

1 Corinthians 5:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

Analysis

But now I have written unto you not to keep company—Paul reinforces his instruction with heightened clarity. The prohibition is specific: **if any man that is called a brother** (ἐάν τις ἀδελφὸς ὄνομαζόμενος)—someone claiming Christian identity, a church member in name. The present participle onomazomenos ("being called, named") emphasizes professed, not proven, faith. The list follows: **be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner**—loidoros ("railer") is verbally abusive, reviling; methusos ("drunkard") is a habitual drunk.

With such an one no not to eat—the double negative (οὐδὲ συνεσθίειν) is emphatic: "not even to eat." Shared meals signified fellowship and acceptance; refusing table fellowship was a severe statement. The principle is clear: the church maintains higher standards for those claiming Christ's name than for unbelievers. Persistent, unrepentant sin by professing Christians requires loving separation to protect the church's witness and create space for repentance. This isn't hatred but hope—severe mercy seeking restoration.

Historical Context

In Jewish and early Christian practice, shared meals were sacred acts of fellowship (koinonia). The early church's agape feasts and Lord's Supper were central to community life (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 11:17-34). Refusing to eat with someone was tantamount to excommunication, treating them as outside the covenant community, similar to Jesus being criticized for eating with tax collectors and sinners (Luke 5:30).

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How do you balance accountability within the church with grace toward those outside?
2. Which sins on Paul's list (sexual immorality, greed, idolatry, slander, drunkenness, swindling) are you most likely to tolerate or excuse?
3. What does loving church discipline look like—firm boundaries while praying for restoration?

Interlinear Text

νῦνὶ δὲ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι ἐάν
now But I have written unto you not to keep company if
G3570 G1161 G1125 G5213 G3361 G4874 G1437

τις ἀδελφὸς ὄνομαζόμενος ἦ πόρνος ἦ
any man a brother that is called be a fornicator be
G5100 G80 G3687 G2228 G4205 G2228

πλεονέκτης ἦ εἰδωλολάτρης ἦ λοιδόρος ἦ μέθυσος
covetous be an idolater be a railer be a drunkard
G4123 G2228 G1496 G2228 G3060 G2228 G3183

ἢ ἄρπαξ τῷ τοιούτῳ μηδὲ συνεσθίειν
be an extortioner G3588 with such an one no not to eat
G2228 G727 G5108 G3366 G4906

Additional Cross-References

Romans 16:17 (Parallel theme): Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

2 Thessalonians 3:14 (Parallel theme): And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

2 Thessalonians 3:6 (Parallel theme): Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

Matthew 18:17 (Parallel theme): And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

1 Corinthians 5:13 (Parallel theme): But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

2 John 1:10 (Parallel theme): If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

Revelation 21:8 (Parallel theme): But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Revelation 22:15 (Parallel theme): For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

Matthew 23:25 (Parallel theme): Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

1 Timothy 3:3 (Parallel theme): Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;