

# Flee Sexual Immorality

Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher 6/14/20 (c) 2020

*1 Corinthians 6:12-20*

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## **PREINTRODUCTION**

1. This morning we have the wonderful privilege of looking at the Word of God and studying it together, so let me invite you to turn in your Bibles to 1 Corinthians chapter 6.
2. In our last look at this chapter, we looked at verses 9-11.
3. This morning we are considering verses 12-20.

## **BIBLE VERSE**

1 Corinthians 6:12-20 (NASB) 12 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.

13 Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body.

14 Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power.

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be!

16 Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, “The two shall become one flesh.”

17 But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

18 Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.

19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. We have been studying 1 Corinthians for some time now
2. We are now in chapter 6
3. Up to this point we have seen:
  1. The Problem of division (first 4 chapters)
  2. The problem of failing to discipline sin (ch.5)
  3. The problem of lawsuits (ch.6)
4. All of these problems were behaviors the Corinthians formerly had but now had brought them over into the church
5. They were divided over leaders and human philosophy, over disciplining sin, and over suing one another

6. And now they had the problem of sexual immorality
7. But Paul, in verses 12-20, addresses their immorality and takes apart their rationalization for it
8. He does that by giving them 3 principles to show why sex sin must be excluded from the Christian's life
9. He says sex sin harms, controls, and perverts the body

## 1

# Sex Sin Harms the Body (v.12a)

### **FREEDOM IN CHRIST DOES NOT GIVE A LICENSE TO SIN**

Paul says in verse 12, "All things are lawful for me"

1. The Corinthians [had] formulated this principle "by repeating it on all sorts of occasions [and] made it a shield for many questionable and even wrong actions. (Lenski, R. C. H. The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistle to the Corinthians. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1963. Print.)
2. Paul repeats it here and in 1 Corinthians 10:23
3. The word for "lawful" (exestin, pres.act.ind.verb) means "permitted" or "allowable"
4. He says, "All things are allowable"
5. That's liberty
6. But in this context it's not freedom for sexual immorality
7. We are to "put to death the deeds of the body" (Rom.8:13)
8. According to Colossians 3:5 (NASB), we are to "...consider the members of [our] earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry."

9. Yes we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter (Rom.7:6)
10. But that in no way gives us a license to sin
11. Paul said in Romans 6:1-2 (NASB) What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?
12. God will forgive us when we sin but we must remember the price is high

## QUOTE

No sin that a person commits has more built-in pitfalls, problems, and destructiveness than sexual sin. It has broken more marriages, shattered more homes, caused more heartache and disease, and destroyed more lives than alcohol and drugs combined. It causes lying, stealing, cheating, and killing, as well as bitterness, hatred, slander, gossip, and unforgivingness.

John MacArthur, 1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print.  
MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

**WHAT YOU'RE FREE TO DO IS NOT ALWAYS GOOD**

Paul continues in verse 12, “All things are [allowable] for me but not all things are profitable (expedient, KJV)

1. Profitable or expedient is the Greek word *symphero* (pres.act.ind.verb) and it means “good, helpful, useful, profitable”
2. Though “all things are allowable” they are not always good or helpful or useful or profitable
3. The price of abusing freedom and grace was very high. Sin always produces loss. (MacArthur, John, Jr., ed. *The MacArthur Study Bible*. electronic ed. Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997. Print.)
4. Every sin...a Christian commit[s] is forgiven in Jesus Christ.” But no sin is ever right or good, and no sin ever produces anything right or good. Sin can never be worthwhile or profitable. (MacArthur, John F., Jr. *1 Corinthians*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print. *MacArthur New Testament Commentary*.)

## QUOTE

The Greeks always looked down on the body. There was a proverbial saying, “The body is a tomb.” Epictetus said, “I am a poor soul shackled to a corpse.” The important thing was the soul, the spirit of a man; the body was a thing that did not matter. That produced one of two attitudes. Either it issued in the most rigorous asceticism in which everything was

done to subject and humiliate the desires and instincts of the body. Or—and in Corinth it was this second outlook which was prevalent—it was taken to mean that, since the body was of no importance, you could do what you liked with it; you could let it sate its appetites. What complicated this was the doctrine of Christian freedom which Paul preached. If the Christian man is the freest of all men, then is he not free to do what he likes, especially with this completely unimportant body of his?

William Barclay, *The Letters to the Corinthians*. Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster John Knox Press, 1975. Print. The Daily Study Bible Series.

## **THERE IS ALWAYS A PRICE FOR SIN**

There is no other sin that a man or a woman commits that has built into it the deep-rooted damage that the sin of sexual immorality has. It has destroyed more people than drugs or booze ever together could have destroyed.

God looks on sexual immorality with extreme seriousness. Because of this sin in Israel, “twenty-three thousand fell in one day” (1 Cor.10:8)

## 1. Proverbs 5:3-23

1. The lips of an adulteress woman are sweet like honey but bitter like wormwood (vv.3-4)
2. They are like a two-edged sword which is a reference to death (v.4)
3. Every step she takes is toward death (v.5)
4. All her ways are unstable (v.6)
5. Verses 7-8 is a warning to stay away from her
6. Do not go near the door of her house (v.8)
7. Sexual immorality has destroyed so many marriages (vv.9-10)
8. David was forgiven for his adulteress relationship with Bathsheba but he lived with the guilt of his sin the rest of his life (vv.11-14)

1. 2 Samuel 12:9-12 (NASB) Why have you despised the word of the Lord by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. 10 Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' 11 Thus says the Lord, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. 12 Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.'"

9. Sex is for marriage (v.v15-20)

## 2. Proverbs 6:23-29

1. She has a smooth tongue that draws her victims (v.25a)

2. She attracts with her beauty and by the gaze of her eyes (v.25b)
3. No one will escape the consequences of this sin (vv.26-35)
  1. You will be punished (v.29)
  2. You lack sense (v.32)
  3. You destroy yourself (v.32)
  4. You wound, disgrace and bring about reproach on yourself (v.33)
  5. You will not escape the rage of her jealous husband (vv.34-35)
4. God may forgive it, but that doesn't make it right, and it doesn't make it smart
3. Proverbs 7:1-27
  1. She flatters with her words (vv.5, 18-21)
  2. She entices the one who lacks understanding (v.7)
  3. Her house is the way of death (v.27)

## QUOTE

The price of going to bed with her is enormous —guilty conscience, remorse, scandal, venereal disease, wrecked marriage, broken home, mental disturbance, and a host of other ills.

William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*. Ed. Arthur Farstad. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995.

Print.



## 2

# Sexual Sin Controls the Body (v.12b)

### BIBLE VERSE

1 Corinthians 6:12b (NASB) “...All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.”

### IT MAKES YOU ITS SLAVE

1. The words “be mastered” (excousiazo) in the NASB is “brought under the power of any” in the KJV
2. It means “to come under the domination of, or the power of something
3. It means “to enslave”
4. There is nothing more enslaving than sexual evil

### QUOTE

He are the Corinthian Christians, in the name of liberty, losing their freedom and becoming slaves. In the name of Christian freedom, they had become slaves top their own desires.

John MacArthur, Sermon: Christian Liberty and Sexual Freedom  
(1827)

### IT MUST BE KILLED

1. God's will is that you abstain from sexual immorality and you possess your body in sanctification and honor
  1. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 (NASB) For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; 6 and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. 7 For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. 8 So, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.
2. God's will is that you kill all sin in your body
  1. Romans 8:13 (NASB) for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. — In other words, “kill the flesh, mortify the flesh, master the flesh, gain control over the flesh”
  2. 1 Corinthians 9:25-27 (NASB) Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. 26 Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; 27 but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.
  3. All sin has a progressive element – Psalms 1:1-2 (NASB) How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of

scoffers! 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.

Paul says, “Yes, all things are lawful, but you do that and they’ll enslave you. You’ll become a slave.” There is nothing more enslaving than this particular kind of sin.

3

## Sex Sin Perverts the Body (vv.13-20)

### BIBLE VERSE

1 Corinthians 6:13 (NASB) Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body.

### YOU SAY THE BODY IS PURELY BIOLOGICAL (V.13A)

1. “Foods is for the stomach and the stomach is for food”
  1. This was a popular proverb to celebrate the idea that sex is purely biological, like eating
  2. So, the Corinthians argued...let the body have its way.
  3. But what is the body’s way? The stomach was made for food and food for the stomach, they went on.
  4. Food and the stomach naturally and inevitably go together.
  5. [They say] in precisely the same way the body is made for its instincts
  6. It is made for the sexual act and the sexual act is made for it
  7. Therefore let the desires of the body have their way. (Barclay, William, ed. The Letters to the Corinthians. Philadelphia, PA: The

Westminster John Knox Press, 1975. Print. The Daily Study Bible Series.)

2. Food and stomach may be biological but not the body and sexual immorality

1. 1 Corinthians 8:8 says that “food does not commend us to God”
2. Romans 14:17 (NASB) for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

### **THE BODY IS FOR THE LORD (VV.13B-20)**

God is going to “do away” with food and the stomach “yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body.”

1. God did not make the body for impurity
2. God made the body for holiness
3. Our bodies are “for the Lord and the Lord is for the body” (vv.14-15)
  1. God is going to “raise up” the body “through His power” (v.14)
  2. Our “bodies are members of Christ” (v.15)
4. When you commit sexual immorality, you are making the members of Christ members of a prostitute (vv.15-17)
  1. This should never be! (May it never be!)
  2. When you “join” yourself to a prostitute you are “one body with her” (v.16)
  3. “The two shall become one flesh” from Genesis 2:24 is talking about a sexual union between a husband has with his wife
  4. Jesus uses this phrase in Matthew 19:5-6 and Mark 10:8
  5. Paul uses it in Ephesians 5:31
  6. So “the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with him” (v.17)

7. When a believer commits sexual immorality, he is joining Christ to that sinful relationship
  8. Paul affirms that all sex outside of marriage is sin; but illicit relationships by believers are especially reprehensible because they profane Jesus Christ with whom believers are one (John 14:18–23; 15:4, 7; 17:20–23; Rom. 12:5). This argument should make such sin unthinkable. (MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur Study Bible*. electronic ed. Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997. Print.)
5. Flee immorality (v.18)
1. “flee” (pheugo, pres.act.imp.)
  2. 2 Timothy 2:22 (NASB) Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.
  3. 1 Peter 2:11 (NASB) Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.
  4. Genesis 39:5-18 (NASB) It came about that from the time he made him overseer in his house and over all that he owned, the Lord blessed the Egyptian’s house on account of Joseph; thus the Lord’s blessing was upon all that he owned, in the house and in the field. 6 So he left everything he owned in Joseph’s charge; and with him there he did not concern himself with anything except the food which he ate.  
Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. 7 It came about after these events that his master’s wife looked with desire at Joseph, and she said, “Lie with me.” 8 But he refused and said to his master’s wife, “Behold, with me here, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house, and he has put all that he owns in my charge. 9 There is no one greater

in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil and sin against God?” 10 As she spoke to Joseph day after day, he did not listen to her to lie beside her or be with her. 11 Now it happened one day that he went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the household was there inside. 12 She caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me!” And he left his garment in her hand and fled, and went outside. 13 When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled outside, 14 she called to the men of her household and said to them, “See, he has brought in a Hebrew to us to make sport of us; he came in to me to lie with me, and I screamed. 15 When he heard that I raised my voice and screamed, he left his garment beside me and fled and went outside.” 16 So she left his garment beside her until his master came home. 17 Then she spoke to him with these words, “The Hebrew slave, whom you brought to us, came in to me to make sport of me; 18 and as I raised my voice and screamed, he left his garment beside me and fled outside.”

5. Romans 6:12-13 (NASB) Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, 13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.
6. “Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body” (v.18)

1. There is a sense in which sexual sin destroys a person like no other, because it is so intimate and entangling, corrupting on the deepest human level.
2. But Paul is probably alluding to venereal disease, prevalent and devastating in his day and today.
3. No sin has greater potential to destroy the body, something a believer should avoid because of the reality given in vv. 19, 20. (MacArthur, John, Jr., ed. The MacArthur Study Bible. electronic ed. Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997. Print.)
7. Your body is “a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you” (v.19)
8. You have been “bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body” (v.20) by abstaining from sexual immorality

## **CLOSING**

In an article entitled “Consequences of Sexual Sin,” Eric Davis gives a list by Steve Lawson on the dangers of sexual sin.

I’m going to read the list and make no comment but give this to you as we close.

Sexual sin:

1. It robs God of his glory.
2. It desecrates the temple of God.
3. It attaches Jesus Christ to the act of sin.
4. It establishes an evil intimacy.
5. It is uniquely self-destructive.

6. It deeply grieves the Holy Spirit.
7. It is an evil against God.
8. It brings the painful judgment of God.
9. It forfeits all joy and gladness.
10. It forfeits spiritual power.
11. It's forfeits physical strength.
12. It forfeits financial resources.
13. It haunts your mind.
14. It ruins your testimony before others.
15. It bring public disgrace and painful shame.
16. It disqualifies from ministry.
17. It causes others to stumble.
18. It breaks your vow to your spouse which you made before the Lord.
19. It exposes false spirituality.
20. It breaks multiple other divine commands.
21. It may lead to pregnancy.
22. It always leads to other sins.



23. It invites painful confrontation from others.

24. It gives God's enemies cause to blaspheme.

25. It forfeits spiritual influence with the lost.

If you are struggling with this sin, I want to encourage you to get honest with God about it. Repent if you have committed it. Memorize Scripture and heed the wisdom of Scripture.

If you're not a Christian this morning, you're already defeated with this and many other sins.

You are a slave to sin and you need to have the chains of sin broken this morning.

You do that by coming to Christ in repentance and confession believing Jesus is who He said He is, God, and turning your life over to Him right now.

You do that as we pray.