

Spiritual Bodies

Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

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

1. Paul quotes a Corinthian catch-phrase in verse 1: "*Everything is permissible for me*". What are the two comebacks (in the same verse) that Paul gives to this attitude?

2. Some of the Corinthians thought their spirits were eternal but their bodies were not, so it didn't matter what they did with their "disposable bodies." How does the resurrection of Jesus refute this attitude (verse 14)?

3. In verse 15 Paul takes the argument further. What is his point, and how should it change their attitude about what they do with their bodies?

4. 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. How should this change the way we live?

In John 4, Jesus is talking about the same thing. A Samaritan woman asks about worship at the temple in Jerusalem. Read what happens: ²¹Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

The Israelites used to come to the temple to worship God. Now there's a dramatic change. From now on *all of life is worship!* From now on, *everything we do is* spiritual because the Holy Spirit is within us. There's nothing in our daily lives that doesn't matter to God - because his Spirit is part of everything we do!

6. How does Paul bring his whole argument together in verses 19-20?

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 People think the Bible's teaching about sex is outdated.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

8. If sexual temptation is a problem for you, how does focussing on Jesus' death relevant?
9. Whether or not that specific temptation is a problem for you, what other ways do we need to think about honouring God in everything we do with our bodies?
10. How does this passage warn against dividing up life or thinking that any part of life is off limits to God?

Action Plan

Paul offers a very clear action plan if you're tempted by sexual immorality. It's in verse 18. He says, flee from it! Run for your life! Stay away! Again, speaking statistically, in a church the size of ours there will be a number of people caught up in sexual immorality *right now*. As you read these words, why not work out an immediate action plan. Fleeing sexual immorality may be costly. It may mean changing jobs. It may mean ending a friendship. It may mean having nothing more to do with someone you feel strongly about. Flee anyway! Remember, you are not your own... you were bought at a price. Therefore, honour God with your body!

Do it!