

“Your Body is a Temple of the Holy Spirit”

Prepared by Patrick J. Griffiths © - pastorpat@waukeshabile.org

June 19, 2005

“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?” (1 Cor 6:19)

Read 1 Cor 6:12-20

Perhaps we are to see this paragraph in light of chapter 5 and all that precedes it in chapter 6. Paul picks up the thought of sexual immorality, a theme he addressed in chapter 5. Perhaps the defrauding in 6:1-8 was that of fornication and/or adultery. Perhaps the lawsuit was for financial compensation in light of having been physically defrauded.

Paul’s opening statement is interesting. As a general rule, “All things are lawful for me.” This means exactly what it says. God has given us all things to enjoy and in so doing to return thanks (1 Tm 6:17). Yet he places on the statement several qualifiers.

First, “Not all things are helpful” (v.12a). Second, “I will not be enslaved by anything” (v.12b). Third, “The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord” (v.13). Finally, “You are not your own, for you were bought with a price” (v.20).

The qualifiers help us to understand the nature of the grace received. Grace opens before us a fertile field of activity. We may enjoy the richness of God’s world and the diversity of His people. Grace is not only a green light of opportunity, but a yellow light of caution and a red light of abstinence. Grace does “instruct us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age (Ti 2:12).”

Paul’s reasoning for abstinence in the area of immorality is found in the believer’s vital connection with the Lord Jesus Christ. Each believer is a member of the body of Christ (v.15). Paul will revisit this thought heavily in chapter 12. Just as physical intimacy joins two individuals into one flesh, so also have we as the people of God been joined to Christ. By engaging in sexually immoral activity we are adulterating ourselves before God. We have betrayed Him.

The exhortation in verse 18 is emphatic, “Flee immorality.” The list of sins is as diversified as personalities and cultures, but there is one common denominator that traverses all personalities and cultures and it is the sin of sexual immorality. This sin, unlike others, is a “sin against your own body (v.18).” This is not a “right” you possess. This sin is not yours to commit since your body is not your own. When Jesus Christ died on Calvary’s cross He purchased you. He redeemed you from the sin market by paying the debt that stood against you. He liberated you from sin’s marketplace. You are now free. But your freedom is not a license to sin; rather it is the liberty to serve.

Our freedom from sin is a freedom to Christ. We left sin’s mastery only to be mastered by Christ. Because of His work in us and through us, we are now to glorify God in our bodies

Continued on the other side...

(v.20). This is our true freedom, our true liberty. The more we learn of Him and His Word and the more mind renewal takes place, the more we will see life transformation. When it really gets down to it, what can sexual immorality offer us that we cannot already find or already have in Christ?

There is liberty in being addicted to nothing or no one but Christ. May God continue to move us in our slavery to Him. May our joy be found in our bondage to His cross. May our appetites be such that we crave nothing but Him. This will only take place as we bury ourselves in a true knowledge of who He is, what He has done, and who we now are in Him.