

## 1 Corinthians 6:12-20: Glorify God With Your Body

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1 Corinthians

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### Introduction

- Vacation at a friend's mountain house - didn't belong to us - wanted to leave it as clean as possible because we want to return some day. It didn't belong to us, so we treated it with more care than we treat the stuff that does belong to us.
- You live in a culture that tells you that your body belongs to you. And you need to be the you that you want to be. Culture tells us we need to embrace and celebrate whatever someone chooses to do with their body.
- God's Word tells us something completely different than our culture. Scripture tells us that your body doesn't belong to you. It belongs to God, so it matters how you treat your body.
- Question from [1 Corinthians 6:12-20](#): Will you honor God with your physical body? Or, will you give into your sinful cravings and do with your body what you want to do with it?
- This is a difficult passage where Paul addresses sexual sin head on. Paul wanted the believers in Corinth to know that their bodies did not belong to themselves but to God, and they needed to honor God with their bodies.
- Three ways to fight sexual sin from this passage of Scripture.

## You need to acknowledge that your body belongs to God.

- In Corinthian culture, sexual sin was rampant. Paul already alluded to it in [1 Corinthians 6:9-11](#).
- Temple prostitution was rampant in Corinth. Sex was a part of the worship of pagan gods. The prevailing attitude of men: marriage was for producing heirs and social alliances, not for sexual satisfaction. That's what prostitution was for.
- According to some historians, as many as 1,000 temple prostitutes in Corinth. Based on the population, 1 in every 30 women were prostitutes.
- vs. 12 - For believers in Corinth, apparently some were stepping outside of their marriages for sexual gratification, and they were using Christian freedom as an excuse. They said, "Everything is permissible." Maybe the argument was, "Jesus has forgiven me of all my sins, so why does it matter?" Or, "Jesus has made me free... I'm free to do with my body what I want."
- Just because sin is forgiven doesn't mean that now sin is permissible or beneficial for you. Paul's counter is "You might say everything is permissible, but I will not be mastered by anything." It's easy to be mastered by sexual sin. Paul had one master, Jesus.
- Jesus has set you free from sin, He has not set you free to sin.
- vs. 13 - Corinthians viewed sex like they viewed food - a biological need. In their minds, ultimately, their bodies were disposable. God would do away with their bodies, so it didn't matter what they did with their bodies. From their perspective, God was far more concerned with their souls than their bodies. Their logic: As long as I love God with my soul, what does it matter what I do with my body? Or, what I do with my body doesn't affect who I am on the inside.

- Influence of Plato - dualism - body and soul are distinct and separate. What matters is who I am on the inside. Or, just do what you want with your body, because what matters to God that I'm a good, honest person that loves people. What matters is who I am on the inside.
- vs. 13-14 - You're body and soul are intricately intertwined. You are a WHOLE person. Your BODY and SOUL matters to God. Jesus was a whole person - and also fully God. He rose from the dead, and some day you will rise from the dead. Eternity is not a disembodied soul floating on the cloud. When Christ returns, He will resurrect your body, and your body will be reunited with your soul, and for all of eternity you will exist in a glorified body as a whole person.
- Since God sent His Son to die and rise again for you so you can look forward to resurrected life, your body belongs to Him. He paid the price through the death of His Son to purchase you out of sin and death. Your WHOLE person belongs to Him. Therefore, you do not exist to gratify your bodily desires, you exist to honor the Lord.
- **Don't believe these three lies:**
- **It's my body.** The lie of this culture - it's your body to do with what you want. The culture tells you to be true to your desires. NOT TRUE. You were created for God and you were redeemed from your sin for His glory.
- **I must listen to my body.** The lie: It's just biology. Or, sex is like eating - If I'm hungry I feed my appetite. You must listen to God, not your bodily urges. You belong to Him. You were bought with a price ([1 Corinthians 6:20](#)).
- **What consenting adults do with their bodies harms no one.** NOT TRUE. Marriages are harmed. You are harmed. The person you consent with is harmed because sex is never just biological or recreational. It is always an intertwining of persons at the deepest levels. Facts: some of the biggest regrets people have are sexual regrets. Some of the greatest

shame people feel is over past sexual sins. Some of the greatest emptiness people feel is when sexual sin doesn't deliver on what it promises.

## You need to embrace the gift of oneness inside of marriage.

- Sex is never just physical. It's never just casual. Sex always attaches you with someone else at a deep level. That's why God created sex: to attach you at the deepest levels with one person for life. Sex is physically, but it is also profoundly spiritual.
- vs. 15 - You belong to Christ. You are united with Him. Why would you take what's united with Christ and join it to a prostitute? Of, if you're a follower of Jesus attached to Christ, why would you sinfully attach yourself to someone else for the sake of your own sexual gratification when you know that Jesus, who you are attached to, has a better way for you?
- vs. 16 - That sinful encounter with a prostitute, or a person who is not your spouse, is a soul joining encounter. It's not just physical. By the nature of what sex is, it is uniting two into one ([Genesis 2:24](#)).
- **Sex always engages the whole person.** It's never just physical. Sex is meant to bring two people together as one in the context of biblical marriage. Yet, in our culture, people join together all the time in sexual sin with no desire to actually be one in all things. In our culture sex is transactional and self-serving. Sex outside of marriage communicates, "I want your body, but I don't want you as a whole person. I don't want commitment. I just want to use you for my gratification." Some of you are in these kinds of relationships right now, and you are in sin. You need to repent.
- **God's design for sex is life-giving.** The world's design is life-taking. It may feel life-giving in the moment, but it leaves you empty and often

broken-hearted. In sex inside of marriage, when you give your body to your spouse, you're not just saying, "I give you my body." You're saying, "I give you my whole life. I'm committed to you for your good and God's glory." Inside of marriage, sex always points to the Gospel. As uniting and satisfying as sex is, and as much of a celebration of love sex is, it points us to a greater oneness, a greater love, and a greater satisfaction that is found only in Christ.

- Sex is a reminder of the promises you made on your wedding day, and those promises point you to the even greater promises of Jesus who promised to never leave you nor forsake you, who promised to be with you for eternity, an eternal union that no one can separate you from.
- Sex is not just a bodily function, it is profoundly spiritual, and in its proper context, it is a beautiful picture of love and union that points us to the love of Jesus. Sex is never ultimate, but it does point us to the One who is ultimate: Jesus.

## **You need to flee from what pollutes God's design.**

- vs. 18 - Paul's command: Flee sexual immorality. All other sins are outside the body while sexual sin is against the body. All sin is sinful, and all sin deserves punishment. However, no other sin affects you quite like sexual sin. Sexual sin 1. rejects God's design. 2. It is a sin against someone else because you have used someone as an object for your pleasure. 3. It is a sin against yourself because you have given of your body and soul to someone who is not your spouse.
- vs. 19 - Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. When Paul writes, the temple still stands in Jerusalem. What would never happen in the temple of God in Jerusalem was sexual activity. It was a holy place, and in Jerusalem, priests worked to protect the sacredness of the temple.

- However, the Spirit of God didn't indwell the temple in Jerusalem. The Spirit of God indwells believers. Your body is a sacred space. vs. 20 - you were bought with a price, redeemed by God and for God. [1 Corinthians 6:11](#): you've been washed, sanctified, and justified. Just like you wouldn't pollute the temple in Jerusalem with sexual perversion, why would you pollute your own body with sexual perversion? Your body is a sacred space inhabited by the Spirit of God. Glorify God with your body.
- Sexual sin is rampant in our culture, and even in our churches. How can you flee? How can you glorify God with your body?
- **Flee to Christ.** Flee from sexual sin by fleeing to the One who you know who has something better for you. For some, this is a call to once and all give your life to Jesus by repenting of your sins and believing that Jesus died and rose again so that you could have eternal life. What you need is for Jesus to change your heart and life this morning.
- **Make a decision now!** Determine that God's way is best and obey Him. If single, a teenager, etc. The enemy is coming hard after you. Stand strong! If you are married, you're not exempt from sexual temptation. If you give in, it will only result in destruction. Make a decision now that you will live as who you are in Christ.
- **Don't be afraid to have necessary conversations.** Men, we need each other. Women, you need each other. We need people who will hold us accountable and have hard conversations with us. Parents, don't be afraid to have conversations with your children about God's design.
- **Feed your soul.** Are you feeding your soul with the lies of the world? Are you feeding your soul with media and images that cause your mind and heart to wander sexually? Are you feeding your soul with pornography? Inappropriate conversations? Or, are you feeding your soul with the things of God ([Colossians 3:1](#), [Philippians 4:8](#)).

- **Cherish what God cherishes.** God has a high view of your body. He sees you as a whole person whom He loves and cherishes. You need to see you as God sees you, and you need to see your body as something worth cherishing and protecting, not just as a biological clump of cells and tissue to gratify your desires.
- **Fight for God's design.** Let's not be ashamed to talk about sex by God's design. Let's not be afraid to celebrate God's design for marriage. For some, fighting for God's design means this morning repenting of sexual sin. It may mean stopping a relationship that is sinful. It may mean moving out of the house of your girlfriend/boyfriend that you are living with. However God is calling you to respond, glorify God with your body.=