

## Glorify God in Your Body, Part 2: Washed, Sanctified, Justified

**1 Corinthians 6:9 ESV (Pg. 556)** Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, **10** nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. **11** And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. **12** “All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything. **13** “Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. **14** And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. **15** Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! **16** Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” **17** But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. **18** Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. **19** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, **20** for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

- I. Last week, we said human beings alone, in all creation, have the honor and dignity of being made in the “image” and “likeness” of God.
  - A. That is to say that they are *like* God in many ways, and they, as the vice-regents of creation, *represent* God.
    1. But that dignity was corrupted by mankind’s fall into sin; now men and women, though still bearing God’s image, are not *as much like* God as they were. The image has been corrupted and polluted in multiple distinct ways.
    2. But Christ came to display for us what the perfect image of God looked like; and through the cross, his resurrection, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, he is progressively transforming believers back to the image of God.
  - B. To accomplish this, the physical bodies of all who believe have become the dwelling place (or temple) of the Holy Spirit. Our bodies are under new ownership. We have a holy obligation to glorify God in our bodies, to live as slaves to Christ, and not to our flesh.
- II. It will help to know a little about the Corinthian church. Simply put the Corinthian church could have been booked on the “Jerry Springer” show. But the good news is that their church can give us significant confidence and insight about God’s love, patience, and grace for the church, and his ability to lovingly correct his own body.
  - A. In chapter 5, Paul has just dealt with a man who had taken his own step-mother as a lover. Paul, horrified, says that the church was “arrogant” and “boasting” about it, instead of mourning and dealing with the sin.
  - B. Then, in the beginning of chapter 6, Paul addresses the Corinthian’s habit of suing one another in court instead of resolving even the most minor

disagreements *within* the church. He told them that this particular practice had brought tremendous disgrace on the name and cause of Christ.

- C. In the portion we just read, Paul strongly eludes to the fact that members of the congregation are carousing with prostitutes, and there are other scandalous issues in this particular church dealt with throughout the book.
- D. By the time we pick up where we did today, Paul addresses these things with a sweeping pronouncement. **1 Corinthians 6:9 ESV Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, 10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.**
1. Paul lists 9 particular sins, telling the church that they are fooling themselves if they think that those who practice such things have any hope of inheriting the kingdom of God. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather examples of things for which “the wrath of God is coming.” (Col. 3:6)
    - a) His words echo Jesus’ statement in John 3:3: “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”
    - b) Both Jesus and Paul are stating that entrance into the kingdom of God requires a God-orchestrated transformation of life from the top down.
  2. Paul is concerned that when the people of the church have no distinction from the people of the world, it creates confusion about the glory of the gospel to outsiders, as well as a lack of assurance within the church.
- E. But even in the flashing light of all their own disgraceful sins, Paul doesn’t tell them to shape up and act right, or that they have blown it and will be cast into hell; he reminds them of the gospel’s effect on them, putting all of his emphasis in the past tense, using the word “were” 4 times. **1 Corinthians 6:11 ESV And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**
1. Paul is reminding them that in their former identity, they **were** sexually immoral, idol-worshippers, adulterers, homosexuals, thieves, greedy, drunks, trouble-makers, and cheats, but something happened to change that.
    - a) Paul says that they were “washed”. When Jesus found them, He loved them far too much to leave them in their filth. So he stripped the stained and tattered rags of sin and self-righteousness off of them, bathed them in his cleansing, forgiving blood and clothed them in his perfect righteousness, which they could not earn and could never lose.
    - b) He also says they were “sanctified”. Although they are **positionally** and **covenantally** clean because of Jesus, the Holy Spirit is working daily to make them **functionally** righteous. **Philippians 2:13 ESV for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.**
    - c) They have also been “justified”; speaking of their legal standing with God. They have been fully pardoned of all crimes! **Romans 8:33 ESV Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.**

2. Paul's point in verse 9 is **not** that they will go to hell or miss heaven when they dabble in the sins he listed. His point is that they are making a grave miscalculation about the nature of the gospel; one we can all easily make.
  - a) They assume that through the gospel they have been freed from the law **to** sin; when in fact, they have been freed by the gospel **from** sin.
  - b) *"You will always know whether you are delivered from the guilt of sin by answering this question: Am I delivered from the love of sin?"*<sup>1</sup> C.H. Spurgeon. The gospel allows us to see Jesus as glorious, and sin as poison, loss, and death; to increasingly desire Christ, and despise sin.
- III. Paul then spends the rest of chapter 6 building a gospel-centered ethic of sexual behavior for the church. This is really important for at least two reasons:
  - A. I am convinced that all people, in all times, are not just generally fallen in sin, but as a direct result of sin, are all sexually broken. There has never been more observable proof of that fact than there is today.
    1. Every instance of divorce, sexual harassment and assault, child molestation, homosexual activity, pornography use, spousal abuse, religious prudishness, transgenderism, adultery, cohabitation, fornication, prostitution, and abortion are all damning evidence of our universal sexual brokenness.
    2. I did not list every variation of sexual sin, but I imagine that all of us has engaged in, or been affected by one or more of these things. But if you measure your relative sexual wholeness, and think you're not broken, remember Paul's list included 9 specific sins, only 3 of which were sexual in nature. The point being that **we are all guilty** before a holy God.
  - B. Secondly, the Bible's sexual ethic is so important because our culture has never been so generally confused about gender, sex, and God's good design for it.
    1. And that is the first thing you must know about sex. **God created it!** He designed all of its mystery, wonder, emotional connections, procreative power, pleasure and goodness.
    2. Even so, the ultimate purpose of sex is not the consummation of marriage, procreation, the expression of love, or even pleasure, though those are all important God-ordained secondary purposes.
  - C. But the ultimate purpose for our bodies, which would include the full expression of our sexuality, is the glory of God. **1 Corinthians 6:20b ESV So glorify God in your body.** Since the context of this passage is sex, it would be an allowable paraphrase to say that Paul is commanding, "Glorify God with your sexuality."
- IV. Paul proceeds by answering a series of arguments, stated as slogans, put forth by the Corinthian church in order to correct them. So throughout the book of 1 Corinthians, Paul will often repeat the slogan and counter it with the truth. The 1st example of this is in 6:12.
  - A. **1 Corinthians 6:12 ESV** "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be dominated by anything. Paul begins with a legal argument, but not by saying here that "all things are lawful", despite what many have taught. That is the Corinthian proposition, not the Christian one. But Paul holds the law up to grace for comparison.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/spurgeon/sermons37.ix.html>

1. The church has likely heard Paul’s preaching about how the gospel has freed them from the Old Testament law and incorrectly deduced that that means when it comes to sin, “if it feels good, do it!”
  2. But Paul reminds them that, even though freed from the law as they are, all things are not helpful, and a believer shouldn’t be controlled by anything or anyone but God. It is grace highlights the difference.
- B. Paul then moves on to the next slogan. **1 Corinthians 6:13 ESV** “Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food” –and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. **14 And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power.** Paul now argues for the sanctity of the body because of the resurrection.
1. The Corinthians are arguing that the the fact that we have a stomach in a world filled with food means that it’s apparent from nature that we should just “eat, drink and be merry”. They have applied this same reasoning to the sexual organs and sexual desires, concluding that both exist for indulgence.
    - a) But Paul soberly reminds them that the stomach, food, and hunger are temporary. They will be done away with at death and judgement. Not so with the body! This body is not destined for an end, but a renewal.
    - b) Therefore in this life, we treat it with honor and dignity as something dedicated to the Lord for his glory. Just as God promised to raise Christ from death, and did so; he has promised resurrection for my body as well. I must regard it as the Lord’s property reserved for that day.
  2. This speaks to the person struggling with same-sex attraction or gender confusion. There are many in that situation, and it is an incredibly difficult burden to bear, especially if your heart longs to honor God.
    - a) The world would surmise that you were “born that way”, like someone having blue eyes or brown hair; therefore, because your desires are “natural” you should just give in to them. I know this is a complex issue, so I won’t insult you by telling you to just work to change your desires.
    - b) But if you are a Christian, I would encourage you as Paul said, to “put to death the deeds of the body” (Rom. 8:13), just like I would tell someone with heterosexual temptations. Our bodies are not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. Struggling through our battles to honor God is universal, worth it, won’t last forever.
  3. The truth is that everyone of us could look at our sinful tendencies and say that we were “born that way”. **Psalm 51:5 ESV** Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.
    - a) Some were born with homosexual desires, or out-of-control heterosexual lust; or was born vain, a liar, selfish, violent, manipulative, or fearful.
    - b) But as followers of Jesus Christ, the remedy is the same for all of these. **Colossians 3:5a ESV** Put to death therefore *what is earthly in you*. We do this, realizing our bodies are for the Lord and the Lord for the body. Doing so carries great reward - in this life as well as the one to come.
- C. Paul then gives another thing to consider about engaging in sexual impurity. **1 Corinthians 6:15 ESV** Do you not know that your bodies are members of

Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! **16** Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” **17** But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

1. He argues from our association with Christ, telling the church that the parts of their bodies, are in actuality the members of Christ’s body.
    - a) Would any of us imagine that it is OK to watch pornography with Christ’s eyes? Would we ask Christ to participate in a premarital or same-sex tryst, or as Paul says, get a hooker for him?
    - b) Paul’s response is to this is the Greek is “me” (may)<sup>2</sup>; a little word meaning “may God forbid.” Obviously, the thought is highly repulsive to Paul considering the holiness and perfection of Christ. But that is exactly what we do when we engage in, or justify sexual immorality!
  2. Paul says the oneness found in marital sexual intercourse where two people “become one flesh” (repeated 5 times in scripture) applies to every sexual union...even ones with prostitutes!
    - a) The implication is that there are no such things as “one night stands” or casual hook-ups. When you relate to someone sexually you are physically, spiritually, and emotionally making a part of them to be a part of yourself, as well as giving away a part of yourself to them forever.
      - (1) This is why the only safe place to do this is in marriage.
      - (2) Otherwise, you will be emotionally and spiritually disjointed, leaving parts of your soul all over the place, instead of entrusting yourself to one spouse, a gift of God, with whom to be in lasting covenant.
    - b) But Paul’s is saying that you not only make yourself one with someone else through the spiritual mystery of sex, but as a Christian, you are involving Christ in the transaction! This is not the kind of “sharing Jesus” the Bible encourages, but a kind that mocks his holiness and perfection.
  3. As the bride of Christ, we have already become “one spirit” with him. Therefore, we can conclude that sexual impurity on the part of the people of God (married, single, same-sex attracted or straight) boils down to adultery against Jesus, to whom we have been betrothed and to whom we belong.
- D. Paul begins concluding his gospel-centered ethic with a command. **1 Corinthians 6:18a ESV** **Flee from sexual immorality.** This is the only option for Christ’s church. Don’t dabble in it, don’t excuse, don’t justify it...flee from sexual immorality! Run like Joseph did in Genesis 39. There is a time to stand and fight but when it comes to sexual temptation, your best bet is always to cut and run.
1. And Paul has one more argument to make; this one from self-interest. **1 Corinthians 6:18b ESV** **Every *other* sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.**
    - a) What does Paul mean by “outside the body” and “sins against his own body”. Is sexual immorality a special kind of sin? How so? Does sexual sin place our soul in more jeopardy than lying, stealing, or even murder?

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong=G3361&t=KJV>

- b) The answer might lie in the fact that the word “other” is not in the original Greek. Commentators have added it because they have difficulty explaining the meaning of the verse without it. When we remove it we quickly realize that we are dealing with another Corinthian slogan.
  - 2. The Corinthians (not Paul) argue that ‘every sin’ is committed ‘outside the body’. They apparently believed that the body was morally insignificant in the divine reckoning, and sin was only possible in our motives and intents.<sup>3</sup>
  - 3. Paul answers this false assertion by declaring, “the sexually immoral person sins **against** his own body.” Why would anyone do that? He is saying that the body is very significant both in this life and in the one to come. It needs to be regarded as very important to God, as well as to us.
- V. Then he comes to where we began last week. “Why would you sin against your own bodies, Corinthians?” **1 Corinthians 6:19 ESV Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, 20 for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.**
  - A. Homosexuality, transgenderism and gender fluidity fail to bring God glory with our bodies because they begin with a fundamental assertion that God made a mistake when he created us either male or female. The idea of Lordship demands that Jesus is Lord, that he is always right, and he does all things well.
  - B. Adultery, premarital sexual activity, and cohabitation fail to bring God glory because they desecrate the vivid picture of the gospel that covenant marriage is supposed to be.
    - 1. Paul says that the one man, one woman “until death do we part” model of marriage is primarily to illustrate to beauty and mystery of the commitment of Christ to his church.
    - 2. Any deviation from this portrays a false image to the world of what Christ has done, and his commitment never to leave us or cheat on us.
  - C. The use of pornography fails to glorify God in at least three ways.
    - 1. First, it takes men and women who are co-equals with us as image-bearers of the living God and turns them into objects for our own selfish pleasure.
    - 2. Second, it fails to recognize that God is the giver of the good gifts of husbands and wives, and assumes that just anyone can be taken for our lustful pleasure, without the hassle of laying down our lives in sacrifice.
    - 3. For the single person, porn use says to God, “I don’t trust you to be enough for me. I don’t believe that you will provide everything I need to be satisfied.”
  - D. Where are you broken sexually? Where have you failed to glorify God in your body and with your sexuality?
    - 1. If you are a believer, God has washed you, sanctified you, and justified you. He has given you the Holy Spirit to dwell inside of you, not to condemn you but to transform you back into the image of God, and to help you “flee sexual immorality” and “glorify God in your body”.
    - 2. Glorifying God in our bodies begins with honestly and repentance.

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<sup>3</sup> Burk, Denny; *What's the Meaning of Sex?*, Wheaton IL, Crossway © 2013; pp. 55-56