

4. Read Paul's emphatic statement again in verse 11. Why do you think Paul gives opposite instructions regarding how the Corinthians are to treat an immoral person who does not claim to be a Christian and one who does?

5. Read verses 1-2. Who does Paul hold accountable for maintaining the purity of the church?

6. What does this say about your responsibility to this church?

7. According to verse 2, the Corinthians not only tolerated this man's immorality, they were puffed up with pride because of their "tolerance." That's why Paul rebukes the whole church for giving their approval to such behavior. What message does it send to the world if a church approves of radically immoral behavior, such as sexual immorality, greed, idolatry, drunkenness, or swindling (v 11)?

8. On the other hand, what message does it send to the world when the church's life together is marked by love, unity, forgiveness, and holiness? (see also John 13:34-35; 17: 20-21)

The marks of ongoing faith and repentance

- What are some of the ways that you can personally contribute to the church's distinctiveness, to its task of reflecting God's character to the world?