

Series: Together Toward Maturity

Inductive Bible Study Guide: 1 Corinthians 5:6-13



Step 1: Observation – What does the passage say?

Read **1 Corinthians 5:6–13** carefully more than once. Pay attention to the imagery Paul uses, the commands he gives, and how he distinguishes between insiders and outsiders.

Observation Prompts:

- What metaphor does Paul use for sin?
- What commands does Paul give the church?
- What feasts or Old Testament imagery are mentioned?
- What is Paul's teaching about judging?

Read the passage and note what you see:

What image does Paul use to describe the effect of sin in verse 6?

What command does Paul give in verse 7, and why?

What Old Testament picture does Paul connect to Jesus in verse 7?

What kind of life (or “feast”) are believers called to live in verse 8?

What instructions does Paul give about associating with people in verses 9–11?

What distinction does Paul make between judging insiders and outsiders in verses 12–13?

Step 2: Interpretation – What does the passage mean?

Paul explains why tolerating sin is dangerous for the church: **sin spreads like leaven**. Using Passover imagery, he calls believers to purity because Christ, the true Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed. The church must practice discipline with its own members, while leaving judgment of the world to God.

Questions to Explore:

What does the metaphor of leaven (yeast) teach about the influence of sin? (vv.6–7)

Why does Paul connect Christ to the Passover lamb? (v.7)

How does this deepen our understanding of salvation and holiness?

What does it mean to “celebrate the festival” with sincerity and truth? (v.8)

How is Paul describing the Christian life here?

Why does Paul forbid close fellowship with someone who claims to be a believer but lives in unrepentant sin? (vv.9–11)

Why does Paul say the church judges insiders but not outsiders? (vv.12–13)

What is the difference between accountability in the church and God’s judgment of the world?

Word Study Suggestions:

- **Leaven (vv.6–7):** yeast, symbolizing influence that spreads—often used for sin or corruption.
 - **Passover lamb (v.7):** reference to Exodus 12, where a spotless lamb was sacrificed and its blood saved Israel. Christ fulfills this as our sacrifice.
 - **Sincerity (v.8):** Greek *eilikrineia* — purity, genuineness, without hidden motives.
 - **Purge (v.13):** to cleanse, remove, expel what is unholy or destructive.
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Step 3: Application – How should I respond?

Paul’s challenge is clear: sin must not be tolerated, because Christ has set us apart to live in holiness. The church must take seriously its call to live as God’s people, marked by truth, purity, and accountability.

Personal Reflection:

Am I allowing “small compromises” that could spread like leaven in my life?

What does it mean for me to live as one cleansed by Christ, my Passover Lamb?

Do I confuse grace with tolerance of sin? How does Paul correct this thinking?

Am I more concerned about judging the world than holding myself and my church family accountable?

How can I help cultivate a culture of sincerity and truth in my church?

Summary Truths:

- Sin spreads like leaven; unchecked sin will affect the whole church.
- Christ, our Passover Lamb, has set us apart — we are called to holiness.
- The Christian life is a continual “festival” of sincerity and truth.
- The church is called to exercise discipline among believers, while God judges the world.
- True love and unity come from purity, not tolerance of sin.

Optional Memory Verse:

“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.”
— 1 Corinthians 5:7 (ESV)

Prayer Prompt:

“Lord, thank You that Christ, my Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed for me. Help me to live in sincerity and truth. Keep me from tolerating sin in my life or excusing it in the church. Give me courage to walk in holiness and love.”

For Further Study:

- Exodus 12:1–30 — The original Passover
- John 1:29 — Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away sin
- Hebrews 12:14 — Pursue holiness, without which no one will see the Lord