

# BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



## FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

*Living as Christians in an Immoral World*  
1 Corinthians 5:1-11, 6:9-20

**Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.**

### **Leaders' Responsibilities:**

**Important:** Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a series of sessions needs to have access to the "Introduction" article found at the beginning of each series (Bible Teaching #....). The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

### **Prior to this Coming Session:**

**Gathering Time Leader:** Make copies of the old hymn **Take Time to Be Holy**. Give a copy of only one stanza to each participant. Have pencils or pens available so that the participants can rewrite the stanza in modern language..

#### **Bible Study Leader:**

Youth Bible Study Leader: Have copies of magazines and newspapers available; have poster board and glue and scissors for making a poster.

**Worship Time Leader:**

**Music Sources:**

**Take My Life (Holiness)**, *The Worship Hymnal* #589; CCLI # 1617154

**Sanctuary**, *The Worship Hymnal* #588; CCLI #24140

**Take Time to be Holy**, *The Worship Hymnal* #587; CCLI# 93748 Public Domain

**Purer in Heart, O God**, *The Worship Hymnal* #591; CCLI # 297623 Public Domain

**Grace Alone**, *The Worship Hymnal* #112; CCLI # 2335524

**Gathering Time:** (Suggested time: 15 minutes)***Living as Christians in an Immoral World*****Focal Text**

1 Corinthians 5:1-11; 6:9-20

**Background Text**

1 Corinthians 5:1—6:20

**Main Idea**

Christians are to live disciplined lives, recognizing that salvation affects every aspect of life, including how one uses one's body.

**Question to Explore**

I'm a Christian, but what's wrong with...?

**Teaching Aim**

To guide the church to summarize Paul's teachings on disciplined moral living in the church and identify practical ways they will apply them.

**Gathering together:**

Sing one or more of the following:

**Take My Life (Holiness)**, *The Worship Hymnal* #589; CCLI # 1617154

**Sanctuary**, *The Worship Hymnal* #588; CCLI #24140

**Purer in Heart, O God**, *The Worship Hymnal* #591; CCLI # 297623 Public Domain

**First thoughts:**

Give one stanza of the old hymn **Take Time to Be Holy** to each participant. Be sure that all stanzas are given out. Ask participants to rewrite the stanza so that it is in modern language which would be meaningful today.

**Take Time To Be Holy**

Take time to be holy  
 Speak oft with thy Lord  
 Abide in Him always

And feed on His Word  
Make friends with God's children  
Help those who are weak  
Forgetting in nothing  
His Blessing to seek  
Take time to be holy  
The world rushes on  
Spend much time in secret  
With Jesus alone  
By looking to Jesus  
Like Him thou shalt be  
Thy friends in thy conduct  
His Likeness shall see

Take time to be holy  
Let Him be thy Guide  
And run not before Him  
Whatever betide  
In joy or in sorrow  
Still follow thy Lord  
And looking to Jesus  
Still trust in His Word

Take time to be holy  
Be calm in thy soul  
Each tho't and each motive  
Beneath His Control  
Thus led by His Spirit  
To fountains of love  
Thou soon shall be fitted  
For service above

CCLI Song No. 93748  
© Public Domain  
George Coles Stebbins | William Dunn Longstaff

## **Closing the Gathering Time:**

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

**Note to the Bible Study Leader:** Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

## **Teacher Preparation**

### ***Living as Christians in an Immoral World***

#### **Focal Text**

1 Corinthians 5:1-11; 6:9-20

#### **Background Text**

1 Corinthians 5:1—6:20

#### **Main Idea**

Christians are to live disciplined lives, recognizing that salvation affects every aspect of life, including how one uses one's body.

#### **Question to Explore**

I'm a Christian, but what's wrong with...?

#### **Teaching Aim**

To guide the church to summarize Paul's teachings on disciplined moral living in the church and identify practical ways they will apply them.

### **Introduction to your personal study:**

We often focus on one aspect of behaviour which seems more sinful than others. Paul speaks to the Corinthian Christians about some serious aspects of unholy living. Included in those are aspects we might not consider so bad – greediness, for example. We might not excuse greediness, but we certainly understand our wanting more – and more and more.

This is a difficult lesson because we live in a world of changing moral values. Tolerance of many different lifestyles is a value for many thinking people. Never has the challenge to holy living been more important. Never has it been more important for us to understand God's grace in our own lives.

## Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the **“Introduction”** article found at the beginning of this series of Bible Study and Worship sessions (Bible Teaching #.....). The person who downloaded this session should have that material for you, as well.

Sexual immorality was rampant in ancient Corinth. Paul apparently quotes a favourite saying among the Corinthians, **“Food for the stomach and the stomach for food”** (v. 13). In the context the idea seems to be, **“God gave both men and women sexual organs and He expects us to use them”**. Even the predominant religion in Corinth (the worship of Aphrodite) provided male priests and female priestesses for worshippers to have sexual intercourse as a part of their worship. Sexual involvements of all sorts were common and accepted. This was part of the environment out of which the believers in Corinth came. **“And that is what some of you were”** (v. 11). One of the converts was still in an incestuous relationship with his father’s wife (v. 1).

## Focusing on the Meaning:

The passage of Scripture for this study speaks to that kind of situation. It is a delicate situation – how a local church is to relate to a member who refuses to stop immoral behaviour. Paul teaches that we are not to fellowship with a believer who refuses to change (v. 11). His own treatment is “to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh” (v. 5). Those words seem harsh, but Paul may be saying there is a time to stop pleading with and praying for a person to repent and allow sin to bring its consequences so that the person will see the behaviour is leading to destruction. Perhaps that will bring him to brokenness and repentance.

Our society does not differ that much from that of Corinth. Certainly there is a great deal of sexual immorality and sexual deviation. If that is so, should there be a difference in the way believers live? How can a believer live faithfully to the Lord in this kind of environment? There are some things here that can help us.

First, it is good to recognize that when we believe in Jesus for forgiveness he really does change us. **“But you were washed, you were sanctified (made holy), you were justified (put right with God, acquitted of all charges)”** (v. 11).

Second, there is a higher principle or standard for the believer. Paul makes a statement twice in 1 Corinthians, **“Everything is permissible for me – but not everything is beneficial”** (6:12; 10:23). The believer, like anyone else, can do whatever he is capable of doing. However, he/she needs to ask some questions: Is what I want to do beneficial? (6:12) Will it build other people up? (10:23). Is it consistent with being under the lordship of Jesus? (6:12). Is it in violation of the fact that my body is a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit, that it does not belong to me, and that it is to honour God? (6:19-20).



## 1 Corinthians 5:1-11; 6:9-20

5:1 Paul addresses a serious moral problem in the church. A man has an incestuous relationship with his stepmother. No criticism is given about the woman which must indicate that she was not a believer. Paul is concerned with the Christian believer who is living in a way which even the highly immoral pagan culture of Corinth would not condone. Such behaviour was explicitly forbidden by the Jewish law (Leviticus 18:8).

5:2 Paul is concerned about this gross sexual misbehaviour, but he is equally concerned about the lack of a reaction on the part of the believers who apparently have taken no action to remedy the situation. Such inaction is unthinkable because of the influence such behaviour would have on others. The church would have little voice in addressing the sexual immorality of the larger culture when such blatant immorality existed within its own circle. Paul asks "Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief?" Grief is always the appropriate reaction to sin in the body of Christ. Grief will balance the self-righteousness that so easily is expressed in situations of this nature.

Paul continues by asking why the man has not been put out of the fellowship of believers.

5:3-5 Paul reminds the fellowship that he is with them in spirit. He has passed judgment on this person and states that he should be handed "over to Satan". This difficult to understand statement must refer to the understanding that the world belonged to Satan. Paul thus indicates that this man must be placed outside the fellowship of the church with the hope that the lack of Christian companionship and the consequences of his sin would bring him to a place of repentance. Apparently the church did take action and the incestuous member repented his transgression (2 Corinthians 2:5-11; 7:8-13).

Nonetheless it is difficult to see how to lovingly apply this in today's society. When we attempt to do so, the church nearly always comes across as harsh and judgmental. While preparing this material, the author read an editorial written by a seminary student in which the story was told of a young woman who was a church leader as was her boyfriend. She became pregnant and the church relieved her of her responsibilities. The author of the article felt the church was failing to support the young woman in a time when she was especially needy. It was stated that the majority of singles sitting in the pew were having sex or had had sex. Some doubt was expressed that those in leadership positions should be held to higher standards.

5:-8 This rather wholesale acceptable of sexual behaviour outside of marriage was part of what Paul addresses when he speaks of the yeast which works through a whole batch of dough. Leaven most commonly symbolized evil to the Jewish mind. Leaven was dough which had been kept over from the previous baking and which, in the keeping, had fermented. The Jews identified fermentation with putrefaction, with rottenness. And so leaven stood for a putrefying and corrupting influence. The Passover bread was unleavened bread (Exodus 12: 15ff; 13:7). But more than just

using unleavened bread on the day before the Passover Feast the law declared that the Jew must light a candle and must search his house ceremonially for leaven and that the last bit of leaven must be cast out.

Paul uses that picture to say that our sacrifice has been sacrificed, even Christ; it is His sacrifice which has delivered us from sin as God delivered the Israelites from Egypt. Therefore, he goes on, the last remnant of evil influence must be cleared out of our lives. If you let an evil influence into the church it can corrupt the whole society. Discipline must then be exercised for the sake of the Church (See Barclay, W. **The Letters to the Corinthians, The Daily Study Bible**. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956, pp 50-51).

5:9-11 In these verses, Paul broadens the need to address other issues of immorality – greediness, idolatry, slander, drunkenness, greediness. These sins are not so easily identified as a pregnancy in an unmarried young woman. It is undoubtedly true that through the ages many church leaders have gone blithely on committing these sins while making an example of unmarried women.

Barclay summarizes these sins as follows: The sin of fornication is a sin against one's own self. He has reduced himself to the level of an animal and sinned against the light that is in him and the highest that he knows. The sin of the greedy and grasping spirit is a sin against our neighbours and our fellow man. Persons are regarded as objects to be exploited rather than brothers to be helped. The sin of idolatry is a sin against God. It is the abandoning of the real God for the false God. It is the failure to give God the first and only place in life. (Barclay, pp. 53-54).

These realities call us to pray for the church and its leaders for great wisdom in dealing with sin within the church. Paul indicates that there are times when a person must be cut out. The purpose of doing so is redemptive. There is the hope that the person involved will repent and return to an even more meaningful relationship to God. There is the need for the church to guard its influence both within the church and without. True wisdom and great love is required in dealing with these issues.

6:9-11 Paul continues to point out sins which have no place in the life of one who is in a right relationship with God through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and through the Spirit of our God. This list is more inclusive though not a list of all the sins which we can commit. It includes fornicators, idolaters, adulterers which were included earlier. It mentions sensualists or pleasure seekers (those who only live for the pleasure they can give themselves) homosexuals, thieves, drunkards and slanderers. Rapacious men refers to "the spirit which is always reaching after more and grabbing that to which it has no right" (Barclay, p. 59). Paul points out that some of the Corinthians believers fit in those categories before their salvation experience. This is a triumphant statement "And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified." Sin can only be overcome with the transforming power of faith in Christ.

6:12-20 Paul refers to the freedom we have in Christ to choose to do those things which honor him. Our body is the residence of the Holy Spirit. We cannot use it for our pleasure alone. Sexual union symbolizes a uniting of two bodies. ***“For these two will become one flesh”***. One flesh cannot be separated. Once one has given away a part of himself or herself in a sexual union of any kind outside of a committed marriage relationship then all relationships will feel the effect of that commitment.

### **Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:**

These were radical concepts in Paul's days and just as radical today. We cannot expect that those who have not committed themselves to Christ will accept this value system. It is increasingly difficult for Christians to commit to moral purity in the world in which we live. No one likes to be the “odd person out”. We don't like being considered weird, straight laced or legalistic. We want to be liked, to be considered “with it”. Teens struggle with these issues, but adults do as well. Thoughtful Christians struggle with being loving and kind while understanding Biblical truth applied to today's world.

We will not, and cannot, commit to holy living unless we understand that we are “bought at a price”. The price was Christ's death on the cross. Your task as the leader and guide for your church as you study this passage is to affirm for them the necessity of living lives that meet Christ's standards of purity and holiness.

### **For Personal Reflection:**

**What have I learned from this study?**

**What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?**

**What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?**

## **Bible Study Plan** (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

### ***Living as Christians in an Immoral World***

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

#### **Focal Text**

1 Corinthians 5:1-11; 6:9-20

#### **Background Text**

1 Corinthians 5:1—6:20

#### **Main Idea**

Christians are to live disciplined lives, recognizing that salvation affects every aspect of life, including how one uses one's body.

#### **Question to Explore**

I'm a Christian, but what's wrong with...?

#### **Teaching Aim**

To guide the church to summarize Paul's teachings on disciplined moral living in the church and identify practical ways they will apply them.

#### **Connect with Life:**

Begin with this thought: Regardless of one's moral standards hardly anyone would deny we live in an immoral world. Crime statistics confirm that in every society. Divergence from moral norms occurs everywhere. Virtually everyone is ultimately shocked by someone's behaviour. By anyone's standards we live in an immoral world, the big question for all believers is, "How shall we live"?

#### **Guide the Study:**

Ask someone to read 5:1. Make sure everyone recognizes the situation in the church at Corinth.

Ask someone to read 5:2.

Ask how the believers were responding to the situation. Give opportunity for response.

Inquire: What should be our response? Give opportunity for response.

Then ask: What are the dangers in holding others accountable for their moral behaviour? Encourage response. (Possibilities include being accused of “judging others” and of having a “holier than thou” attitude. We might be accused of “sticking our noses into other people’s business”.)

Ask someone to read 5:4.

Point out the guidelines in dealing with immoral behaviour – “in the name of Jesus”, “with the power of our Lord Jesus”.

Ask: What does that mean. Give opportunity for response.

Explain how difficult it is to call into question someone’s moral behaviour. Ask the people to list the qualities in Jesus they see as he relates to immoral people. Encourage response.

Explain to them that we are to behave as Christ did. Warn that even then we may be misunderstood or accused of passing judgment on others.

Ask someone to read 5:5.

Ask what they think it means **“to deliver...for the destruction of the flesh”**. Give opportunity for response. You can share your insights from your Bible study.

Point out: We must always be motivated by the desire to help fellow believers and not to condemn them. We take action “so that his spirit may be saved”.

Ask someone to read 5:6.

Explain: Allowing immoral behaviour among believers to go unchecked involves the risk of other believers doing the same things. Just like yeast spreads through a lump of dough immorality will spread in a fellowship of believers.

Ask someone to read 1 Corinthians 15:33.

Warn them: **“Bad company corrupts good morals”.**

Read 5:9-13.

Explain: We are forced to live in an immoral world. We cannot correct the world's behaviour. We are, however, responsible for monitoring our behaviour.

Ask: How does isolating the unrepentant believer can help restore him/her. Give opportunity for response. Then, if the question has not yet been raised, discuss with the group how this passage differs completely from the practices of exclusion and shunning of members found in many religions and cults.

Read 6:9-11. Point out that God brings about a moral change in people who receive Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

### **Encourage Application:**

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Read 6:12, 19.

Point out that all of us are free to make moral choices. We can do whatever we are capable of doing.

Ask what higher laws are at work in the believer, higher than the law of freedom to make moral choices. Encourage response.

Responses should include:

Will it help or hinder other people?

Is it consistent with being under the lordship of Jesus?

Does it reflect the fact that my body is a dwelling place for God?

Encourage each one to ask themselves these tough questions.

**Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time.** Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

# Youth!!! Take Ten

## Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

### ***Living as Christians in an Immoral World*** **1 Corinthians 5:1-11, 6:9-20**

**A youth will lead the following activity and comments.** No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

Sensualists or pleasure seekers (those who only live for the pleasure they can give themselves) were included in the lists of sinners in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. The word (malakos) “describes what we can only call a kind of wallowing in luxury in which a man has lost all resistance power to pleasure” (Barclay, p. 58).

Advertisers often use this human weakness as a means to sell a product. Find advertising which addresses this human reality. Make a poster illustrating how prevalent this is in society today. You may draw an illustration of an ad you have seen on TV or in other media sources.

**Worship Time** (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***Living as Christians in an Immoral World*****1 Corinthians 5:1-11, 6:9-20****Beginning the Service:**Sing **Sanctuary**, *The Worship Hymnal* #588; CCLI #24140**Offering:****Praying for the World:**

Pray for a movement of God among lost people groups that will result in rapid, miraculous multiplication of New Testament churches that praise and glorify the one and only God of the universe. Pray that home churches may be a part of this multiplication of churches.

**Sharing Guide:**

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

**Bought At a Price****1 Corinthians 6:20*****You were bought at a price. Therefore, honour God with your body.***

The call to moral purity was always a part of the Jewish belief system. In Leviticus 20:7 it states: ***Consecrate yourselves and be holy, for I am the Lord your God.***



Later in Leviticus 20: 26 we read ***You are to be holy to Me because I, the Lord, am holy...I have set you apart from the nations to be Mine.***

Moral purity was often a theme in the Psalms. ***Create in me a clean heart, O God and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*** Psalms 51:10

The first book of Psalms tells us

***Blessed is the man  
who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked  
or stand in the way of sinners  
or sit in the seat of mockers.***

***But his delight is in the law of the Lord;  
and on his law he meditates day and night.  
He is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither  
Whatever he does prospers.***

***Not so the wicked!  
They are like chaff  
that the wind blows away.  
Therefore the wicked will not stand  
in the judgment  
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.***

***For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous.***

The struggle to live up to the teaching of the law became an arduous one as Jewish leaders added more and more regulations. Soon true moral purity was lost in the attempt to fulfill mere man made laws. Jesus himself said to the Pharisees and teachers of the law who accused his disciples of eating with “unclean” hands ***“You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men”*** Mark 7:8.

But Christ transformed that struggle when he gave himself as a sacrifice for the sins of man. Our relationship to Him gives power to overcome temptation. Moral purity becomes a possibility because we are new creatures in him. We were ***“bought with a price”***.

Ephesians 4: 22-24 states ***You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires to be made new in the attitude of your minds, and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.***

Paul speaks of his own moral uprightness in these words ***Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world and especially in our relations with you, in the holiness and sincerity that are from God. We have done so not according to worldly wisdom, but according to God's grace.*** 2 Corinthians 1:12. Paul is, therefore, not boasting in his own moral strength but in God's grace which enables him to live uprightly.

***You were bought at a price. Therefore, honour God with your body.***

### **Call to Commitment:**

Understanding the sacrifice of Christ and the power of his grace in our lives keeps us from becoming proud of our righteousness. The common criticism of the church is that Christians see themselves as better than others. We cannot do that when we understand that we were bought at a price and we are sustained by God's grace.

Sing **Grace Alone**, *The Worship Hymnal* #112; CCLI # 2335524

### **Concluding the Service:**

Choose the final blessing from one of Paul's letters to the churches and read it to encourage the church. Then ask someone to close with prayer.

Make a copy of this hymn for each participant or give a copy of one stanza to each participant to be used in the Gathering Time.

## **Take Time To Be Holy**

**Take time to be holy  
Speak oft with thy Lord  
Abide in Him always  
And feed on His Word  
Make friends with God's children  
Help those who are weak  
Forgetting in nothing  
His Blessing to seek**

**Take time to be holy  
The world rushes on  
Spend much time in secret  
With Jesus alone  
By looking to Jesus  
Like Him thou shalt be  
Thy friends in thy conduct  
His Likeness shall see**

**Take time to be holy  
Let Him be thy Guide  
And run not before Him  
Whatever betide  
In joy or in sorrow  
Still follow thy Lord  
And looking to Jesus  
Still trust in His Word**

**Take time to be holy  
Be calm in thy soul  
Each tho't and each motive  
Beneath His Control  
Thus led by His Spirit  
To fountains of love  
Thou soon shall be fitted  
For service above**

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