

Pursuing Purity in an Impure World

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Paul is writing to believers living in a sex-saturated culture where sexual sin is accepted as normal and natural. He gives us ammunition to fight temptation: 3 reasons why the pleasure of sexual sin is NEVER worth the cost.

Why say 'no' to sexual sin?

1. Sexual sin enslaves you (v12)

- Verse 12 begins a slogan used by Corinthian believers to justify sexual sin
 - If we are free from the Law, why not do whatever we want?
- Paul doesn't refute the slogan, but he does refute the application
 - While Jesus' death removed the *penalty* of sin, it didn't remove the *consequences*
 - The consequence of sexual sin is "mastery" – slavery, addiction
- Multiple studies demonstrate that repeated use of porn manipulates and rewires the stimulus/reward mechanism in your brain just like heroin and cocaine
- Sexual sin builds habits that turn into addictions
- When God sets boundaries on sexuality it's not because He's mean, old-fashioned, or a prude! It's because He loves us and wants to protect us from what enslaves.

2. Sexual sin betrays Jesus

- The Corinthians were equating appetite for food with appetite for sex (v13)
 - Since sex is like food – a temporary craving satisfied with a part of your body that will die – there must be no spiritual significance to sex
- Purpose of this slogan: **minimize value of our bodies to justify doing what we want**
 - Hard and fast divide between the spiritual, which is important, and the physical, which is not.
 - So do whatever you want with your body since it doesn't matter
- Paul doesn't agree – your body is neither temporary nor insignificant (v13-15,19-20)
- 3 reasons why God cares about our bodies and what we do with them
 - 1) Your physical body belongs to the Lord
 - V14: "for the Lord" – it belongs to Him
 - V19-20: you are not your own... you were bought with a price
 - Spiritually speaking, we are all slaves – either to sin or to Jesus
 - 2) Your physical body is eternal (v14)
 - The Greeks were wrong about afterlife – God will resurrect your body

- Therefore sex is a moral issue (and so is food!)
- 3) Your physical body is God's home on earth (v19)
 - In the OT, God's home was the literal temple in Jerusalem
 - Now God's home is in the lives of His people on earth
 - Your body is precious to Jesus because it's His temple

3. Sexual sin damages you for life (v16-18)

- In 1st century Corinth and 21st century America, we minimize the significance of sex
- Quote in verse 16 comes from Genesis 2 – when God invented marriage
 - Sex makes you “one flesh” whether you intended to or not
- **For humans, sex is not just a biological act, but a spiritual and relational event**
- Therefore, there is NO SUCH THING AS CASUAL SEX
- That's the point of v18 – **sexual immorality is a sin against your own body**
- For those of you who are not yet married
 - You look forward to becoming “one flesh” with your spouse through sex
 - Don't damage that “one flesh” relationship before it's even begun!
- Sex is SO MUCH MORE POWERFUL AND SIGNIFICANT than our society realizes

If you are feeling incredible guilt, shame, regret, know that...

...You are not alone

- Vast majority of us have fallen to sexual sin in some form at some point
- Satan wants us to think that we're alone, but we're not

...You are not beyond God's love and forgiveness

- John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world” – all people without exception
- Jesus died for ALL PEOPLE and ALL SIN
- Because God loves all and Jesus died for all, God now offers forgiveness as a free gift
- If you have believed, you are forgiven! Just believe it!

...You can be healed and delivered from sexual sin

- God can heal you of past sin and deliver you from future sin...
- **IF you will fill your mind with the truth of God's Word**
 - Challenge: memorize these 3 biblical reasons for purity
 - Challenge: memorize verses 18-20
- **IF you will get help from God's people**
 - Practice accountability
 - Celebrate Recovery – Tuesdays here at Southwood campus at 7pm
 - Meet with a pastor or counselor or small group leader

When temptation comes remember... The pleasure of sexual sin is NEVER worth the cost