epistle probably by his own hand. For Peter was a fisherman, the son of a fisherman. He would have been, at the time Jesus called him, illiterate. But it is unlikely that he remained illiterate even though he apparently used John Mark as his interpreter when speaking to non-Aramaic-speaking audiences. And if he used John Mark as his interpreter, he would have also used John Mark to teach him to write the Greek language, thereby permitting him later in life to write in rough Greek, which is how Peter's Second Epistle reads ... there is so much difference in language usage between Peter's First Epistle and his Second Epistle that a significant portion of the early Church did not believe Peter's Second Epistle was genuine and therefore resisted its canonization. For Peter in his Second Epistle espoused a differing endtime scenario than John says in his vision, the Book of Revelation. However, John's vision came perhaps two decades after Peter wrote what he understood about the end of the age: John's vision disclosed new knowledge that was not intended for the 1st-Century Christian Church, even the seven named assemblies.

Jesus' command to Peter to feed His lambs, tend His sheep, feed His sheep was for Peter to do, not for anyone else to do. Thus, when Peter wrote his two epistles, Peter fulfilled the command given him. He fulfilled the task assigned him, except for how he was to die. So what was passed to the next generation were the two epistles, not authority to invoke Peter's commission by other men. Peter did not have the authority to pass his commission on to someone else. If he would have had this authority, he wouldn't have written any epistles. So to use Jesus telling Peter to feed His lambs in the addendum chapter to John's Gospel is a misuse of the Gospel.

Christ Jesus doesn't change (Heb 13:8), but cultures change. The world as a living organism changes. And God's relationship with the world changes. Therefore, God interacts with human persons through differing covenants, with earthly covenants extending from one shedding of blood to the next shedding of blood. Heavenly or spiritual covenants are not ratified by the shedding of blood but by better promises, such as the rainbow or the glory of God shining from the face of Moses or the song Moses required the children of Israel to memorize before they crossed the Jordan and entered the Promised Land.

As the world and its cultures change, God reveals additional information to His sons ... it would have done no good for God to disclose to 1st-Century disciples that the moon has no significant atmosphere when no human person understood anything about the

earth's atmosphere—and this is a physical thing that can today be understood by any thinking person. Humanity had to intellectually mature as a species before God could reveal by realization that the Genesis “P” creation account is not about the physical creation of the world but about the spiritual creation of sons of God, formed in the spiritual image and likeness of God, Father and Son.

God has waited a long time for humanity [*Homo s. sapiens*] to intellectually mature enough that He could begin to close out the demonstration begun when iniquity was found in an anointed cherub. He is still waiting. But His wait is about over. For when humanity can get no farther away from God, the midnight hour of the one long spiritual night that began at Calvary will be upon humanity: the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel from bondage to indwelling Sin and Death will happen. And in a day, roughly a third of humanity, all biological or legal firstborns not covered by the blood of Christ will perish. And because only firstborns that by their birth order already belong to God will perish, thinking man will realize that a higher power, a greater intellect than man exists and has intervened in the affairs of mankind.

The proof that there is a God will come when people realize that the two-plus billion people that perished in a day were all firstborns ... that is not today information stored by the NSA or by Google. People are not today categorized by birth-order. They are categorized by birth names, by dates of birth, by tattoos and birthmarks, by vocations, by ancestry [DNA], by assigned employment numbers [Social Security numbers], by health records, even by gun ownership in much of the world. They are categorized by the number of years of schooling, by income, by credit rating, but not by birth order. So far, no data base exists that identifies all firstborns, except with God who has a priority claim on the lives of all who open the womb: firstborns belong to Him. They must be redeemed or He can take their lives without cause. And since Calvary, firstborns are redeemed by the fleshly person taking the Passover sacraments of blessed and broken unleavened bread and drinking from the blessed cup on the dark portion of the 14th day of the first month, this first month beginning with the first sighted new moon crescent following the spring equinox wherever the person lives, meaning that earthly Jerusalem no longer has spiritual importance. It is heavenly Jerusalem that has importance, and it is the indwelling firstborn son of God that has importance.

If an electro-magnetic pulse were to strike the earth, the modern world would be returned to the 18th-Century. If the pulse were strong enough and if it were repeated (such as coming from solar flares) as the earth rotated on its axis, the industrialized world would cease to exist, and perhaps a third part of humanity would perish over a few weeks or months as cities run out of food, water, and transportation. But the cause of this massive loss of life would be known and understood. And death would not be selective, but centered in areas where the means for supporting life failed ... the Second Passover liberation of Israel will not be a catastrophe of this sort. The means of production will not be harmed: production can continue if there are people able to operate systems whose operators were firstborns. Governments, however, will collapse because of the number of firstborns by their birth-order-natures that have gravitated to positions of civil power. So what will be seen is that humanity cannot continue to govern itself, and economic as well as social collapse will occur. Babylon [the administration of

the Adversary] will fall, but not before the Adversary does his best to take humanity down with him.

Human governance is not a complicated matter, but at the human level, one size doesn't fit all ... in 1982 and 1983, two veterinarian students from Denmark arrived on Kodiak Island to fish for salmon. These two had spent their previous three summer vacations in Norway fishing for salmon and hadn't even had a bite. So when they initially caught a pink salmon nearly every cast and at least one silver an hour, they were elated.

I ferried these two Danes from one river drainage to another on several occasions. We talked. They were good fishermen, but they said Alaskans were poor fishermen: Alaskans would stop at a river, make three casts, and if they didn't catch anything, they would get back in their vehicles and go to the next river or stream where they would make three more casts and were then off to another river. I knew the tendency for I tended to fish a hole then move on to another hole. I knew that the first person to make a decent presentation to the fish in a hole caught fish, that fighting a salmon in a hole caused the salmon to emit chemicals that turned off the bite in that hole. So I had to consider how persistent I was to continue fishing a hole when not catching anything. I wasn't all that persistent. There were too many places to fish to stay in one location for long.

But what impressed these two Danes the most was how a country as large as the United States could function with as little "government" as existed; could function as a representational democracy. They could understand democracy working on a small scale as in a tiny country or in a church congregation, but in a country as large as the United States, how, they wondered, could democracy not become mob rule? How could democracy not be exploited by politicians pandering to the lowest common denominator of the public? And I told them that democracy in the United States had been compromised more than most Americans realized: I told them about Blue Laws that still existed in Oregon when I was in high school, and how Seventh Day Adventist business owners had fought to get them repealed so that they could conduct business on Sunday. I told them about Fair Trade laws that had prevented me (because I wouldn't sign Fair Trade Agreements) when I had a gunshop in Oregon from selling firearms at any price but the manufactures' retail price ... I thought the United States had too much government and could do with a great deal less governmental interference in the day by day operation of under-capitalized small businesses. The free market needed to be "free," not tilted to favor established businesses over start-ups.

Coming out of the 1950s and going into the 1960s, American democracy had been exploited by politicians pandering to big businesses, the military-industrial complex about which President Eisenhower had warned Americans. But Johnson's War on Poverty added a new audience for pandering politicians, the urban poor, voters who could be "milked" in the way the two Danes saw voters milked in their own country.

Democracy is rule from the bottom up. If the bottom is moral, self-reliant, industrious, democracy works, or at least works until the people realize they can "vote" themselves money from the public coffers ... the temptation to not vote for their own interests is more than any democratic society has so far overcome, with Bernie Sanders'

presidential campaign focusing on exploiting the human desire for equality of outcome, not opportunity.

But returning to what Paul wrote about there must be schisms in any fellowship to identify who is genuine and the question, what if there are more false members than genuine disciples? Do these genuine disciples that have been put out of fellowships of false “Christians” then begin new fellowships that will not be recognized as legitimate by false Christians? And if a fellowship of genuine disciples “marks” a swindler who calls himself a brother, will the fellowships of false members recognize this marking? That question can be answered from field evidence; from what happened at Port Austin, Michigan, in 2004 ... fellowships of false members, not believing they are false, will not recognize the authority of genuine disciples.

Democracy even within assemblies of genuine disciples doesn’t work; for returning to what Paul wrote to the holy ones at Corinth:

Your boasting [of tolerance and love] is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (1 Cor 5:6–8)

Tolerance of sin has limits. Love of the sinner while hating the sin has limits. And there needs to be an adult in the assembly of believers who is able to say (and to be heard) that the transgressions of the one who calls himself a brother cannot continue inside a fellowship of believers ... for the assembly at Corinth, Paul, though physically absent from this assembly, was that adult.

But Paul didn’t really have authority inside the assembly at Corinth; for he writes,

This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful. *But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court.* In fact, I do not even judge myself. For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God. (1 Cor 4:1–5 emphasis added)

Apparently, the assembly of holy ones at Corinth was judging Paul by a yardstick seen only darkly in Paul’s epistle, which isn’t the first that he wrote to this assembly: “*I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people*” (1 Cor 5:9 emphasis added) ... 1st-Corinthians isn’t Paul’s first epistle [letter] to the church at Corinth; so the context for the canonized book, 1st Corinthians, cannot be fully known or appreciated. But the context must have had something to do with supporting Paul and his entourage; for Paul also wrote,

I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may learn by us *not to go beyond what is written*, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another. For who sees anything different in you? **What do you have that you did not**

receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it? Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign, so that we might share the rule with you! For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things. I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, ***you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.*** I urge you, then, be imitators of me. (1 Cor 4:6–16 emphasis and double emphasis added)

Do not go beyond what is written—written where and by whom? By Paul in the missing epistle that he wrote to the saints at Corinth, the one he references in chapter 5, verse 9? Apparently so. For if Paul had written to these saints something about loving the sinner while hating the sin, these saints would have gone beyond what Paul wrote in tolerating the man who was with his father's wife; they would have gone to what Moses wrote concerning a man lying with his father's wife. If they would just do what Moses wrote, the man would have been dead before Paul knew about him; for Moses inscribed the words of the Lord, "If a man lies with his father's wife, he has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them" (Lev 20:11).

In the missing epistle, Paul must have written something about love superceding the Law, with the saints at Corinth taking what Paul wrote as permission to tolerate in their fellowship the man who was with his father's wife ... endtime disciples see a similar misunderstanding of what Paul wrote in an epistle, in 1st Thessalonians, in what Paul wrote in 2nd Thessalonians:

You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. And *you became imitators of us and of the Lord*, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and *how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven*, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. (1 Thess 1:5–10 emphasis added)

And,

Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. For *you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you.* It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate. For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For *we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies.* Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good. If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother. (2 Thess 3:6–15 emphasis added)

Apparently some of the saints at Thessalonica interpreted what Paul wrote about “waiting” for Christ Jesus in a similar way as Millerites took the teachings of William Miller about the Second Advent coming in 1843/1844, when hundreds of people sold all they had and waited for the coming of the Lord. Therefore, Paul had to write a corrective epistle that told the holy ones in Thessalonica to get back to work.

Apparently the assembly at Corinth, in receiving Paul’s missing epistle concluded that love included tolerating sin inside the fellowship ... we see this today in Christian ministries that accept as members in good standing “Christians” in homosexual relationships despite Moses writing,

If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them. ... And you shall not walk in the customs of the nation that I am driving out before you, for they did all these things, and therefore I detested them. (Lev 20:13, 23)

The same criterion applies to homosexual relationships as applies to a man with his father’s wife: the offenders shall be delivered to Satan for the condemnation of their fleshly bodies. Nothing more. Nothing less. Someone has to be the adult and say that evil must be purged from the assemblies of the Lord.

Paul indirectly explains that his authority to command the saints at Corinth to put the man with his father’s wife out of the assembly comes from him being the spiritual father of these saints, not from him being their pastor and they being his parishioners. Therefore, the one who is the father of endtime disciples—the one who delivers to endtime disciples the good news that is time specific to the end of the age—has by virtual of being “the adult in the room” the authority to command saints to rightly judge the sinner among them, and out of love for the sinner, deliver the sinner to the Adversary so that his spirit might be saved when judgments are revealed. And it was on this basis that Herbert W. Armstrong permitted his ministers to act as Nicolaitans, heavy handed autocrats that would have if they could have decided every matter for his converts.

In John's vision, the glorified Jesus tells the angel to the Church at Ephesus, "Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate" (Rev 2:6), and tell the angel to the Church at Pergamum, "So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth" (Rev 2:15–16).

In John's Gospel, the glorified Jesus tells His disciples,

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld." (John 20:19–23)

In giving His disciples the Holy Spirit [*pneuma 'agion*], Jesus gave to His disciples collectively—not to just Peter—the authority to forgive or withhold forgiveness of sins ... but what if John wanted to forgive a person's transgression, but Peter, being older, said, *No way*. Would the transgression be forgiven? Who would decide whether the transgression would be forgiven? Who is the father of the first disciples? Is not Christ Jesus the spiritual "father" of His disciples; is not Christ the one who taught His disciples about God the Father? Yet what does Christ say in Matthew's Gospel?

If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, *I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.* For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them. (Matt 18:15–20 emphasis added)

If two disciples agree on earth about anything, it will be done for them by God in heaven—a strong statement that suggests the second witness, the second opinion, the second request by disciples truly born of spirit binds God to doing what is reasonable from the perspective of dwelling on earth. So a person who calls himself a brother yet swindles three "brothers" out of moneys and real property and who is then marked by two brothers as a person whose transgressions are not to be forgiven, will not have his transgressions forgiven but will have to bear the spiritual death sentence attached to swindling his brothers.

But what if hundreds of other so-called brothers support the swindler? Is the swindler truly condemned to spiritual death? Or do those who support the swindler condemn themselves to death, thereby sharing the fate of the one they support?

The saints at Corinth did not condemn the man who was with his father's wife, and Paul rebuked these saints for their liberality that was really cowardice ... when a person will not call evil "evil" but will tolerate evil out of "love" for the evildoer, the *love* is feigned and those who tolerate the transgression take upon themselves the sins of the transgressor. In not putting the sinner out of all assemblies of the Lord, these assemblies separate themselves from Christ Jesus.

Again, in 1st Peter, chapters one through four, Peter "feeds" the lambs of God, new converts that are infants in Christ—and this is as Jesus told Peter in the addendum chapter to John's Gospel. Then in chapter five of 1st Peter, Peter addresses "tending" [shepherding] the sheep of the Lord, thus fulfilling the second task Jesus laid upon Peter: *Tend my sheep*.

In 2nd Peter, Peter does not address new converts but writes to mature Christians: "Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, *To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours* by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet 1:1) ... if you as a Christian have obtained faith equal to that of Peter, you are not a spiritual lamb. You are a sheep, said metaphorically. And in his second epistle, Peter feeds mature disciples with sufficient knowledge and understanding to get these disciples into the kingdom. No further feeding is really necessary.

Peter would have been appalled if someone called Peter the Vicar of Christ; for he didn't place himself between the disciple and God. He didn't do more than he was commanded; for writing in any language would have been difficult for Peter ... Peter didn't write for the fun of writing, not that anyone who has something genuine to say writes for fun. Peter wrote because he was commanded to feed lambs, tend sheep, and feed sheep. So to use what Jesus commanded Peter to do in the addendum chapter of John's Gospel as the basis for usurping authority over other disciples (thus inserting the person between the disciple and Christ Jesus) is tantamount to open rebellion against God.

But when an assembly of the Lord refuses to rightly judge a manner, their refusal usually comes from what Paul by the hand of Tertius wrote to the holy ones at Rome:

Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand. ... Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. (Rom 14:3–4, 13)

In what Paul writes to the saints at Rome about eating and drinking doesn't equate to what he wrote to the saints at Corinth about the man who was with his father's wife. The comparison would be a proverbial apples versus oranges scenario; for whether a person eats clean meats from an animal sacrificed to an idol, or whether a person eats no meat is not a salvational issue. The person does well either way. The person has swindled no one; has not committed an offense against the person's own body. Therefore, leave the person be; for the one who would be the spiritual father of the person will have taught the convert to eat clean meats only not as a health issue, but as a matter of not lusting for food that isn't for Israel. Hence, it isn't what goes into the

mouth of a spiritual Israelite that defiles this Israelite, but what goes on in the mind of this Israelite. So this Israelite can eat what doesn't offend the sensibilities of the Israelite, meaning that meats swallowed has no more meaning than the fleshly body. The person that is a Christian is the inner self, inner man, of the Israelite; hence, Christians are without gender, without race, without social status in this world.

If an assembly will not purge evil from within itself, then the one who brought this assembly into existence will have to step in as the adult in the room to compel the assembly to clean itself up. If two or more members of an assembly move to purge evil from within the assembly, they will be joined by Christ Jesus in purging evil from among themselves, even if that means removing all who are not genuine. And if false disciples or false ministers gain control of an assembly by either the vote of members or by usurping authority, then all who remain in the assembly take upon themselves the sins of the transgressors: genuine disciples are to remove unrepentant transgressors from among themselves. They will do so even if removing unrepentant transgressors destroys the assembly; for it is better to lose the fellowship of false brethren than to lose spiritual life.

When there is no hierarchal authority within genuine fellowships, those disciples who have been born of spirit must possess the courage to declare "evil" evil and to purge evil from within the fellowship, not being intimidated by who will get hurt.

The author of Hebrews wrote,

And being made perfect, He [Jesus] became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek. About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But *solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.* (Heb 5:9–14 emphasis added)

The person who will not purge evil from within a congregation is a spiritual infant, able only to ingest the milk of the word. And infants are not spiritual fathers of anyone.

So, can a son of God forgive an unrepentant sinner who has sinned against another brother? No, because the sinner is unrepentant. Rather, a son of God can hold the sin of the unrepentant sinner until the brother who was wronged asks for the sin to be released. Even then, the adult in the room—the spiritual father who brought the assembly into existence—can tell the assembly to purge out the old leaven, old sin [sinner] before the Passover sacraments are taken. This is what Paul did. This is what Paul expected others who build on the foundation he laid (1 Cor 3:10–11) to also do.

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