

Study 3 - 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

When it comes to sex, these days it seems like anything goes. Nothing is shocking anymore, all options are equally valid, and if it hasn't been seen on Big Brother yet, just wait til next week's episode. Corinthian society was no different, and the Christians in Corinth were either seduced by the attitude around them, or went to the opposite extreme. We'll see one extreme here, and the other in Chapter 7.



Personal Preparation Day 1 – 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

1. Paul quotes a Corinthian catch-phrase in verse 12: "Everything is permissible for me". What are the two responses Paul has to this attitude?
2. He follows this up with another saying in verse 13: "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food". What does this mean, what is he hinting at (beyond food), and how does he speak against it?
3. Some of the Corinthians thought their spirits were eternal, but their bodies were not. This meant it didn't matter to them what they did with their "disposable bodies". In verse 14, what event does Paul say has refuted this thinking?
4. What effect does this future event have on the way we use and treat our bodies now? (verses 15-17)
5. What reasons does Paul give in verses 18-20 for Christians to "flee from sexual immorality"?

Personal Preparation Day 2 – The temple

So far in 1 Corinthians, Paul has said a number of times that the Corinthian Christians are the "temple of God". In order to understand the gravity, depth and importance of that image, let's take a look at a few key passages.

Read 1 Kings 8:1-21

After the building has been described in the previous two chapters, this chapter shows us the climax of the temple story.

As you read this story, what would you say are the important elements of the temple?

Read Matthew 23:16-22

In this passage, Jesus is critiquing the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. What insight do we gain about what Jesus saw as the most important element of the temple?

Finally, read John 2:18-22

Jesus has just cleared the temple, and the Jews demanded a sign from him. What change is occurring in regard to the place where God dwells, and where people come to meet God?

Considering all you've just read about the temple, what is the significance of Paul calling Christians the "temple of the Holy Spirit"?

Group Discussion Questions

The world talks a lot about sex but it's often thought that Christians are too embarrassed, or are too old-fashioned, to really have anything relevant to say. However, the Creator knows how his creation should use what he's given, and he cares how they use it.

1. How do you think the world views sex today? Is it liberating, enslaving, or somewhere in between?

Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

2. What questions, comments or observations did you have from reading the passage this week?

3. How do Paul's answers to the sayings in verses 1 & 2 show us what Paul expects regarding sex and self-control?

4. According to this passage, how does Jesus' resurrection relate to sex and sexual immorality?

5. In the Old Testament, the temple was God's holy place. It was the place of God's presence, so it had to be clean and pure. But, says Paul, now God's Spirit lives in his people, so we are his temple. What impact does Paul say this should have on the way we live?

6. What is the difference between sexual sins and other sins, according to Paul? Is he saying some sins are worse than others?

7. How does Paul bring the whole argument together in verses 19-20?

8. People think the Bible's teaching about sex is outdated. How does this passage show that the Bible has **always** been at odds with the views of society?

THINK:

a. How does the death and resurrection of Jesus help us view and work through sexual temptation?

b. Apart from sexual temptation, in what other ways do we need to think about honouring God in everything we do with our bodies?

c. How does this passage warn against dividing up life, or thinking that any part of life is off-limits to God?

Coming Up...

- Newcomers Lunch (Sun, 27 Apr)

For Prayer...

- Praise God that through the death & resurrection of Jesus, there is nothing that cannot be forgiven.
- Pray that in our new life with Christ, we might honour God with how we use our bodies.