

The Case for Purity

Series: "Building Up God's Family," Part 15 of 48

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

The Geography of Corinth.

- Greece is two large land masses, divided by Aegean Sea on East and Ionian Sea on West
- Isthmus of Corinth is _____ miles wide
- Destroyed in 146 BC, rebuilt in 44 BC by Julius Caesar, became a _____ town

Corinth is Like a College Campus.

- Nobody was "from" Corinth, no _____ accountability structures
- Most of the people were _____, an enormous sexual energy
- "To Corinthianize" came to mean "to practice _____ immorality."
- Aphrodite was the goddess of _____, with over 1000 temple prostitutes.

The Church in Corinth Like a Campus Ministry.

- Church was a young church, with new _____.
- The Christians believed you held onto your sex purity, and you gave away your money— sex was _____.
- The Pagan world believed you held onto your money, and gave away your sexual purity— money was _____.
- Epistle of Diognetus: "We Christians share our table with all but we don't share our _____ with all."
- People thought Christians were _____!

Various Responses to a Culture of Sex

1. Some would fall back into their _____ (1 Corinthians 5:1).
2. Some said, "it is best to _____ with sex completely," but Paul told married couples, "Do not deprive each other." (1 Corinthians 7:5).
3. Some said, "everything is _____" (1 Corinthians 6:12), but Paul preached that Christian freedom has limits.

The Believer Has Remarkable _____, But Our Freedom Has Limits

We must realize from the outset that when Paul speaks of freedom, he is not referring to those things God has clearly forbidden, such as are found in the Ten Commandments. He is saying that all things not expressly forbidden by God are permissible. But that leaves an amazing amount of liberty for the NT Christian, especially as compared to an OT believer. Under the Old Covenant a Jew was subject to 613 commandments, which covered just about every aspect of his life. In contrast the NT Christian has relatively few do's and don'ts to follow. Our diets are not prescribed, our worship times and procedures are a matter of personal preference, we have virtually no ceremonial rules to follow, and civil and criminal codes are delegated to the state rather than the Church. The larger part of our daily decisions are open to individual judgment. Ours is not a rule-book sort of religious faith.

—Pastor Mike Andrus

- Some permissible actions are not _____.
- Some freely chosen actions become controlling _____.

SIX REASON WHY SEX OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE IS NOT AN AREA OF CHRISTIAN FREEDOM

1. Our Bodies Were Not Designed for _____, but for the Lord (vs. 13) and Ultimately, for Resurrection (vs. 14).

(1 Cor 6:13-14 NIV) "*Food for the stomach and the stomach for food*"--but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. {14} By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also.

2. Our Bodies Are Actually _____ of Jesus Christ.

(1 Cor 6:15 NLT) *Don't you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ? Should a man take his body, which belongs to Christ, and join it to a prostitute? Never!*

3. Immorality Severs the Body from the _____, Creating a Monstrosity.

(1 Cor 6:16-17 NIV) *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." {17} But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.*

4. Sex is a Foretaste of _____ with Christ in Heaven.

(1 Cor 6:17 NIV) *But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.*

5. Immorality is Uniquely Self-_____.

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

6. Our Bodies Are _____ for the Holy Spirit

(1 Cor 6:19-20 NIV) *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; {20} you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.*

Asking the Right Questions in Dealing with Sexual Sin.

I wonder if the real problem is that we are focusing on the wrong question. When the primary question we are asking is, "How can I defeat this sin?" we end up unknowingly fostering a spiritual growth path that breeds self-effort, secrecy and shame. People may be trying hard to defeat this sin, but "trying hard" doesn't seem to be working. They feel like failures yet are too afraid to admit that to anyone else. Let me suggest three alternative questions . . .

– Alan Smith in *EFCA Today*, Summer 2009

1. What am I thirsty for?
2. Where is Jesus in my struggle?
3. Whom else have I invited into this struggle?

Our Goal at Saint Paul's: A Culture of B_____.