

# 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:12-20

“Glorify God In Your Body”

How great is the redemptive work of God in the heart and in the life of each individual soul that He touches and transforms through the blood of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit! Taking the wicked and washing them, taking the sinner and sanctifying them, taking the degenerate and justifying them. He takes the kind of people found in 1 Cor 6:9-10, and transforms them into the kind of people found in 1<sup>st</sup> Cor 6:11. **God takes fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, sodomites; He takes thieves, the covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners, the likes of which were some of us; and He washes us, sanctifies us, and justifies us in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world *through* Him might be saved, He came to seek and to save that which was lost.** He takes us off that broad path that leads to our demise and destruction and sets us on the narrow path that leads to life. He accredits us with His very righteousness.

But here's the deal, what He's done for us *positionally* (having washed us, sanctified, and justified us, imputing His righteousness to us) He wants to work in and out through our lives *practically*. We spoke about that last week, making our position our practice. God has forgiven your sin in Christ; cast it as far as the east is from the west, He remembers it no more, but it's imperative that we allow Him to do for us practically what He's already done for us positionally. **Or another way to understand that is that God wants our day to day practical lives to reflect His redemptive work *in* our lives. He wants our lives to accommodate our confession of Christ as the Lord of our lives. Now we understand that none of us will be perfect practically until we see Christ face to face, the bible says that when we see Him we will be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. But until that day we're a work in progress, so we're not talking about leading a life that's sinless, but as we grow in Christ we should be sinning less and less.**

Which brings us to our text today; we're to understand His redeeming grace *in* us brings about a responsibility *for* us. You were washed, you were sanctified, "...you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." We'll see that underscored or sort of restated in Vs 19 and 20 like this, "...*and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body*" 1 Cor 6:19-20 **In other words, if you've been washed, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God inwardly, there is a certain lifestyle that will accommodate that outwardly. You and I are to recognize that our bodies belong to the Lord and as such they are to be utilized for His purpose and plan for our lives. We're to be focused not on how *we* want to use our body, but on how *He* wants to use our body.** Paul told Timothy, "*No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.*" 2 Tim 2:4 Which is to say that the soldier doesn't seek to gratify his own wants and desires, but he submits himself completely to the one who has authority over him, even so we're called in the scriptures to die to self, to crucify the flesh, to take up our cross and follow Christ. **To submit ourselves to Him completely, in totality, soul, spirit, and body. When Jesus redeemed you, He redeemed *all* of you, not just your spirit; your body belongs to Him as well. and So Paul says here in Vs 12**

## Vs12

and So the idea here is that of Christian liberty, and Paul being the champion of God's grace, the one who heralded and proclaimed the grace of God like no other would constantly preach and teach of the liberty. He told the Corinthian believers there in 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor, "Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Cor 3:17

Of course we know that Jesus said, "...if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." John 8:36 To the Galatians Paul wrote, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free," Gal 5:1 and It would seem that this was another way of saying that same thing, so when Paul came to Corinth, this is probably the phrase that he himself was using to teach them about the liberty that we have in Christ. "All things are lawful for me," I'm free in Christ, He's given me all things and all things are mine. Remember that's what he was teaching earlier, that whether Paul or Apollos, the world, life, death, things present or things to come—all are yours. But what's so critical in every one of those Vs is the context that surrounds those Vs. Because Paul was never saying that we've been set free to lead our own lives the way we want, however we want, indulging ourselves in whatever we want. That's not liberty, that's license, and God has never granted us a license to sin, but rather we've been set free from the chains and bondage of sin. Leave 1<sup>st</sup> Cor, flip back to Romans Ch 6 (Vs6-19)

So there's always a context that qualifies Christian liberty, you see all things are lawful for me. Meaning that there's nothing that as a Christian I can't do, God did not eradicate my free will when I surrendered my life to Him. and When Christ set me free, He freed me from the constraints of the law, I've been liberated. But here's the context that qualifies my liberty, notice it here in Vs 12, "...but not all things are helpful," or as it says in the KJV, "But all things are not expedient." What's "expedient" mean? It means, "suitable for achieving a particular end in a given circumstance." So though as a believer I can do whatever I want, I have to think it through and decide if what I'm considering is suitable for achieving a particular end in the given circumstance. Now what's the end, what's the goal we're seeking to achieve as believers? We want to be like Christ right? We've been called to be disciples of Christ, to learn of Him, to be imitators of Him, to follow after Him in a manner that's befitting to Him. and So as I consider taking part in whatever it is that's before me, the question that confronts me is, "Is this given circumstance helpful in aiding me to achieve the particular end of Christ likeness?"

Now as it pertains to our text today, the topic at hand is fornication, sexual immorality. You see it would seem as though the Corinthians were taking this phrase that Paul uttered, "All things are lawful for me," and twisting it in such a way as to say, "Then if I engage in sexual activity outside of marriage it's not a problem, because I'm free to do what I want in Christ." and So Paul is here reminding them of the context, and the qualifications of Christian liberty, not free to sin, free from sin.

In other words is fornication, and/or sexual immorality suitable for achieving the particular end, (or goal) of Christ likeness? No, as a matter of fact in so doing I'm subjecting myself to the bonds of sin once again that Christ has died to set me free from. Thereby exercising my liberty in such a way as to once again enslave myself, now what kind of sense does that make? That's why Paul says again, "All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any."

Which in the Greek he's making a bit of play on words there basically saying, "I have power over *all* things but won't be brought under the power of *any* thing." and This word, "power" is only used one other time by Paul and it's in Ch 7 Vs 4 translated "authority" with respect to the authority the husband has over the wife's body, and that the wife has over the husband's body. and So what he's saying is that when you engage in sexual conduct outside of the confines of marriage you're actually surrendering the authority over your body to someone else, which is called what? **If someone has authority over you, then you are in bondage to them, translation, you're no longer free, you're enslaved. and Christ having freed us we're not to enslave ourselves to sin again.**

Something else you might remember is that Christian liberty is always exercised with in the confines of love. Jesus said that we're to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and mind (that's 1<sup>st</sup> and foremost) 2<sup>ndly</sup> we're to love our neighbor as our self. So that if we're exercising our liberty in such a way as to pain, or inflict harm (physically, emotionally, or spiritually) to another we're not walking with in the parameters of love, we've violated the biblical context of liberty.

So consider the end of the matter, will it aid me in Christ likeness, and/or will it hurt, or harm someone in the process? and If it impedes my growth, brings me into bondage, or hurts someone in the process (which fornication inevitably will do) then it's not expedient and I shouldn't exercise my liberty to engage in it. Because as a believer it's not about satisfying or gratifying myself, it's about being well pleasing to Christ and being conformed into His image by His grace and the power of His Spirit in my life.

Another phrase it seems they cling to in justifying their immoral behavior is found in Vs 13.

### **Vs13**

What was the catch phrase? "Foods for the stomach, and the stomach for foods," the idea being that one was made for the other, it was a natural body appetite and nothing wrong with satisfying it. Even so the sex drive is just another bodily appetite that needs fed and satisfied just the same. **Sex for the body, and the body for sex, they're both simply appetites that are completely acceptable to satisfy. and I've had people use that argument with me in our culture today, "Well, what's the difference, it's a bodily function just like eating or going to the bathroom when I need to, or anything else."**

But Paul squelches that mentality immediately. He says, "Food for the stomach, and the stomach for food, (sure I'll give you that) but God will destroy them both." In other words you're trying to compare apples and oranges, things temporal with things eternal, the stomach and foods will be destroyed. **Oh it's not to say that there won't be food in heaven, or that we won't eat, but we won't be driven by fleshly appetite or depend upon those kinds of things to survive, that aspect is temporal. But the body is eternal, not in it's present state, but in its resurrection form (and Paul will draw our attention to the resurrection in the next Vs). But he's blowing buckshot through their justification, "Foods for the stomach, stomach for foods, even so sex for the body, the body for sex," look at the 2<sup>nd</sup> ½ of Vs 13.**

“Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.” You see to say that the body is for sexual immorality is to pervert the purpose of God giving us bodies. The body is for the Lord, the Lord for the body, He is the Lord of our body and we’re honor the Lord *with* our body. That’s the proper perspective, viewing the body as a purely sexual instrument is a perverted perspective.

and I’m not saying that all sexual activity is bad or sinful, God created it and it’s a good thing with in the *context* that God has ordained. Which is the marriage union, with in the marriage union it’s pure and blessed, outside the marriage union it’s perverted and cursed, one commentator said that sex outside of marriage is like robbing a bank, you get something, but it isn’t yours and one day you’ll pay for it. Sex with in marriage is like a person putting money *in* the bank, there’s safety, security and you’ll collect dividends. But the Holy Spirit wants us to realize here that comparing the bodily appetite for food, and the bodily appetite for sex as one and the same is to error greatly. Eating a particular meal to satisfy your stomach will have zero eternal ramifications, engaging in sexual activity outside of marriage to gratify your flesh can have very grave eternal ramifications. The stomach appetites will be destroyed (with respect to the need to feed it to survive) but the body via the resurrection will be eternal. Notice

#### Vs14

Now he’ll speak in detail regarding the resurrection in Ch 15 so we’ll keep moving for now.

#### Vs15-17

You see now Paul starts getting into the gravity of the nature of the sin of sexual immorality in the life of the believer. When you receive Christ into your heart, ask Him into your life, He literally indwells your physical body through the means of the Holy Spirit. and Christ uses your body to accomplish certain aspects of His plan and His purpose on the earth, we are members of the body of Christ individually and as the church we make up the body of Christ on the earth collectively. and Paul will speak more in depth on *that* point in Ch 12, but the point he’s making *here* is that by Christ coming into us, living His life by the Spirit out through us, when we engage in various activities (*whatever they may be*) we enter Christ (by default, Him being in us) into that equation. I place His eyes on what I watch, His hands on what I touch, His feet wherever I walk, so then shall I take the members of Christ and join them to a harlot? You say, “God forbid!” That’s exactly what Paul’s saying here, “Certainly not!” “No way!” “Perish the thought!” Who would think of doing such a thing, and yet that’s exactly what we do when we engage in sinful activity.

Now why would Paul use the term “harlot?” Because that’s whose services they were soliciting, remember the temple of Aphrodite was there in Corinth which was inhabited by 1,000 temple “priestesses” who would worship their goddess by engaging in sexual activity throughout the night as they descended upon the city, it was one way they funded the temple. So these guys would have these urges, justify what they wanted to do by saying that they were free in Christ and it was a natural appetite of the body, and they would grab a gal who prostituted herself “religiously” and hey, “no harm, no foul” right? Wrong, you’re taking the members of Christ and joining them to a harlot, as the scripture says, “The two shall become one flesh.”

There is an inescapable bond, and union that takes place through a sexual relationship that is unavoidable. It doesn't matter if you want that to happen, don't want that to happen, try to guard that from happening, or anything else, it's a spiritual law. It's not a purely physical act as the world would have you to think, it involves and impacts the entirety of who you are, your soul, your psyche, the entirety of your personality, how you interact with people socially, there is no part of you that's left untouched, or un-impacted when it comes to a sexual relationship. Someone said that the mathematics of sin are always the same, add sorrow, subtract joy, multiply your problems, and divide your heart; I think that's pretty accurate.

Now it gets worse still because he who is joined to the Lord is one with Him, and so we bring Him into that situation, now it doesn't violate His holiness, or His sinlessness, it's our sin. But it surely profanes the Lord, as we subject the authority of our body (His holy temple) to another other than Him, and utilize it to gratify sinful lusts as opposed to giving ourselves over to holiness. What's the best thing to do?

### Vs18

"Flee sexual immorality" it doesn't say, "Fight it," "Test yourself to see how strong you are," Don't try to resist it, just flee from it. To Timothy Paul said, "*Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*" 2 Tim 2:22 Peter said, "Beloved, *I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,*" 1 Peter 2:11 Flee sexual immorality, of course we can't help but picture Joseph in a statement like that. There he was (Gen 39) Potiphar's wife taunting him to sleep with her day after day after day.

and Who would know, he'd been thrown in a pit, sold as a slave, transported miles and miles away into Egypt, no one knew him, who's it going to hurt? Yet Joseph understood that his relationship with man was secondary to his relationship with God, so though no one would know, God would know. and He said, "*How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*" Gen 39:9 and We read that one day she sought to take him by the garment and force him to lie with her and when she wouldn't let go of his garment he just slid himself out of it and ran away. He was literally fleeing sexual immorality, because he valued his relationship with God.

and This word that's been translated, "Sexual immorality" here encompasses way more than just fornication. It's that word "Porneia" from which we get our word pornography. This word extends to include sexual gratification of any kind outside of the parameters of marriage. So we're talking various magazines, movies, internet web-sites, books or whatever, if it has to do with sex and it's outside the parameters of your marriage you're to have nothing to with it, in fact you're to flee from it.

2 schools of thought on this next phrase, one is a 3<sup>rd</sup> means of justification that the Corinthians used, "Hey sin is something that takes place outside the body," you know that I may sin against you, but how can I sin against myself? My sin may violate you, but how can I violate my own self? and If that's the case Paul is most definitely clarifying the fact that sexual sin violates one's own body, he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Hence you have unplanned or unwanted pregnancies, you have sexually transmitted diseases, and a splintering of one's own soul, not too mention violating the sanctity of the temple of the Holy Spirit that takes place in the course of sexual immorality.

The other school of thought being that Paul isn't saying that this sin is any *worse* than another, but that it does carry unique ramifications and has a unique effect upon the body in not only physical ways, but morally, spiritually, again the entirety of the personality. and There are great scholarly fellas on both sides of the issue, I think the main thing that Paul is seeking to communicate is that sexual activity outside of marriage is in fact sin and that it carries with it incredible penalties that can spill out both presently and eternally if not dealt *with* and repented *of*.

### **Vs19-20**

You may recall that back in Ch 3 Vs 16 when Paul was speaking of we being the temple of the Holy Spirit that he was speaking collectively of the church corporately, that we individually make up the temple collectively in which God dwells, like living stones being formed and fit together. But here Paul is speaking singularly, "Do you not know that your body (singularly) is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God?" *and This is the radical thing, we think of the tabernacle in the OT where the glory of God was at rest in the Holy of holies. and What this is communicating is that God has ordained that He should make your heart, your body, your being His home, His resting place, His habitation, thereby you become the temple in which God dwells, literally. and The word, "Temple" here is "Naos" which is a very specific reference not to the outer courts, but the inner sanctuary up to and including the holy of holies, God desires that your heart be His holy of holies.*

He is to be the Lord of your life, not only of your soul, but of your body, so what happens when I commit sexual immorality? I'm allowing something unholy, into as it were the holy habitation of God and defiling the temple, I'm giving the temple of God over to another, in essence committing idolatry. Placing myself under the authority of another other than God, and so you can begin to see the gravity of such a situation. Because you belong to God, you are not your own.

You might underline that, "You are not your own," you belong to the Lord, spirit, mind and body. There are those who teach that though demons can't possess a Christian's spirit, they can possess their bodies, but the fact is that you belong to Jesus spirit, mind *and* body, and He's not sub-letting His property. It's not going to happen, last week we spoke of being addicted to our rights, "I have rights" well, not really we're not our own, we're the Lords.

*and Because of that we ought to be careful to honor the Lord, and glorify the Lord in our bodies. If you loaned me your car, or perhaps some tool or something. I'm going to be careful to take especially good care of it because it's not my own, it belongs to you. So to with our bodies, they're not our own to do whatever we want with. (and I'm not trying to put you on a legalistic spin over non-essential matters) But we're to honor the Lord with our bodies, not simply seek to gratify ourselves, polluting and/or abusing God's property. You see we're not our own, we've been bought at a price, purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ You're familiar with Peter's words, "...you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter 1:18-19 Here's the deal, God's salvation is free, but it was anything but cheap, it cost Him a great deal, the blood of His only begotten Son. "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor 5:21*

So now what, what are you to do, how are you to respond? “Glorify God in your body.” and He hasn’t left you to try and accomplish that, leading a holy and righteous life on your own, His Holy Spirit resides *in* you, availing the power *to* you that you might overcome sin to lead a life set apart to Him.

and I want you to know that even if you *don’t* know the Lord, God extends that same offer to you. He’s calling you out, out of a life of sin, and into a life of holiness. He stands prepared to forgive your sin and impute to you the very righteousness of Christ, and it’s a very simple transaction that takes place through faith. **For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whosoever would believe on Him would never perish but have everlasting life. You’ve been leading a life contrary to the will and ways of God, it’s a simple matter of repentance, turning around, instead of going away from God, turn around and cast yourself into the arms of God, and He’ll receive you to Himself for whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.** Jesus said that the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. So it doesn’t matter where you’ve been or what you’ve done God loves you, and wants to do a cleansing work in you, all you have to do is ask.

#### Prayer Points:

God I’m not sure that we’ll ever comprehend the price that You were willing to pay that we might know You, be forgiven *by* You, and walk forever *with* You. But God we thank You, and we desire to lead lives set apart *to* You as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable which is our reasonable service. Teach us what it means to lead holy lives, not weighed down by compromise or the things of this world. Help us to recognize those things that though they may be lawful, yet they’re not expedient or helpful, that we might place You, and Your will 1<sup>st</sup> in our lives. May we recognize that we’re not our own, but that we belong to You, so God may we *glorify* You in our bodies, have Your way in us.