

First Corinthians 6:12-19

This next section focuses on sexual immorality.

It connects to the present argument by returning to the topic that began in 5:1 with Paul saying,

“It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you.”

As Paul spoke to the church about how to deal with the immoral brother of 5:1-8 he also began to

address the church on their responsibility to judge those in the church.

This led to 6:1-7 where the church not only had failed to judge those inside the church but now Paul

gives an example of the church having gone to the world to ask for the world’s judgment on members of the church. The men involved with this are listed as cheating, doing wrong and considered thieves, greedy slanderers and swindlers.

This type of people are listed and compared with the sexually immoral in 6:9-12.

By mentioning the sexually immoral Paul has returned to his theme that began in 5:1.

Process for the Flow of the Letter:

1. Sexually immoral man 5:1-8
2. Failure of church to judge the situation properly 5:9-12
3. Church has gone to the world to have a situation judged 6:1-7
4. Members of the church are corrupt with cheating, deceiving, etc. 6:8-9
5. Cheating is listed along with sexual immorality 6:9-11
6. Paul returns to sexual sins in 6:12-20
7. This leads to the issue of marriage that begins in 7:1

Two words dominate the next 7 verses:

1. porneia (πορνεία) (or a form) of it 5 times
2. soma (σῶμα) “body” 8 times

Paul is going to quote and use some of the Corinthians own statements in these verses.

The Corinthians have separated the body from the spiritual life.

Thus, they can go to prostitutes without having any effect on their spiritual life.

The Corinthians had a serious misconception of the spiritual life and spiritual power.

They thought that since they were on a higher spiritual plane the physical life could not affect them.

This is more than an ethical question. The truth of the gospel is at stake.

They had false views of:

1. Freedom in Christ (“Everything is permissible”)

2. The body (God will destroy the body)

Paul's argument against their false spiritual views:

1. Paul argues against their false views
 - a. 6:12 – argues against their distortion of Christian freedom
 - b. 6:13-14 – argues against their misunderstanding of the body
2. Paul builds on the truth of this doctrinal statement: “The body is meant for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.” (Point: You cannot separate the spiritual from the physical.)
 - a. Sex unifies a man with a woman in his body.
 - b. Salvation unifies a man with the Lord in his spirit
 - c. But, a man is both the body and the spirit. They are not divided.
 - d. Thus, a prostitute has joined unified with the same man as the Lord has.
3. Sexual immorality is wrong because it is a sin against the body of a man who is meant for the Lord.

A very important point in these verses concerns the human body.

1. The body is part of a man forever.
2. The body was made by God and is for the Lord.
3. The body should not be abused, rejected, or subdued to attain salvation.
4. Control of the body should not be ignored nor is the body immaterial to salvation.

6:12

Paul attacks their theology first, not their behavior.

- If you have a messed up theology you will have messed up behavior.
- So, if you start with correct theology you are heading in the correct direction.
- And, that direction is in the direction the Holy Spirit is leading you as sons of God which is spiritual growth and conformity into the image of Jesus, the Son of God