



1 Corinthians

16-Nov: Twisted view of sexuality

Series Summary: It is easy to expect perfection from the local Church. But this is an unhealthy, unrealistic, and unbiblical expectation. Instead, we learn in the book of 1 Corinthians that we must patiently and passionately seek out the Lord together, even when it is messy.

Big Idea/Question: God is not against sex. God is against sexual immorality because he knows how it will harm us in the end.

GROUP DISCUSSION

(The Problem)

The problem in Corinth: As you can probably tell the Corinthian church had some problems, to say the least. One of the problems was sexual immorality. The Corinthians felt that they could do whatever they felt like with their own bodies. So much so that the church members crossed sexual boundaries that even non-Christians in the city looked frowned upon. (1 Cor 5:1-5). Here is why Paul felt that this was a serious problem.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8 Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? **7** Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. **8** Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Leader Note: Context (yeast): The words let us celebrate the festival are a figurative way of picturing what Christ is to believers. In Paul's day, the Passover was celebrated with a ceremonial search throughout one's home for yeast and then destroying the yeast before the Passover lamb was slain in the temple. Because Christ, the Passover Lamb, has already been sacrificed, all yeast (that is, all evil) should be removed from among his people. The old life (the old bread) was characterized by wickedness and evil; these have no part in Christ's church. Believers, characterized by being born again, have cleansed the evil from their lives and are like the new bread, living in purity and truth. A small piece of fermented dough eventually affects the whole loaf.¹

How does sexual sin lead to other sin issues?

How could your sexual sin lead to others doing likewise?

Answer/Leader Note: Christians have always played the comparison game. We compare our success. We compare our failures, and we compare our sins. If we notice that one of our friends is having sex with their boyfriend or girlfriend it becomes normalized. We think to ourselves, "well if they are doing it and they are doing it it must not be that bad." The problem here is that when we do this we are following others not Christ. Our example and target is to be like Christ, not to be like others. Don't play the comparison game. You will always lose.

10-12th grade (Vs 7) Why does Paul bring up Jesus the Passover lamb in the middle of talking about sexual sin?

Answer: Jesus' atonement was not intended to free us to sin but to liberate us from sin. As he likes to do in many of his letters, Paul thus calls his audience to "become what they are"—to act according to the way God has already chosen to consider them in Christ (cf. esp. Rom. 6–8).²

1 Corinthians 5:9-13 I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— **10** not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. **11** But now I am writing to you that you must not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or slanderer, a drunkard or swindler. Do not even eat with such people. **12** What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? **13** God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked person from among you."

What is Paul telling the Corinthian Church and us in this passage?

¹ Bruce Barton et al., Life Application New Testament Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 662.

² Craig Blomberg, 1 Corinthians, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 106.

What is Paul's expectation of Believers in Jesus and those who do not believe in Jesus?

Answer/Leader Note: Paul was very clear on this point. We should not be surprised when those who do not know Jesus act like they do not know Jesus! Why would they? But when Christians who know Jesus fail to follow in Jesus' example we have a problem.

VIDEO TEACHING

(Jesus > Culture)

1 Corinthians 6:12-13

The stomach is made for food and our bodies are made for sex argument is weak. Instead, we were created to glorify God. Sex and sexual immorality are not the same things. Also, sex easily becomes our master.

1 Corinthians 6:14-17

Sex brings about oneness (intimacy). This is why sex was intended for one man and one woman in a marriage covenant.

GROUP DISCUSSION

(flee sexual sin)

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. **19** Do you not know that your bodies are temples 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 bodies.

Paul did not say avoid or try not to mess up. No, he said flee sexual immorality. What does it mean to flee sexual immorality?

Leader Note/Answer: There are a lot of answers to the question above. I would camp out on this question. Here are two of my thoughts.

1. Fleeing means not relying on your own willpower. If you are spending a vast amount of time alone and your battle plan to not cave in to the temptation to have sex is willpower you are not fleeing.
2. Fleeing means we are not trying to see how much we can get away with. If we are asking the question, “*does this count as sexual immorality (sin)*” the answer is probably yes, and the asking of that question probably shows we have the wrong mindset.

“*Our bodies are a temple*” is a phrase many Christians use and often misuse. But regardless of how others use this phrase what did Paul mean when he said our bodies are a temple and how does that relate to sexual sin?

Leader Note/Answer: Our bodies are in fact God’s temple because God’s presence no longer resides in the Most Holy of Holies as it did before (Exo 40). Now, because of Jesus’ work on the cross, the veil was torn (Matt 27:51). Now God’s presence recedes within us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-13). This should lead us to view ourselves differently. God cares enough to indwell within me. What I think, say, and do matters as an ambassador of Christ.

The Corinthians church struggled with sexual sin because they caved into the pressure of the culture around them to view sex as they did. If we are not careful we will do the same. What do you think our culture gets wrong about sex? How does our culture have a twisted view of sex?

How do we keep ourselves from adopting the same twisted view?