

Christian Connections

1 Corinthians 5:9-13

I. Intro

● Anecdote

- Connection
 - Now that we exist in the digital age - Connecting with others has never been easier.
 - And whether we're talking about cellphones - social media platforms - or video conferencing tools - like zoom...
 - ...we are able to create connections with people - who are here in our own hometown...
 - ...as well as with those who are half way around the world.
 - We're able to connect with people we've never met before - and we're able to reconnect with friends we haven't seen since high school.
 - And while it's true that we have limitless opportunities to connect with the people that we want to interact with...
 - ...it's also true that Christians have been given doctrinal directions that regulate the people we're connecting with.

II. Outline

● Points

- Connect
 - With this as our focus - we're going to spend our time today - considering our connections...

- ...in light of the instructions that Paul presented - here in this letter that he sent to the Christians in Corinth.
- And as we study the scriptures before us this morning - we're going to consider...
 1. ...How Christians should connect with Outsiders
 2. ...How Christians should connect with Backsliders
 3. ...How Christians should connect with Insiders
- With this as our outline - let's open our Bibles to 1st Corinthians chapter 5...
 - ...where we find Paul - presenting clear and concise instructions regarding Christian connections.

III. Outsiders

● Set up

- Context
 - As we make our way to the fifth chapter of 1st Corinthians - I wanna take some time to put our text - back into it's context.
 - I should begin by reminding you that it was back in the beginning of this chapter...
 - ...where Paul rebuked the carnal Christians in Corinth - for failing to exercise church discipline...
 - ...in the case of a believer who was engaging in adultery with his step-mother.
 - It's for this reason that he commanded them to cast that backslidden believer out of their congregation - so that he might repent.

- Now - here in our text today - we find Paul - clearing up the confusion concerning the conditions of Christian companionship.
- With this as our focus - let's pick up our study of 1st Corinthians 5 - beginning there at verse 9 - where Paul declared...

● Text

1Co 5:9 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people.

1Co 5:10 Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.

1Co 5:11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.

1Co 5:12 For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside?

1Co 5:13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.”

• Previous

- Here in our text today - we find Paul - referring to the instructions that he presented - in a previous epistle.
- It's for this reason that many believe that 1st Corinthians isn't the first epistle that Paul sent to the Christians in Corinth.
- And while we could spend the rest of our time - considering the concerns of those who insist that our Bible is missing books...
- ...I encourage you to remember that - the Bible was written - and canonized - by men who were led by the Holy Spirit.
- And seeing how the word of God is settled in heaven forever - then - we can be sure that...
- ...the Spirit of the living God has provided us with the Old and New Testaments - according to His will.

- That being the case - we can certain that the previous epistle that Paul sent to Corinth - doesn't belong in the cannon of scripture.

- Company

- At the same time - we should consider how the Holy Spirit led Paul to clear up the confusion - from something he wrote in the previous epistle.

- Look with me again - there at verse 9 - where Paul declared...

1Co 5:9 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people.

- Here in this verse - we find Paul - reminding his readers about the instructions that he presented in the previous epistle.
- And we must not fail to notice that - this command had everything to do with the company that they were keeping.
- Just to be clear - that word - company - was translated from a Greek word...
- ...which was used in reference to the intimate associations that believers should have with our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- Conversely - Paul encouraged the Christians in Corinth to separate themselves from those who were engaging in sexual sins.

- Pornos

- Notice with me again - there at verse 9 - where Paul declared...

1Co 5:9 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people.

- Now - that phrase - sexually immoral people - was translated from the Greek word - PORNOS.

- This is actually the root of the Greek word that Paul used back in the first verse of this chapter...
- ...where he referred to the backslidden brother - who was engaging in sexual immorality.
- The root word - PORNOS - was used of those who indulge in unlawful sexual intercourse.
 - And not only that - but - the same word was also used of those who prostitute their body to another - for financial gain.
- Confusion
 - Now - as we consider the counsel that Paul presented in the previous epistle that he sent to the church in Corinth...
 - ...there seems to've been some confusion about his command to disfellowship from sexually immoral people.
 - After discovering that the Christians in Corinth were allowing an adulterer - to remain in the fellowship of faith...
 - ...that's when Paul penned this epistle - so that he could help them to understand that...
 - ...he wasn't referring to the sexually immoral people who were outside the church...
 - ...no - instead - he was challenging them to break fellowship with the believers - who were engaged in sexual immorality.
- World
 - Let's consider again how Paul put it here in our text today - look with me again - beginning there at verse 9 - where he declared...

1Co 5:9 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people.

1Co 5:10 Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.

- Here in these verse - we find Paul - helping the Christians in Corinth to realize that...
- ...the instructions that he presented in the previous epistle wasn't about the sexually immoral people of this world.
- And in order to understand this distinction - it'll help you to know that when Paul referred to the "people of this world"...
- ...he was talking about the unbelievers - who had yet to repent - and receive the remission of sins - by faith in Jesus Christ.
- In other words - those who are of the world - are those who do not belong to the Christian church.
- Outside
- We should also notice that Paul referred to the people of this world - as those who are outside.
- Notice with me again - there in verse 12 - where he asked...

1Co 5:12 For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside?

- Here in this verse - we find Paul - drawing a distinction - between those who are inside the church - and those who are outside.
- That word - outside - was translated from a Greek word - which - in this context...
- ...was used of those who do not belong to the Christian church.
- Simply put - the people of the world - are those who have yet to embrace the grace of God - by faith in Jesus Christ.

- And it's for this reason that described them as those who are outside of the church.
- Seeker
 - In light of this description - I wanna take a moment to address the seeker sensitive movement...
 - ...which is largely focused on creating a church culture that seeks to convince unbelievers - to come to church.
 - And while I'm all for the evangelistic endeavors - by which Christians help unbelievers to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ...
 - ...it's also crucial for Christians to realize that the church is a fellowship of faith - which is for those who believe.
 - And while I don't mean to suggest that you should never invite an unbeliever to church...
 - ...I do believe that we must be wise in the way that we interact with outsiders.
- Wisdom
 - Let's consider how Paul put it - in Colossians chapter 4 - it's verses 5 and 6 where he declared...

Col 4:5 Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time.

Col 4:6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.
 - Rather than attempting to fill the pews of the church with unbelievers - Paul encouraged the Christians in Colossae...
 - ...to walk in the wisdom of God - whenever we interact with those who are outside.

- And with this as the goal - Paul directed the disciples of Christ to make sure that our words are gracious...
- ...while simultaneously seasoned with salt - - as we set out to share the message of our Messiah.
- More simply put - our interaction with outsiders - should be based on the goal of leading them to the Lord.
- Go
- I like the way that the Lord Jesus summed it up - in Mark chapter 16 - it's verse 15 - where He directed His disciples to...

Mar 16:15 "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

- Christian - listen - Christ Jesus has called us to go into the world - so that we can preach the gospel to those who are outside.
- And much like Jesus - who was friends with sinners and tax collectors...
- ...we too should become those believers - who are Walking in wisdom with those who are outside...
- ...so that we can help them to embrace the grace of God - by faith in the cross of Christ.
- And what this means is that - we've been called to be IN the world - without being OF the world.

● Application

- IN
- Let's consider how Christ Jesus put it - in John chapter 17 - where the Lord prayed to God the Father - by declaring...

Jhn 17:14 “I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Jhn 17:15 “I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

Jhn 17:16 “They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Jhn 17:17 “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

Jhn 17:18 “As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

- As we consider the content of this prayer - it's crucial for Christians to realize that...
- ...we've been called to be - IN the world - - while maintaining a certain level of separation - FROM the world.
- Just to be clear about this - it's necessary for Christians to interact with those who are outside - so that we can lead them to Jesus.
- At the same time - Christ Jesus also prayed for us to be sanctified - and set apart from the world.
- And what this means is that - our connection with those who are outside - should center around the great commission of Christ.

● Transition

• Points

- Now - this brings us to our second point - because listen...
- 1. ...while it's true that our connection with Outsiders should be based on the goal of leading unbelievers to the Lord...
- 2. ...our connection with backsliders should be severed - if they refuse to repent.
- In order to explain what I mean - let's take another look at the challenge that Paul was presenting - here in our text today.

- Look with me again - there at 1st Corinthians chapter 5 - beginning again at verse 9 - where he declared...

IV. Backsliders

● Text

1Co 5:9 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people.

1Co 5:10 Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.

1Co 5:11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.

1Co 5:12 For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside?

1Co 5:13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.”

- Separate
 - As we take another look at these verses - we must not fail to notice how Paul challenged the Christians in Corinth...
 - ...to separate themselves from the backslidden believers - who were continuing to engage in sexual immorality.
 - And as we consider the context - from back in the beginning of this chapter...
 - ...there should be no doubt that Paul was referring to the man who was engaging in an adulterous relationship with his step mother...
 - ...when he commanded them to put away from yourselves the evil person.
 - What this means is that - Christians have been called to disconnect from believers who continue to engage in sexually immorality.

- Covetous

- Not only that - but - Paul also presented a list of sins - that can cause us to break company with carnal Christians.

- Look with me again - there at verse 11 - where Paul declared...

1Co 5:11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.

- Here in this verse - we find Paul - helping the Christians in Corinth to realize that...
 - ...sexual immorality is not the only sin - that can separate backslidden believers from their Christian community.
 - The carnal Christian who continues to pursue their covetous desires for the worldly things they want to acquire...
 - ...are also running the risk of being excommunicated from their fellowship of faith.
 - And one reason why is because - covetousness is a form idolatry - which is actually the next sin on Paul's list.

- Idolater

- Look with me again - there at verse 11 - where Paul declared...

1Co 5:11a But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater...

- Now - that word - idolater - was translated from a Greek word - which was used of those who worship false gods.
- Not only that - but - this word was also used of those who worship the wealth of this world.

- And as we consider how the word - worship - - actually speaks of the worth - or - value of a thing...
- ...idolatry is actually the sin of placing a greater value on the creation - rather than the Creator.
- That being the case - Christians should turn away from every idol - by worshipping God - in Spirit - and in Truth.

- Reviler

- Not only that - but - Paul also encouraged every Christian - to avoid the believers who are revilers.
- Let's consider how Paul put it - here in our text today - look with me again - there at verse 11 - where he declared...

1Co 5:11a But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler...

- Now - that word - reviler - was translated from a Greek word - which was used of those...
- ...who are guilty of verbally assaulting others - with bitter and blasphemous statements.
- A reviler is a mean-spirited person who loves to demoralize others with insulting words - designed to humiliate.
- And as we consider this definition of the word - reviler - there should be no doubt that Paul was commanding Christians...
- ...to disconnect from the Christians - who are constantly abusing other believers - with vicious verbal attacks.

- Drunkard

- Paul also encouraged the Christians in Corinth to disconnect from those who failed to maintain their sobriety.

- Look with me again - there at verse 11 - it's there where he declared...

1Co 5:11a But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard...

- That word - drunkard - was translated from a Greek word - which was used of those who are intoxicated.
- Not only that - but - the same word was also used of those who are tipsy.
- And while the original Greek word was used of those who are given to much wine...
- ...we can also be sure that this also applies to those who are under the influence of anything that affects our sobriety.
- And according to Paul - we ought to disconnect from Christians - who fail to maintain their sobriety.
- Extortioner
- This brings us to the sixth and final sin that could result in the exclusion of a backslidden believer - from their fellowship of faith.
- Look with me again - there at verse 11 - where Paul declared...

1Co 5:11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner...

- Now - that word - extortioner - was translating from a Greek word which was used of those who steal by violence.
- This is the same word that Paul used in 1st Corinthians chapter 6 - where he declared...

- “...neither covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God...”
- With that being the case - those who have truly placed their faith in Jesus Christ - should also stop engaging in extortion.
 - As for those who continue committing this sin - should be put away from their fellowship of faith.

- Named

- Let's consider again how Paul put it - here in our text today - look with me again - there at verse 11 - where he declared....

1Co 5:11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.

- As we take another look at this verse - we must not fail to notice that Paul was perfectly clear about the way that we should respond...
 - ...to those who call themselves Christian - and yet - continue to live like those who are still outside.
 - And just to be clear - Pau was referring to those who are named brothers - or sisters in Christ.
 - In other words - he was talking about those who call themselves Christians.
 - Simply put - those who call themselves Christians - should be held to a higher standard - than those who are outside.
- Christian?
 - Now - listen - just because someone calls themselves a Christian - doesn't mean they are.

- And just because a person shows up to church on the regular - doesn't mean they they are a Christian.
- Attending church doesn't make you a Christian - any more than going to McDonalds makes you a red haired clown in a yellow onesie.
- Remember - the church isn't a building - - it's a body of believers - who have placed their faith in the sacrifice of Christ Jesus.
- And the believer isn't Christian - because they were baptized - or because they are on a membership roster...
 - ...no - instead - believers are Christians - because - we've been born-again - by faith in Jesus Christ.
 - And according to Paul - the backslidden believer should be admonished as a brother - or a sister in Christ.
- Practice
 - In order to understand what this looks like - let's consider the way that Paul explained it - to the Christians at the church in Thessalonica.
 - Hold your place here in 1st Corinthians - and let's turn in our Bibles to 2nd Thessalonians chapter 3.
 - And as we make our way to the third chapter of 2nd Thessalonians - I wanna take a moment to point out that...
 - ...Paul wasn't referring to the Christian - who is wrestling against their depraved desires.
 - No - instead - Paul was referring to those who call themselves Christians - while continuing to live like an unbeliever.
 - These are backslidden believers - who must be excluded from their fellowship of faith - so that they might repent.

● Application

- Disfellowshipped

- Let's consider how Paul put it - here in 2nd Thessalonians chapter 3 - look with me - beginning there at verse 13 - where he declared...

2Th 3:13 ...as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good.

2Th 3:14 And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed.

2Th 3:15 Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

- Here in these verses - we find Paul - encouraging the Christians at the church in Thessalonica...
 - ...to disfellowship the Christians - who will not abide by the doctrinal instructions that Paul presented in his epistles.
 - And while it's true that we all struggle to abide by the instructions that Paul presented in his epistles...
 - ...it's also true that the believers who choose to practice sin as a way of life...
 - ...must be excommunicated from their fellowship of faith - because
 - remember - a little leaven - leaven's the whole lump.
- Admonish
 - At the same time - Paul also pointed out that - they should be admonished like a brother.
 - Look with me again there at 2nd Thessalonians 3 - beginning there at verse 14 - Paul declared...

2Th 3:14 ...if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed.

2Th 3:15 Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

- As we take another look at this verse - we must not fail to notice that...
- ...the excommunication of a backslidden believer is not only intended to shame them - so that they might repent...
- ...but the purpose of this punishment should be the admonishment the carnal Christian - who has returned to a life of sin.
- And while it's true that Paul encouraged us to not even eat - with those who are living in sin...
- ...Paul also encouraged us to Admonish backslidden believers - with the love of the Lord.

● Transition

• Points

- Now - this brings us to our third and final point - because listen...
- 1. ...while it's true that our connection with Outsiders should be based on the goal of leading unbelievers to the Lord...
- 2. ...and while it's true that our connection with backsliders should be severed if they refuse to repent...
- 3. ...it's also true that our connection with Insiders should be based on the accountability of Christian companionship.
- In order to explain what I mean - let's take another look at the challenge that Paul was presenting - here in our text today.
- Look with me again - there at 1st Corinthians chapter 5 - beginning again at verse 9 - where he declared...

V. Insiders

● Text

1Co 5:9 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people.

1Co 5:10 Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.

1Co 5:11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.

1Co 5:12 For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside?

1Co 5:13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.”

- Inside
- As we take one last look at these verses - I wanna direct your attention to the contrast that Paul presented...
- ...as he described the difference between the way that outsiders will be judged by God...
- ...and the way that those who are inside should be judged - by those who are inside.
- Just to be clear - if those who are outside - are the unbelievers who are in the world...
- ...then it only stands to reason that those who are inside - are believers who are members of their Christian congregation.
- And in order to make my case - it'll help you to know that the Greek word which was rendered - inside - in this context...
- ...was used of those who belong to the Christian family - more commonly called the church.
- Company

- With this definition in mind - we should take some time to consider how we should connect with those who are inside.
- With this as our goal - I should take a moment to remind you that - we can't become companions with those who are outside...
- ...and the reason why is because those who are outside are unbelievers - who are on the broad road that leads to destruction.
- And we can't become companions of the Christians who are living for the lusts of the flesh...
- ...and the reason why is because - - the backslidden believer should be excommunicated from their fellowship of Faith.
- With all of this being the case - the companionship that creates true Christian connections...
- ...can only occur within in the context of the church - where Christians are committed to Christ Jesus.
- Question
- In order to explain my point - let's take another look - beginning there at verse 12 - where Paul asked...

1Co 5:12 For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside?
Do you not judge those who are inside?

1Co 5:13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."

- According to Paul - Christians haven't been called to pass judgment on the unbelievers who are outside the church...
- ...and the reason why is because - there's coming a day - when God is going to judge those who refused to trust in Jesus Christ.
- That being the case - Paul redirected the attention of the Christians there in Corinth...

- ...and he did this by asking them the rhetorical question - which is found there in the second half of verse 12 - by asking...

1Co 5:12b Do you not judge those who are inside?

- Judge

- I like the way that the scholars who created the New Living Translation rendered verse 12 - they put it like this...

1Co 5:12 It isn't my responsibility to judge outsiders, but it certainly is your responsibility to judge those inside the church who are sinning.

- According to Paul - Christians have been called to judge one another with righteous judgment.
- And just to be clear - that word - judge - was translated from a Greek word...
- ...which was used of those who pronounce an opinion concerning what is right - and what is wrong.
- And in this context - Paul was referring to those who pass a Biblical judgment on the deeds and words of other believers.
- Therefore - Christians should judge one another - according to the word of God - and for the sake of spiritual accountability.
- Fruit
- In order to explain my point - let's consider something that Jesus said - in Luke chapter 6 - - beginning at verse 43 - He declared...

Luk 6:43 "...a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit.

Luk 6:44 "For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush.

Luk 6:45 “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

- So - according to Jesus - we are able to test the fruit of those who claim to be Christian.
- And while it's true that we can't really know what's happening in the heart of the people here at church...
- ...we can test the fruit that they produce - by judging the words that come out of their mouths.
- This was precisely the point that the Lord Jesus was making - when He informed the multitudes that...

Luk 6:45 “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

- Spiritual Fruits

- From this - we can see that the Lord Jesus has called us to become fruit inspectors - by judging the fruit that flows from our mouths.
- Not only that - but we should also consider the list of spiritual fruits that Paul presented in Galatians 5 - beginning at verse 22 - he declared...

Gal 5:22 ...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

Gal 5:23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Gal 5:24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

- Those who are truly walking in the power of the Holy Spirit - will also produce the fruit of the Spirit.
- This includes the agape love of the Lord - the joy of Jesus - the peace that surpasses all understanding...

- ...the longsuffering patience that enables us to bear with one another.
- This includes the kindness of Christ - the goodness of God - the faithfulness of saving faith - the meekness of our Messiah...
- ...and the self-control that helps us to crucify the passions and desires of our fallen flesh.
- Accountability
 - Now - as we consider this list of spiritual fruits - I have no doubt that we all come short of perfectly producing these fruits - every moment of every day.
 - And it's for this reason that we should be helping one another to become those believers - who are walking in the power of the Spirit.
 - With this as our goal - let's consider the challenge that Paul presented - to the Christians at the church in Ephesus.
 - Let's turn in our Bibles - to Ephesians chapter 5 - and as we make our way to the 5th chapter of Ephesians...
 - ...I wanna take a moment to remind you that - Christians have been called to become fruit inspectors...
 - ...who are testing the spiritual fruits that are produced in the lives of the believers inside our church.
 - And with that being the case - Paul also encouraged us to become those believers - who find out what is acceptable to the Lord.

● Application

- Expose
 - Let's consider how he put it - here in Ephesians chapter 5 - look with me beginning there at verse 8 - where he declared...

Eph 5:8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.
 Walk as children of light
 Eph 5:9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),
 Eph 5:10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.
 Eph 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.
 Eph 5:12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.
 Eph 5:13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

- Here in these verses - we find Paul - encouraging the Christians at the church in Corinth to produce the fruit of the Spirit...
 - ...by taking the time to find out what is acceptable to the Lord.
 - In other words - the Christian who wants to produce the fruit of the Spirit - which is in all goodness - righteousness - and truth...
 - ...should spend time studying the truth of God's word - so that we can walk in the light of the Lord.
 - And not only that - but we should also forsake our fellowship with the world - so that we connect with other Christians.
- Fellowship
 - Notice with me again - beginning there at verse 11 - where Paul declared...

Eph 5:11 ...have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

Eph 5:12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.

Eph 5:13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.
 - Christian - listen - the believer who still finds their fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness...

- ...will also fail to find out what is acceptable to the Lord - - and the reason why is because...
- ...they're failing to connect with the Christians - who can actually help them understand what it means - to produce the fruit of the Spirit.
- And it's for this reason that Paul encouraged every Christian to connect with other believers who are inside our church...
- ...so that we can help each other produce the fruit of the Spirit - according to true Christian accountability.

VI. Conclusion

● Wrap up

- Points
 - Now - as we begin to wrap up this study - it's important for us to realize that - just because we can connect with people - doesn't mean we should.
 - And it's for this reason that I encourage you to remember that...
 1. ...Our connection with Outsiders should be based on the goal of leading unbelievers to the Lord...
 2. ...Our connection with backsliders should be severed if they refuse to repent...
 3. ...Our connection with Insiders should be based on the accountability of Christian companionship.

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