

PARENTS – I will be talking about **SEXUAL SIN** today.

Open your Bibles. Title of the message today, “It’s My Body, I’ll Do What I want.”
We’re going back to 1 Corinthians Chapter 6:12-20.

I will be talking about sexual sin today and that would rate this message in the PG area.

The average age now for first time exposure to pornography in our culture has decreased from eleven years old to nine years old. Nine years old, is the average age for first time porn exposure. 65% of kids from nine to thirteen regularly look at porn. Over 90% of all high schoolers look at porn regularly. That is the society we live in.

It seems the Corinthians had a problem with thinking that what they did with their bodies was separate from the important spiritual and eternal things of life, including their life with Christ. And because of the sex-driven culture the Corinthians lived in, they worked hard to not have to address their sexual sin – just as the church in our culture does today.

And so in our verses today, Paul makes an incredible “case” proving what we do with our bodies *does matter*. It matters very much – *to the Lord*. And Paul makes it clear today that what we do with our bodies affects us *spiritually* in a very dramatic way. So let’s buckle up and get ready to hear from the Lord.

Let’s pray. *Lord, Jesus, may your Word do its work. Lord, give me sensitivity but courage to allow your Word to do the work you wrote it to do. Lord, we are the church in Corinth. Our culture is the Corinthian culture. This Word was written to us. May we hear it. May we receive it. And lit by the power of your Holy Spirit may it transform us. In your name, Jesus, and for your glory, amen.*

Paul opens our section by quoting two “sayings” that seem to have become popular in the Corinthian church and it seems these “sayings” came from the Corinthians misusing or misquoting Paul’s teachings on grace and the believer’s freedom from the Jewish law. And of course they were misquoting Paul’s teaching in order to justify sin in their lives.

Have you ever heard of a Christian misusing or misquoting something in God’s Word in order to justify sin in their lives? If so, then welcome to Corinth.

So Paul is going to start by quoting these “sayings” that (it seems) were being misused to justify sin and this is a big deal because I have heard (many times) people misuse this same verse for this same reason.

1 Corinthians 6:12(a) (NLT)

12 *You say “I am allowed to do anything” . . .*

You see the quotes in the NLT around the “saying” *“I am allowed to do anything”* and the NLT adds the words *you say* to make it clear this is something the Corinthians were saying.

The ESV uses just the quotes to convey the same thing but *without* the added words *you say*.

1 Corinthians 6:12(a) (ESV)

12 “All things are lawful for me,” . . . (but in quotes) implying **Paul is “*quoting*” those in the church.**

But then look at the NKJV which most of us are used to hearing.

1 Corinthians 6:12(a) (NKJV)

12 *All things are lawful for me, . . .*

The NKJV doesn’t use the quotes *or* the added words to attempt to explain that this was (almost certainly) written as Paul quoting something the Corinthians were saying. And I have heard (more than a few times) Christians quote just that portion of this verse, *“Well, All things are lawful for me – that’s what the Bible says . . .”*

No, that is actually NOT what the Bible says. Paul is (almost certainly) quoting the Corinthians who are misusing his teaching on grace in order to justify their sin.

So Paul is going to quote this “saying” of the Corinthian church and then he is going to refute it *twice*, which will lead him into his primary point – *which is sexual sin*.

1 Corinthians 6:12 (NLT)

12 *You say, “I am allowed to do anything”- but not everything is good for you. And even though (you say) “I am allowed to do anything,” I must not become a slave to anything.*

Paul is not really *directly correcting* the Corinthians misuse of his teaching on grace and freedom in Christ. He’s not splitting hairs on their misquoting of this “saying.” WHY? Because he has a *bigger fish to fry* (also a great lesson). What he *is* doing is *using their own words* in order to lead them into his *bigger point*.

But as long as we are at this point, let me say this. IF they were using Paul’s teaching on *grace and liberty* correctly (which they were not), but if they were, then Paul’s two

responses (in verse 12) would be good and accurate (in verse 12). The issue would be *not* to turn *liberty* (grace) into a license to sin but Paul is moving on quickly to his *bigger fish to fry*.

And then in verse 13 Paul quotes the other “saying” that was being *misused* by the Christians and then he’s going to use this one to lead into his *primary* subject.

1 Corinthians 6:13(a) (NLT)

13 You say, “Food was made for the stomach, and the stomach for food.” (This is true (we’d say ‘true enough’), though someday God will do away with both of them.) . . .

The problem is – Paul knows – the implication of this saying is “***The stomach was made for FOOD-and the body was made for SEX*” and so instead of addressing the *misuse* of the “saying” Paul is just going to drop the “bigger fish” into the frying pan.**

1 Corinthians 6:13(b) (NLT)

13 . . . But you can’t say that our bodies were made for sexual immorality. They were made for the Lord, and the Lord cares about our bodies.

Listen again to verse 13 without the parenthesis (or my stopping).

You say, “Food was made for the stomach, and the stomach for food.” . . . But you can’t say that our bodies were made for sexual immorality. They were made for the Lord, and the Lord cares about our bodies.

“Our BODIES were MADE for the Lord”

Have you ever thought about that? That your *body* was *made* for the Lord? And have you ever thought about the fact that the Lord cares about your *body* and about what *you do* with your *body*? ***Our bodies were made for the Lord, and the Lord cares about our bodies.***

And then continuing this same thought about our bodies, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6:14,

1 Corinthians 6:14 (NLT)

14 And God will raise us (our bodies) from the dead by his power, just as he raised our Lord from the dead.

Guys, God *has* honored our bodies and God *will* honor our bodies. First, God has honored our bodies by taking one on himself by living in a body just like ours on earth.

Second, God *will* honor our bodies by raising our bodies from the dead *just as* Christ was raised and then God will honor our bodies by *glorifying* them and having us live in our

glorified bodies for eternity – *with him*. Our bodies will be resurrected and glorified just as Jesus was.

And so- our bodies DO MATTER
and **what we DO** in our **bodies DOES MATTER**
and **what we DO** in our **bodies DOES matter SPIRITUALLY**

Do you see the truth building here?

God has created *our bodies* to have the same spiritual dignity as the *Lord's body* and so shouldn't we honor *our bodies* just as we would honor the *Lord's body*?

What if our bodies are actually part of the Lord's body?

1 Corinthians 6:15 (NLT)

15 Don't you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ? Should a man take his body, which is part of Christ, and join it to a prostitute? (GREEK – Porne) Never!

Suddenly – the impact of *what we do* with our bodies becomes very serious. Paul is talking about our *spiritual union* with Jesus Christ. He's talking about the fact that we have *been made one* with Christ... we are so identified with him that we have become *his body* on earth.

And you know when we're talking about salvation we LOVE this truth – **we are “in Christ” and he lives “in us.”** We love the fact that we are *so identified* with Jesus Christ that the price that he paid on the cross becomes payment for our sin, personally because of our *union with Christ* through faith. He became sin in our place and we became the righteousness of God – *in him*. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Man, we love that right up to *this verse* in 1 Corinthians 6 (verse 15) and then we read here that because we are so united with Christ that when we engage in sexual sin in our body (in some way) we are joining Jesus Christ to that sexual sin and that... *is definitely not good*.

Paul is talking about a *spiritual union* that happens between us and Jesus Christ – through faith. But then he's *also* talking about a *type of union* that happens to us – *through sex*. Now this is the LAST thing our culture wants to hear! Some type of “spiritual union” that occurs *through sex*???

If you've been through our marriage course (God's Design For Marriage) or any biblical marriage course, you know marriage is a spiritual union (a one flesh union) and God has designed – as a part of that one flesh union – the spiritual union that occurs *through sex*.

Just look at 1 Corinthians 6:16.

1 Corinthians 6:16 (NLT)

16 And don't you realize that if a man joins himself to a prostitute (Greek – Porne), he becomes one body with her? For the Scriptures say, "The two are united into one."

There is a spiritual side of sex that can be *either* one of the most absolutely incredible things that God has designed into your marriage OR it can be one of the most spiritually destructive things that you choose to *bring into your life*.

There is much more to sex than the physical pleasure. The spiritual union side of sex is one of the most incredible things that God built into us, which is why Paul refers all the way back to the foundation verse for God's Design For Marriage.

Genesis 2:24 (ESV)

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast (cleave) to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

That “becoming one flesh” is more than sex. But all through the Bible it's crystal clear that God designed sex to be a significant part of that spiritual “one flesh” union.

And so Paul is saying here, if you are *united to the Lord* through faith but then there is also a type of *spiritual union* that occurs through sex, the if you are engaged in sexual sin, aren't you (in a way) *connecting the Lord* to that sexual sin?

And then Paul gets to the real problem in verse 17.

1 Corinthians 6:17 (NLT)

17 But the person who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.

That is the real *spiritual problem* with sexual sin.

YOU belong to the Lord

YOU are spiritually united to the Lord

and there is a type of spiritual union that God has built into sex and so Paul comes to this *logical conclusion...*

Since ALL this is true, then aren't you spiritually uniting the Lord with your sexual sin?

So Paul easily arrives at the wisest counsel possible when it comes to this matter.

1 Corinthians 6:18(a) (NLT)

18 Run from sexual sin! . . .

Do not WALK – RUN!!!

Do not MANAGE it, or CONTROL it – RUN FROM IT!!

This is the same conclusion Joseph came to regarding Potiphar’s wife back in Genesis 39.

Do not WALK – RUN!!

No matter what... RUN!!!

WHY??? Why the urgency and the intensity? Let’s just keep reading in verse 18.

1 Corinthians 6:18 (NLT)

18 Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality (GRK – Pornia (broader range of all sexual sin)) is a sin against your own body.

NO other sin so clearly effects the body as this one does.

How can that be? What about alcohol and drug abuse? Those sins affect the body. Yes – but there is no spiritual union like the one God designed into sex. Don’t get me wrong, there is a serious spiritual side to alcohol and drug abuse because it opens you up to the influence of the enemy. But there is a sense in which sexual sins are *different* than all others because of the spiritual union that sex is designed by God to create.

Is it any wonder why the enemy of your soul is constantly bombarding you with the temptation of the broadcast range of sexual sins? Because Satan knows what 1 Corinthians 6:18 says ***No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does.***

And again the word in verse 18 is – PORNIA which means ALL FORMS of sexual immorality *including* the (by far) highest ranking search subject on the internet – PORNOGRAPHY which is the black plague death in our culture and is especially the black plague of death – *in the church.*

No, Paul is not quite done yet. Keep hanging on... there’s more. Because the holiness of our bodies that occurs when we are born again *through faith in Christ.*

Look at the next verse – 1 Corinthians 6:19.

1 Corinthians 6:19 (NLT)

19 Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself,

Your body is a sacred Temple – God the Holy Spirit *lives in you*. The Holy Spirit was given to you *by God*. Because of your spiritual union with Christ – *through faith* you are united with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit lives *in you* and as the end of verse 19 says ***You do not belong to yourself***.

Because 1 Corinthians 6:20 says,

1 Corinthians 6:20(a) says (NLT)

20 for God bought you with a high price . . .

How high a price did God pay for you? The price God paid for you was the *life of Jesus Christ* and he paid that price to *redeem you* (buy you back) from the master of sin who owned you. God paid the highest price possible to redeem you from the *eternal consequences* of your sin and to make you his own.

But... God did not pay that great price to own *just a portion* of who you are. If we are owned by God today it means God owns every part of our lives. We cannot separate the “physical part” of our life from the “spiritual part” – God owns *all of us*. Our physical bodies are his temple right now and one day our *physical bodies* will be glorified to be in his presence for eternity.

In light of all that, there is only one possible *correct response*.

1 Corinthians 6:20(b) (NLT)

20 . . . So you must honor God with your body.

What we DO in our BODIES - DOES matter SPIRITUALLY

What we DO in our MINDS – DOES matter SPIRITUALLY

and when we *join our bodies* or our *minds* to sexual sin, in some way we are joining Jesus Christ to *that sin*.

So, let's *make a commitment* today to HONOR God with our bodies.

Let's pray. *Lord Jesus, give us the desire, the commitment to make the decision to obey you, to honor you with our bodies. Lord, you're our power but we're our own choice. And God we know that as soon as we make this commitment you'll be the power, you'll be the power for us to keep the commitment until we have to make it again. But we have*

to make the commitment, Lord, and then you come with the power. And so Lord, today, we make the commitment to honor you with our bodies. To honor you with our eyes. To honor you with our minds. And God we make it with aggression, with extreme prejudice, with intensity, with violence because we have to. And we turn from these sins in our lives. We turn from them right now, Lord.

Just keep praying. That sin that you know that God has just been grinding you about right now, just deal with it. Start by saying, *“Lord, I’m so sorry. Please forgive me. I never imagined what I was doing to you. Forgive me, Lord. I turn from that sin with extreme prejudice, with intensity, with violence and I pray as I do that you would supply all I need to continue to turn from it, to walk away from it, to walk in your Spirit and avoid the lusts of the flesh. Fill me with your power. I’ll make the choice, Lord, I’ll trust you to be the power. Transform me, Lord. Transform me that I would honor you in all my life – spirit, soul and body. May we live as what we are, Temples of your Holy Spirit. Thank you Jesus. Thank you Lord. Fill us. Transform us. Use us for you glory. It’s in your name we pray, Jesus, amen.*