

Sex Drama and the Believers Who Boast About It

Hakeem Lyons hasn't been the only one sleeping with Dad's woman—believers did it back in Paul's day. Here's what Paul had to say.

Message Magazine's Online Devotional for Thursday, March 19, 2015

Based Upon 1 Corinthians 5

Sometimes it's difficult to call sin by its right name. Sometimes it's difficult to accept the facts about our family or ourselves. What is worse, having a problem that is detrimental to your health, or having that detrimental problem and burying your head in the proverbial sand about it, leaving it untreated?

The believers in Corinth shamefully had a problem with immorality of all kinds. Among their favorite things to do was to indulge in sexual sins of all kinds. It was crazy, not simply because of the fact that they sinned (for all have sinned), but because they professed to be the people of God, they sinned with impunity and non-repentance, and oftentimes what they did would have been shunned by people who did not even believe in God. Why do believers get ourselves into these complicated messes at times?

The difficulty comes into play when we need to call sin by its right name and then handle it appropriately in God's sight among the body of believers.

Here's an example: For some reason, these men thought it was a great idea to have sex with their fathers' wives. Moses gave express counsel against this. Who does that? Even people who do not profess to love God know that is off limits. But, they continued to commit these and other defiling acts openly without regret or repentance. If you were a parent of several children and one decided to consistently defy you in the presence of the others, how would you handle it? If you were a manager at work, and one of your direct reports habitually came to work late and bragged to everyone about how he or she could do whatever they wanted to do, and would never get fired, how would you handle it. If you were a firefighter and as you entered a room of a building where you and the team had extinguished the flames of a three-alarm fire, but you noticed a flame smoldering there as a light breeze blew into the window, what would you do?

Our God of love, whose name is Holy, is jealous over His people. He wants only the best for us and desires to have His kingdom come and will to be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Thus, since He is not the minister of sin (Galatians 2:17-20), when it is running rampantly among His people with open non-repentance, He has instructed us to handle it swiftly before the offenders are emboldened and the others are encouraged to do the same. A loving God cannot afford to sit idly by while His people are being influenced by wickedness. This is why the unrepentant Lucifer was ultimately expelled from heaven. This is why Achan was ultimately flushed out and stoned (Joshua 7). This is why Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. This is why the Tower of Babel was leveled. This is why there was a worldwide flood in Noah's time. It was not that they sinned. God loves sinners. He came to save sinners. He came to transform sinners. It is that they refused to turn from their wickedness and nullified the influence of God in their lives. Therefore, God must accept the choice such ones have made for themselves and they reap their "rewards." The Bible says, "Your boasting about this is terrible. Don't you

realize that this sin is like a little yeast that spreads through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old "yeast" by removing this wicked person from among you. Then you will be like a fresh batch of dough made without yeast, which is what you really are. Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed for us. So let us celebrate the festival, not with the old bread of wickedness and evil, but with the new bread of sincerity and truth. When I wrote to you before, I told you not to associate with people who indulge in sexual sin. But I wasn't talking about unbelievers who indulge in sexual sin, or are greedy, or cheat people, or worship idols. You would have to leave this world to avoid people like that. I meant that you are not to associate with anyone who claims to be a believer yet indulges in sexual sin, or is greedy, or worships idols, or is abusive, or is a drunkard, or cheats people. Don't even eat with such people. It isn't my responsibility to judge outsiders, but it certainly is your responsibility to judge those inside the church who are sinning. God will judge those on the outside; but as the Scriptures say, "You must remove the evil person from among you." (1 Corinthians 5:6-13, NLT).

There is hope, friends. Our God has made provision for us all. He is not willing that any be lost. He has made Himself available, day and night, to deliver us from all sin, sexual or otherwise. We need simply to listen and accept the fact that we have sinned, receive His power to turn our hearts away from it, and submit to Him daily as He renews us in His Spirit. The only sins that our God cannot forgive, are those we embrace and refuse to surrender to Him. Let's make it a habit to surrender and one day live with God forever.