

1 CORINTHIANS
1 Corinthians 6:9-20
Sexual Immorality

This is a day of CONFUSION. Morals have been turned upside down. Isaiah said, “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.” This is an indictment against those who disregard the laws of God and create their own reality. Welcome to 2024! For that matter, welcome to any generation that rebels against God.

The context of this passage addresses the issue of the Corinthian’s failure to treat one another in righteous ways. They were wronging and defrauding one another by taking each other to court and SUING one another. Paul uses this fact as a springboard to launch him into other ways that they were defrauding one another. This comes from the larger context of this passage that goes back to the way that they were failing to handle the issue of the man who was having sex with his stepmother. Furthermore, there was at least a hint in Paul’s writings that some of the church members were still seeing prostitutes! At any rate, they were at best winking at sexual sin, and at worst, approving of it as if it was not a big issue! Paul wanted them to know that it was anything but a small matter. **1 Corinthians 6:9-11 NIV**

9 Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

SEXUAL IMMORALITY IS THE DISPLAY OF AN UNRIGHTEOUS HEART.

This passage does not say that someone who stumbles and commits any of these sins will then lose their salvation. The word, “wrongdoer” refers to one who LIVES in an unrighteous fashion. It is the definition of their lifestyle and regular practice. If anyone PRACTICES unrighteousness, then he or she IS unrighteous, no matter what they might CLAIM.

The biblical requirement for being in the Kingdom of God is that of RIGHTEOUSNESS. Wrongdoers=Unrighteous; one who acts deceitfully or fraudulently, or who VIOLATES justice. Only those who are righteous will inherit the Kingdom; those that are unrighteous will not inherit the Kingdom. We must not allow MODERN NOTIONS of right/wrong to pollute our thinking on this. **“Be not deceived!”** The unrighteous CANNOT inherit the Kingdom. **Corruption cannot inherit incorruption! It does not have the CAPACITY to receive it.** Furthermore, the unrighteous do not WANT to receive a righteous reward. They have no stomach for all that comes with righteousness.

The idea of INHERITANCE is not about MERIT, but about RELATIONSHIP. You do not EARN an inheritance, you RECEIVE it as an HEIR. Again, while imputed righteousness is a LEGAL STANDING, it is identifiable by its consistent BEHAVIOR! Paul's list of sins here is just a CROSS-SECTION of immoral lifestyles. Note that 3 of the 9 behaviors addressed in this list are SEXUAL misbehaviors. This is due to the fact that Paul is specifically addressing sexual issues in a heightened manner in this passage. **Sexual immorality is not a WORSE sin than other sins; it is just a DIFFERENT sin with different CONSEQUENCES.** This list is similar to the one in 1 Corinthians 5:11.

Categories of Sexual sin:

Sexual immorality ["Pornos" = One who prostitutes themselves; Fornicator; One who engages in unlawful sexual intercourse]

Adultery ["Moykhos" = One who has unlawful intercourse with the spouse of another; one who is unfaithful]

Homosexuality - 2 Words used here:

"Malakos" = [A male who submits himself to unnatural sexual lewdness; One guilty of being addicted to same-sex sexual sins, voluptuous]

Arsenokoitēs [A male who sleeps with a male as with a female; abuser of self with mankind;]

In all actuality, those that are sexually immoral are also GUILTY of all of the other categories that Paul mentions: **Idolaters, thieves, Greedy, Drunkards, Swindlers, Slanderers**. This is because those that are sexually immoral prove to be idolaters that worship and serve sexual desire and ignore divine boundaries, thieves who steal sexual favors for their own appetites, greedy people who hoard sexual partners as trophies for themselves, drunkards who are addicted to sexual pleasure, swindlers who defraud others of their purity, and slanderers who lie to get what they want, to the harm of many.

"And that is what some of you were . . ." **This is one of the most powerful statements Paul makes in this passage.** The church is not full of "goody two-shoes" who have never engaged in vile sin. We ALL are guilty of some aspects of wretched sinfulness, but Christ is able to "save to the UTMOST!" **This also refutes any foolish belief that sexual sins like homosexuality are sins that make repentance and salvation impossible!** There is NO SIN that Jesus Christ cannot redeem us from! **Furthermore, this list puts all sexual sins as being equally sinful!**

This passage clearly communicates the FACT that Christ TRANSFORMS those that he REDEEMS. They do not remain the same as they once were! Change is CERTAIN because of what has been accomplished within a believer:

***Washed** – To wash away the filth from their sinful lives. Is an act of OBEDIENCE. n [1Cr 6:11](#), lit., "ye washed yourselves clean;" here the Middle Voice again indicates that the converts at Corinth, by their obedience to the faith, voluntarily gave testimony to the complete spiritual change Divinely wrought in them.

***Sanctified** – To separate and set apart, to make holy, to dedicate to God.

***Justified** – To render righteous, to declare one to be just

If we have experienced these redemptive actions, then the God who has done them within us EXPECTS us to LIVE them out! **1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 NIV**

3 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; **4** that each of you should learn to control your own body^[a] in a way that is holy and honorable, **5 not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God**; **6** and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister.^[b] The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before. **7** For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. **8** Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

These are all aspects of salvation that were done FOR us, but that we also DISPLAY and DEMONSTRATE in our changed lives! It is both an INSTANTANEOUS work AND a PROGRESSIVE work! God does the work inside of us, and then we live it out! But sexual immorality does more than just display an unrighteous heart.

SEXUAL IMMORALITY IS A DEFILER OF ONENESS. 1 Corinthians 6:12-17 NIV

12 "I have the right to do anything," you say--but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"--but I will not be mastered by anything. **13** You say, "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both." **The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.** **14** By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. **15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself?** Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! **16** Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." **17 But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit.**

The words here in verse 12 sound like the modern cries of those wanting "FREEDOM" to do whatever they want to do with their bodies; whether it be that of having an abortion, or that of having sex with anyone of any sex at any time they want. Make no mistake, the modern LGBTQ+ movement is not about LIBERTY; it is about LICENSE. It is a REBEL cry against any BOUNDARIES around sexual behavior. And it is causing enormous damage to people of all kinds, all in the name of "love." Paul speaks against these worldly arguments in practical and spiritual terms.

First, sexual immorality does not BENEFIT the body; it CORRUPTS it. Just because I am ABLE to do a thing does not mean that I SHOULD do a thing. Remember what your mama used to say when you told her that "everyone was doing" it: **["Well, if everyone else jumps off of a bridge, does that mean you should too?"].** Mama knows best!

Second, sexual immorality does not FREE the body, it ENSLAVES it. Sexual immorality controls and consumes the body. Sexual addiction is real.

Modern culture says that sex is just a physical pleasure; no more. No different than eating a meal and then moving on. But scripture says that sex is MORE than a physical act. It is a JOINING of persons. It is a CONNECTION that has LASTING implications. It is a HOLISTIC act involving body, soul, and spirit. It is FOR the Lord, and the LORD is FOR the body.

Paul points out that God created our body, and Jesus will REDEEM our body when we join him in the skies. Our body is IMPORTANT to God, and we are not to mistreat it, or to act like what we DO in our body does not matter. It matters greatly! In fact, it is with our bodies that we OBEY and SERVE the Lord. The flesh should LEARN subjection to the Spirit of God. **It may be a mystery, but we experience ONENESS with the LORD in our entire being: Body, Soul, and Spirit. Our oneness with the Lord, just as our oneness with our SPOUSE, must not be corrupted or compromised.** How many times must we be reminded that you sleep with whoever your spouse sleeps with! Do you want to subject CHRIST to the same horror and shame? GOD FORBID! It is for these reasons that Paul finishes this passage with a warning and a command.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 NIV

18 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. **19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.**

SEXUAL IMMORALITY IS A DENIAL OF DIVINE OWNERSHIP

“All other sins . . . are OUTSIDE the body . . .” This is a most remarkable statement. Every other sin that you can commit is simply done TO the body from outside, but sexual immorality is a sin AGAINST the body in a HOLISTIC sense. Sex is a holistic act, and thus it either BENEFITS or CORRUPTS us based upon how we engage in it. Premarital or extramarital sex causes physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational damage to us. It is a STICKY SIN. It does not just “go away” once it is done. I see this over and over in marriage counseling! **Tony Evans adds another perspective to this as well:**

“Paul comes to the capstone of his argument: Don’t you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you? (6:19). A Christian’s body is a house of worship; therefore, sexual immorality brings such sin directly into God’s presence! When you have sex, you are going to church. The Lord is present when a husband and wife experience physical intimacy too (see commentary on Songs 5:1), but sexual pleasure within marriage brings God glory because it honors his design for sex. Sexual immorality, in whatever form it takes (adultery, fornication, homosexuality, pornography, etc.), makes a mockery of God’s design.” **[From the Tony Evan’s Bible Commentary]**

In light of all this, Paul gives TWO COMMANDS that we will obey if we belong to God:

FLEE SEXUAL IMMORALITY.

Paul does not tell you to FIGHT sexual immorality. He does not instruct us to stay around temptation and do our best to overcome it. He says . . . RUN! Don't hang around to see if you can handle it. Don't try to REASON with it. Don't try to CONTROL it. Run from it. Flee, just like Joseph ran from Potiphar's wife. Get out quick. You must have the same mindset with sexual sins like PORNOGRAPHY. Cut off all avenues to it. Get rid of social media if it keeps tripping you up. Get rid of cable if you find yourself constantly viewing channels that inflame your lusts. FLEE!

GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY.

Your body does not belong to you. It belongs to GOD and to your SPOUSE (if you are married.). **You must learn to treat your body as a STEWARD who is taking care of someone else's property.** Christ paid a tremendous price for your body, and he deserves to be honored in it. Your body has been BOUGHT by God, and he wants it to serve his purposes. For the record, his purposes will be your greatest blessings! God is not trying to steal pleasure from you. He is in fact seeking to increase your capacity for pleasure in your entire being as you worship and serve him. You will learn this about his will as you obey him. **Romans 12:1-2 NIV**

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. **Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.**

Let's pray.

OB FACILITATION GUIDE
1 CORINTHIANS – WEEK 10
Sexual Immorality

START TALKING:

What has been the most startling moral change in culture you have seen in your lifetime?

START THINKING:

Why do you think God's standards for our sexuality are so unpopular?

START SHARING:

[Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11](#). What kind of lifestyles had God redeemed these Corinthian believers from? Why are our sexual behaviors not amoral issues, but rather issues that reflect or deny our relationship with God?

[Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-17](#). How is sex different from other bodily appetites? How are God's standards for our sexuality actually beneficial to us?

[Read 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 and 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8](#). In what ways are the consequences of sexual immorality different from that of other sins? Why does Paul tell us to "Flee sexual immorality," and describe what that might look like? How can you honor and glorify God in your body when it comes to sexual issues?

START PRAYING:

Ask God to give you an ever-increasing sensitivity to his Holy Spirit and to reveal any area of sexual temptation that you may be vulnerable to right now.

START DOING:

Examine your daily patterns, relationships, and environments to see how you could better protect yourself from sexual temptation. Change what needs to change!