

Copyright © Two Journeys Ministry

Andrew M. Davis

Sermon Notes

[www.twojourneys.org](http://www.twojourneys.org)

Please use in accordance with the copyright policy found at [twojourneys.org](http://twojourneys.org)

## **Your Body Belongs to Christ, So Flee Sexual Immorality**

**1 Corinthians 6:12-20**

### I. Our Sexual Crisis is Nothing New

#### A. Our Nation is in a Sexual Crisis

1. Much of it tied to internet pornography... but also revealed in the #MeToo movement exposing many forms of sexual immorality
2. Statistics revealing our sexual addictions are staggering and deeply saddening, especially connected with internet pornography

Every Day:

2.5 billion emails containing porn are sent or received.

68 million search queries related to pornography- 25% of total searches- are generated.

About 200,000 Americans are classified as “porn addicts.”

One-third of porn viewers are women.

Beyond the internet, there are other staggering statistics:

40% of kids in public high schools have had intercourse at least once

Half of the 20 million new STDs reported each year were among young people, between the ages of 15 to 24

The online dating agency called “Ashley Madison” was founded in 2002, advertised with this memorable tagline: **“Life is short, have an affair.”**

In 2015, hackers stole their customer data and some noteworthy Christian leaders were found to have been enrolled, much to their shame and the shame of the church of Jesus Christ. Overall, 25% of those enrolled in this agency claimed to be Christians

All of this points to the devastating weakness that sex continues to be for the godly in this present world... so it has been since the time of Adam and Eve

So our sexual crisis is nothing new

#### B. The Corinthians' Sins

1. It appears that some members of the Corinthian church were frequenting temple prostitutes
2. This was a regular part of the pagan religion... the natural drives for food and sex were harnessed in the service of pagan religions
3. Gods and goddesses were worshiped in part by indulging in these drives—the yearning for meat to eat and for sexual pleasure
4. Normal wickedness all over the pagan world; the very thing that Israel had to deal with when they entered the Promised Land and were surrounded by Canaanites doing the same things
5. Even worse, it seems members of the Corinthian church were arguing doctrinally for their right to visit the temple prostitutes
  - a. Basically, “We are people of the Spirit. Our faith in Christ has moved us to a higher spiritual plane. What we do with our bodies means nothing because the body is not important.”
  - b. A false view of Christian freedom... “**All things are lawful for me**”... a slogan Paul quotes four times in this letter

#### C. Paul addresses the Corinthians' sexual problems DOCTRINALLY

1. Addresses false doctrine about their **bodies**, and their **freedoms**

***1 Corinthians 6:13 The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.***

2. This assertion is PROVED by the doctrine of the resurrection... BOTH Christ's resurrection and ours. If God didn't care about the body, why was Christ physically raised from the dead? And why will he also raise our bodies from the dead? So a Christian's body MATTERS, and what we do with the body MATTERS!!
3. Next, Paul argues against going to temple prostitutes; the Corinthian church members failed to understand the true nature both of sex (“The two become one flesh”) and of Christian conversion (“one is joined to the Lord, so we become ONE WITH JESUS IN SPIRIT”) You can't take Christ's members and join them to a prostitute

4. Next, he DIRECTLY FORBIDS sexual immorality with a clear command: “Flee sexual immorality” and shows how sexual immorality is an assault on their own bodies
5. Finally, he roots all of this in the fact that their bodies are TEMPLES of the Holy Spirit, and that the Spirit lives within us, and that our bodies are NOT OUR OWN... we have been BOUGHT with a price... we are not free to do whatever we want with our bodies, but we are slaves of Christ

## II. “All Things Are Lawful”: Christian Freedom Rightly Understood

***1 Corinthians 6:12 "All things are lawful for me"-- but not everything is beneficial. " All things are lawful for me "-- but I will not be mastered by anything.***

### A. Christian Freedom Asserted... and Misunderstood

1. Paul is probably quoting some Corinthian SLOGAN here... that’s why most translations have it in quotation marks...
2. ANYTHING GOES! I can do whatever I want!!
3. Misunderstanding the freedom Christ gives us from the law

***Romans 6:14 you are not under law, but under grace.***

4. Paul taught that idols are really just blocks of wood, stone or metal; Christ declared all foods clean, so we can eat meat sacrificed to idols
5. BUT they extended this freedom to sex with temple prostitutes

### B. True Christian Freedom

1. Paul restricts their slogan, “All things are lawful for me”

***1 Corinthians 6:12 " All things are lawful for me"-- but not everything is beneficial. " All things are lawful for me"-- but I will not be mastered by anything.***

2. True freedom is NOT doing whatever your fleshly drives want you to do... “If it feels good, DO IT!” NO!!!!
3. True Christian freedom is freedom from SIN

***John 8:34, 36 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ... So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.***

4. Christian freedom is defined by the way Jesus lived:

***John 8:29 I always do what pleases [my Father].***

### C. Enslaved by Sin

***1 Corinthians 6:12 "All things are lawful for me"-- but I will not be mastered by anything.***

1. The image is one of enslavement... we are MASTERED by whatever we habitually do
2. The drive of the flesh toward food and sex and sleep and sensual pleasures is relentless and always tends toward HABITS, ADDICTIONS, and enslavement
3. That's the essence of the sin nature: it takes normal physical desires and pushes them beyond boundaries God has set up, and then enslaves us to them
4. The Corinthians who were going to temple prostitutes were enslaved by their lusts, and were making doctrinal excuses

D. Don't Live for Food

***1 Corinthians 6:13 "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food"-- but God will destroy them both.***

1. Probably another slogan from the Corinthians; pointing to the eating that went hand in hand with the life at the pagan temple
2. Paul seizes on it to point out their FLESHLY mindset
3. It is true that food and the stomach were made for each other... God knows that we need FOOD... he designed food to taste delicious and be nutritious
4. BUT we were not put on the planet to eat, sleep, get old and die
5. BOTH food and the stomach are temporal... they will all pass away
6. We were MADE FOR ETERNITY! Not for eating food

E. Application: Self-control in amoral pleasures

1. American Christians are surrounded at all times by a sea of amoral pleasures, and many are drowning in them
2. We have lawful pleasures galore— food, drink, movies, music, hobbies, comfortable furniture, luxury items that enrich our lives
3. These things are LAWFUL or PERMISSIBLE for us, but have we become MASTERED or ENSLAVED by them?
4. One simple test for enslavement: FAST FROM IT for a time

- a. Smartphones: TOOL and TOY; tool = using it to do productive labor; toy = games and websites that entertain; FAST: Go a day or even a week without using your smartphone for anything fun
- b. Or try a week or month off from all Netflix or any other media entertainment; or YouTube videos
- c. Some people would benefit from a weekly fast from food: choose one day a week (Tuesday) to fast from food for a month
- d. Fasting is a powerful tool for exposing if some LAWFUL PLEASURE has actually enslaved you; it is your master

#### F. Immoral Pleasures Enslave As Well

1. Paul addresses sexual immorality... visiting temple prostitutes
2. There is a power game there as well, of domination and mastery

***Proverbs 6:25-28 Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes, <sup>26</sup> for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread, and the adulteress preys upon your very life. <sup>27</sup> Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned? <sup>28</sup> Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched?***

***Proverbs 7*** describes an immoral woman who uses her alluring clothes, her beautiful face, her bold ways to entrap and young man and entice him to go to bed with her... he is ensnared by her ***little knowing it will cost him his life***

#### G. The Addiction of Internet Pornography

1. So many people are MASTERED by the allure of pornography; addicted by these relentless images
2. They are wrapped up in invisible chains of lust and addiction

### III. A Holy Understanding of Our Bodies

***1 Corinthians 6:13-14 The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. <sup>14</sup> By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also.***

- A. Verse 13 is the key point... God did not design us for food... but even more he did not design our bodies for sexual immorality
- B. He built our bodies for HIMSELF... for his own glory! That's where this entire chapter is heading

***1 Corinthians 6:20 honor God with your body.***

### C. Our Bodies Are a Marvelous Gift from God... and Part of His Redemption Plan

1. The Greek philosophers denigrated the body... the physical was repulsive; they yearned for the pure realm of the spirit
2. Bodily functions were disgusting to the pure Greek philosophies
3. Biblical view is radically different; God created physical universe; called everything “very good”; including the human body:

***Psalm 139:14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.***

The staggering complexity of the human brain, with as many neural interconnections as leaves in the Amazonian rainforest

The almost inconceivable complexity of the human hand... all the ways it can move and articulate and touch lightly and grip powerfully... like the skillful fingers of a concert pianist, or the powerful grip of a rock climber hanging by four fingers on the rock face of El Capitan in Yosemite

The human eye possesses 130 million light-sensitive rods and cones that convert light into chemical impulses. These signals travel at a rate of a billion per second to the brain.

The amazing ability of the ear to separate out a pressure waves from different sources that hits the eardrum as a single composite wave and be able to discern different sources of those two sounds – two different coins jingling on a countertop; or a guitar and a piano both playing an “A” at the same time and you can hear the difference, and even locate where the instruments are relative to you

God made the marvels of the human body; when Adam fell into sin, our bodies became “bodies of sin and death”

### D. Christ’s Incarnation

1. God chose that his only begotten Son should become human, should take on human flesh

***John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.***

2. Furthermore, Jesus’ life in the flesh was the same as ours... he ate foods—chewing them and swallowing them; he felt cold and heat; he was soaked by the spray from the Sea of Galilee, he became tired and slept in the back of the boat; he could feel pain... he bled when whipped, he died when he was crucified... the soldier drove the spear into his side and blood and water flowed out

#### E. Christ's Resurrection

1. But the key issue here is the resurrection from the dead
2. Christ did not transcend the physical realm into the spiritual... he rose from the dead in a PHYSICAL BODY, one that could be touched, one that could eat food... but also could never die again

#### F. Our Resurrection

1. So also Christ will raise us from the dead as well
2. In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul will develop this fully and powerfully

***1 Corinthians 6:14 By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also.***

3. This means that the body is a MAJOR PART of God's salvation plan for us
4. The body matters, and what you do with your body matters
5. So, this should push us toward a HOLY ESTEEM of our bodies right now, that we would use them for God's purposes
6. Paul perfectly sums up what he is demanding from us in Romans 6

***Romans 6:13-14 Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. <sup>14</sup> For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.***

#### IV. Sexual Immorality Offends the Lord Jesus

***1 Corinthians 6:15-17 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! <sup>16</sup> 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." <sup>17</sup> But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.***

#### A. Paul Expands the Doctrine... The Body was Made for the Lord

1. So that means that our bodies are MEMBERS of Christ
2. Christ is intimately connected with our bodies... He uses them to move out and serve and speak his words and walk miles to take the gospel to the lost... our bodies are vehicles of Christ's advancing kingdom on earth
3. We are ONE with Christ spiritually; His Spirit moves in us and moves our bodies to work his will on planet earth

B. Therefore, SHALL WE TAKE THE MEMBERS OF CHRIST AND UNITE THEM WITH A PROSTITUTE?? **NEVER!!!!**

1. There's a sense of utter horror here!
2. It's similar to this:

***James 3:9-10 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men... <sup>10</sup> Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be.***

3. But infinitely worse! Out of the same body come service to Christ and sex with a prostitute?! NEVER!!
4. The temple prostitute is representing a demonic religion; there is a demonic reality behind her; the Christian man is uniting himself with her in a grotesque union with demonic forces
5. So Paul says "MAY IT NEVER BE!"
6. A sense of horror about sexual sin is the only mental state sufficient to fight this evil

C. Sexual Union with a Prostitute

***1 Corinthians 6:16 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."***

1. The Corinthians were underestimating sexual union...
2. They were looking on it as a casual thing... just as many do today with language that minimizes the significance of it... old terms like a "fling" or "affair" or newer terms like "hooking up"... all innocuous euphemisms that minimize what is going on
3. Paul quotes the text from Genesis 2:24 about marriage... ***"for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife and the two will become one flesh."***
4. But now, that's what you did with a temple prostitute!
5. Sexual union is never casual; it has overwhelming and lasting consequences

D. We Need to Make Our Sexual Lives Deeply Connected to Our Lives as Christians

***1 Corinthians 6:17 But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.***

1. Our union with Christ is deep and eternal

2. Satan would try to deceive us that we can walk with Jesus, and then ask if he'd **leave us alone for a few hours**
3. Extends to imaginary union with the pornographic images online

***Matthew 5:28 anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.***

Jesus prescribed radical and savage attack to address it:

***Matthew 5:29 If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.***

#### V. Sexual Immorality Offends Our Bodies

***1 Corinthians 6:18 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.***

##### A. Simple Command: FLEE

1. We are to FLEE... run away... from sexual immorality
2. The word implies a great danger, that the only remedy is to put immediate space between us and the deadly threat

Clear image from Joseph's experience with Potiphar's wife... as she looked at him and lusted after him and allured him day after day... he avoided her whenever he could, and when she cornered him, he ran for his life!

Sexual temptation is too strong for us to resist... the best thing we can do is to avoid being in all tempting situations at all costs

***1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way of escape so that you can stand up under it.***

A way of escape = FLEE!!

##### B. Paul's Reasons: The Assault of Sexual Immorality on the Body

1. Certainly other sins hurt the body... like drunkenness (alcoholism) can eventually destroy your liver and kill you
2. Overeating can give you heart disease and kill you
3. In the same way, sexual immorality can result in grave illnesses that are life-threatening

STDs : AIDS, HPV, syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, other dreadful illnesses...  
 CDC estimates 110 million cases of STDs in US

***Romans 1:27 Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.***

4. These diseases are constantly morphing, developing strains that are immune to antibiotics...

## VI. Sexual Immorality Offends the Holy Spirit

***1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; <sup>20</sup> you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.***

### A. A Christian's Body is a Temple of the Holy Spirit

1. We have noted many times from Ephesians 2 and 1 Peter 2 that the entire church is a spiritual temple made up of living stones
2. But this text is individualized... each and every Christian is INDWELT by the Holy Spirit... the third person of the Trinity

***John 14:16-17 the Spirit of truth... lives with you and will be in you.***

3. By the indwelling Spirit we have continual fellowship with God

***John 14:23 "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.***

4. This indwelling by God makes sexual immorality so evil... we must intensify our sense of God with us and in us by the Spirit

### B. You Are Christ's Slave

1. Paul uses slave language here... we are NOT OUR OWN... we were BOUGHT WITH A PRICE
2. Paul consistently calls himself a "bondslave of Jesus Christ"
3. A slave lives to do his master's will... not whatever he wants to do
4. So this is applied to the original statement: "All things are lawful for me"... I am free to do whatever I want...
5. NO YOU'RE NOT! We were designed to be slaves, and in the end, we will be slaves either to sin or to God
6. The infinite price of Christ's blood was paid to redeem us from our former master—Satan/sin/death... and to serve our new master, Jesus Christ... we

must STOP thinking independently and arrogantly, and say to ourselves at every moment: I am not my own, I was bought by the blood of Jesus!

C. Final Conclusion: GLORIFY GOD WITH YOUR BODY!

## VII. Applications

A. Non-Christian: Come to Christ!

B. Christians: FLEE SEXUAL IMMORALITY!

1. Let me speak to you young people... teens and college students
2. The atmosphere you are growing up in here in America is increasingly PAGAN and super-sexualized
3. You need to stand firm in sexual purity... be very clear in your mind what Christ wants from you
  - a. Fornication is a sin... sex outside of marriage; it is absolutely seen as normal in our culture;

Young man on an airplane... a college student at one of the state universities... good looking, spends lots of time in the gym. He was aware of the sexual morals of the Bible, but felt they were wrong! He wanted to be able to have sex with his girlfriend, and honestly didn't see anything wrong with it

The truth of the Bible has to rule over the hearts of Christian young people... FLEE sexual immorality!

- b. Resolve to be pure sexually... to save yourselves for marriage
- c. If you have already sinned in this area, repent from it and seek the forgiveness and cleansing that Christ alone can give; and resolve to live up to God's holy standards from now on
4. Married Couples: we will be talking even over the next few weeks about the responsibility you have to each other to come together sexually in a holy and faithful way, to protect each other from sin

C. Internet Pornography

1. This is a call to recognize that the Spirit of Christ is in you ALL THE TIME... and he can and will give you the power to put sin to death

John Owen "You must mortify! You must make it your daily work. You must be constantly at it while you live. Cease not a day from this work! **Be killing sin, or sin will be killing you!**