**Attitude is Everything**

**1 Corinthians 5**

I would like to start, today, by apologizing. It was brought to my attention that a few weeks ago, in my sermon, I said wrong thing. Which, actually, I realized fairly soon after the sermon had finished. When trying to illustrate the point that our Father God has given us access to all of His blessings and that all things are ours, I used the story of the prodigal son and made the mistake of saying that the father had told the penitent son that “all that he had was his.” The father actually said that to the older son. The one that wasn’t celebrating with the rest of the household because he was bitter. I’m sorry I got that wrong. But remember that it doesn’t change the principle, which is this. If you belong to God, if you have put your faith in Jesus, then stop being bitter about what you think you deserve and how much other non-deserving people are getting. Instead, celebrate the Good Gifts and every spiritual blessing that God has given you access to.

Alright let’s move on to today’s sermon. Today, if you remember only one thing from my sermon, I want it to be this…

6 (God) gives grace generously. As the Scriptures say,

“God opposes the proud

but gives grace to the humble.”

James 4:6

Some would have you think that 1 Corinthians chapter 5 is all about kicking sexually immoral people out of the church. That definitely seems part of the scenario in the text. But the main emphasis is that there is no room for prideful sinfulness among God’s people.

I agree with some who coined the phrase “Attitude is Everything.”

And I would reinforce that especially before God our Creator and Judge, an attitude of pride receives judgment and an attitude of humility receives mercy and grace.

Today I am going to use a format that can be used to do Bible study. It is a framework that some people use and I thought it could be of help for those who are looking for an orderly way to process the scriptures.

It is called the SOAP method which is an acronym for scripture, Observation, Application, and Prayer…

**Scripture**

For this section you’ll read the scripture or passage of scripture in depth. Simply read it objectively asking the Holy Spirit to help you understand what He wants you to learn either about who God is or who you are or both.

**Observance**

Next you would write down anything you noticed that seemed interesting or stood out to you.

It is a perfect time to ask who, what, where, when and how.

It is also a perfect time to read what other Christians throughout history have believed about the passage.

**Application**

This is the step where you ask yourself how this applies to your life. Sometimes God may deeply convict you of sin you need to ask forgiveness for and other times it may feel like the scriptures only apply in helping you understand how it applies to seeing who God is. I think sometimes people can go to far with this, remember the Bible isn’t all about us.

**Prayer**

And finally, or maybe throughout, prayer.

Pray that God will show you how to apply this scripture to your life. And pray that God will show you more of who He is and help you grow in the knowledge of His grace, mercy, and love so that you too, can show His grace, mercy, and loving kindness.

So let’s use the method today. First the scripture from 1 Corinthians 5:

**Scripture**

**5**I can hardly believe the report about the sexual immorality going on among you—something that even pagans don’t do. I am told that a man in your church is living in sin with his stepmother. **2**You are so proud of yourselves, but you should be mourning in sorrow and shame. And you should remove this man from your fellowship.

**3**Even though I am not with you in person, I am with you in the Spirit. And as though I were there, I have already passed judgment on this man **4**in the name of the Lord Jesus. You must call a meeting of the church. I will be present with you in spirit, and so will the power of our Lord Jesus. **5**Then you must throw this man out and hand him over to Satan so that his sinful nature will be destroyed and he himself will be saved on the day the Lord returns.

**6Your** **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? **7**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. **8**So let us celebrate the festival, not with the old bread of wickedness and evil, but with the new bread of sincerity and truth.

**9**When I wrote to you before, I told you not to associate with people who indulge in sexual sin. **10**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. **11**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.

**12**It isn’t my responsibility to judge outsiders, but it certainly is your responsibility to judge those inside the church who are sinning. **13**God will judge those on the outside; but as the Scriptures say, “You must remove the evil person from among you.”

Now I am going to share a few basic observations…things I believed were noteworthy…

**Observation(s)**

Man in sexual relationship with stepmother (even non-believers think this has gone too far)

People are proud that they don’t feel the need to address it, in fact it seems that they are saying this man is free to live this way. Even boasting (v6)

Paul says that man should be removed from fellowship (So that the man might be saved, in other words repent and truly understand what it means to be in Christ.)

Paul instructs believers that they should not disassociate themselves from non-believers who are living in ongoing sin.

Paul instructs Corinthian believers to disassociate themselves from people who say they are believers, but also embrace (practice, continue in without repentance) sins like sexual immorality, greed, idol worship, abusiveness, drunkenness, or those who cheat others.

This text is not just about sexual immorality! Attitude is everything (God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble)

Paul tells the church leaders that they were responsible to judge people within the church (who were pridefully sinning)

Paul says that God would judge those who did not claim to be believers.

**Application(s)**

Ongoing sin, without humility, is evidence of a need for restoration and possibly evidence that someone has never understood the Good News and the forgiveness and new life that Jesus has offered us.

Being a church member (a follower of Jesus) carries with it responsibilities that being a non-believer does not have (mainly a choice to humble yourself when you recognize or are called out on your sin).

Two very different attitudes with two very different outcomes…High handed sin vs. Humble Heartbroken Sincerity

One of the cool things about the application part of the Bible study is that often times application for one part of the scriptures can be found in another place in scripture. So I will finish up today by sharing from Matthew 18 which helps us understand the restoration that Paul wants to happen in Corinth.

These are the very words of Jesus…

**Matthew 18:15-35**

**15**“If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. **16**But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. **17**If the person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. Then if he or she won’t accept the church’s decision, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector.

**18**“I tell you the truth, whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.

**19**“I also tell you this: If two of you agree here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you. **20**For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them.”

**Parable of the Unforgiving Debtor**

**21**Then Peter came to him and asked, “Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?”

**22**“No, not seven times,” Jesus replied, “but seventy times seven!

**23**“Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. **24**In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. **25**He couldn’t pay, so his master ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt.

**26**“But the man fell down before his master and begged him, ‘Please, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.’ **27**Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt.

**28**“But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment.

**29**“His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it,’ he pleaded. **30**But his creditor wouldn’t wait. He had the man arrested and put in prison until the debt could be paid in full.

**31**“When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him everything that had happened. **32**Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, ‘You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. **33**Shouldn’t you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’ **34**Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt.

**35**“That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart.”

It is true that 1 Corinthians 6 says:

**9**Don’t you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don’t fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality, **10**or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God. **11**Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Attitude is everything…God opposes those who pridefully go on in sin against Him and He forgives every debt of those who humbly trust in His sacrifice for their sin.

Let’s finish with the last part of the study method which is prayer.

**Prayer**

Lord Jesus we know that we are prone to sin. We know that you have taken the penalty for our sins and we know that you have given us friendship with God our Father and Creator. Please help us to live in a way that demonstrates your goodness to the rest of the world.

In other words Lord help us to do what is right and help us to confess to others when we have done things to hurt them and our witness of who you are.

And finally, I pray that you would help us to forgive other believers 70x7 times when, in sincerity and humility, they seek reconciliation and repentance.