

I. **Review:** 1Cor 6:9-11 – NOT OF THE WORLD...

- A. Those who live patterned after the world will not inherit God's Kingdom.
- B. Many people in the world hide their sin by changing the meaning of words. Drunkard = alcoholic; infanticide = murder; Gay lifestyle = Sodomite and Catamite
- C. We've been washed, sanctified and justified in Jesus! We are new creations!
- D. We now walk in the power of the Spirit.

II. **Continuation** – *Freedom or Slavery?*

A. 1Corinthians 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 enslaved by anything.*

- i. All things are lawful for me... (Everything is permissible for me)
 - 1. Paul brings up this proverb, which probably many self-indulgent Christians in Corinth were repeating to justify their actions.
 - 2. There may be certain freedoms you can engage in without suffering guilt because of the freedom we have in Christ. Be sure the freedom you pursue is one to serve one another in love (Gal 5:13) as opposed to using your freedom to cover up evil (1 Pe 2:16 - *Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.*).
- ii. We were called to be free but not to abuse the freedom by indulgence of the flesh:
 - 1. Galatians 5:13-15 ESV *For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. (14) For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (15) But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.*
 - 2. In the following verses Paul will also apply this to sexual immorality, since some were probably justifying their sexual escapades as "freedom".
- iii. **Not all things are helpful (profitable, beneficial)**
 - 1. Anything that leads to harm, scandal, discouragement, division or sin does not please God and does not glorify Christ.
 - 2. You should ask yourself the question: "Is what I am doing beneficial? Will this bring honor to God and the His church? Will Jesus be glorified in me?"
- iv. **Don't be enslaved!**
 - 1. Jesus has set us free from sin to serve one another in love (John 8:31-34; Gal 5:13)
 - 2. Don't be mastered by your passions – they desire to have you (Gen 4:7).
 - a. Shopping can turn into Shopaholic
 - b. Eating can turn into gluttony
 - c. Sports can turn into fanaticism
 - d. Anything can turn into idolatry if you let it enslave you
- v. There are those who seek to conform to the world to justify themselves in their pursuit of their passion. Those who seek holiness seek to rid themselves of anything that can enslave them.
- vi. The Spirit's point here is that certain things can be enjoyed within the boundaries God has set. Outside of those boundaries they are dangerous, harmful and can lead to condemnation.
 - 1. Sexual pleasure can be enjoyed within the boundaries God has set: faithful marriage. Outside of marriage sex destroys relationships.

2. A river is good and useful as long as the river stays in its banks. Outside its banks a river can cause much damage. Same as fire.
- B. 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.*
- i. The kingdom of God is not about gratifying ourselves (eating, drinking - Rom 14:17) but about serving one another in love. We ought to eat to live; not live to eat.
 - ii. The Spirit sets the context especially for sexual immorality. We ought not to define ourselves by our passions, especially sexual passions. Sexual gratification and satisfaction can be met in the Lord, not by sexual immorality.
 - iii. Just because you have desires doesn't mean you have to carry them out. Another common quote Paul uses: "Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food", illustrate the mentality that tried to excuse fleshly indulgence. The Spirit cleverly added the reality that both are temporary - they will be destroyed! So we need to focus on the eternal: what will last - and not be distracted from our purpose by the cravings of the flesh that are passing away as we speak.
 1. Although food was meant for the stomach – it is essential for life; it doesn't translate that the body is meant for sexual satisfaction. Sexual satisfaction is not needed to live.
 2. Both the food and body will perish – our hope is in that which lasts – the unseen!
 - iv. You need to have power over your desires or they will overpower you. Your desires can define who you are or you can define them. Those who have no control over their desires have defined themselves by them. Think of these labels: homosexual, gourmet, sexual predator, thief, embezzler, etc. Anyone who receives such labels justifiably earned them because he is overwhelmed by passion. They control him.
 - v. Identity is often lost in our passion to define who we are according to what we feel. We have Puerto Rican pride, Gay pride, Black Power, Leftists, Rightists, Fascist, One Percenters, Catholics, Gay Christians, and many others who's sense of identity is tangled up in a feeling more so than a conviction in truth and a desire to be conformed to Christ. No wonder Jesus said if you lose your life for Him you will find it, but if you have already found your life in these other passions you will forfeit the true life in Christ - eternal life (Mat 10:39; Mat 16:25).
 - vi. Our passions are not necessarily meant to be carried out - they are mostly corrupt and selfish. We need to be concerned now to use our body to do right things - to serve the Lord (Rom 6:13).
- C. 1 Corinthians 6:14-17 (ESV) *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.*
- i. Be concerned about the power of the Spirit, not the power of your passions.
 1. The spiritual power is the real power - the one that will raise you up and transform your body into a glorified body that will be able to enter God's Kingdom in righteousness.
 2. The power of corrupt passions, though seeming very real in this world, is a passing illusion. It is already fading and should already be locked up if you belong to Christ.

- ii. Paul will now reason with this principle in mind. Should I now use something holy, made holy by Jesus' sacrifice - a holy instrument of God and mix it up with something dark and sinful?
 - 1. You already have seen the corrupt tendency of the world to defame, dishonor and degrade what is holy.
 - a. Sometimes mixing up holy symbols with common or degrading things is called art by those with a corrupt mind.
 - b. The heart is disclosing its corrupt nature.
 - 2. Paul may be saying this because some men might have thought that paying for sex was a freedom they had and that they were not wronging anyone.
 - a. The same could be said by those today who want to indulge in voyeurism (a peeping Tom) and pornography.
 - b. "Look but don't touch. What harm can come by looking?" Of course, they have forgotten the words of Jesus:
 - i. Matthew 5:28 - *But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*
- iii. An allusion to marriage is made in verse 16: the one flesh covenant.
 - 1. Paying for sex is a gross perversion of the one flesh covenant.
 - 2. This covenant is about more than sexual satisfaction. Besides, the kind of gratification you get outside the one flesh covenant is a pitiful one.
 - 3. That kind of union doesn't glorify God for it is not according to His purpose.
- iv. Our concern should be making ourselves one with the Lord and that will not happen by gratifying our sensual passions.
 - 1. Being united to the Lord is all about the spirit and not about the flesh. The flesh is to be put to work for the Lord to keep it in check, and our desire for Jesus and our self-discipline in seeking the kingdom first and abiding in the word of Jesus will result in spiritual growth and maturity - unity with Jesus.
- v. Joined to the Lord...
 - 1. How are we initially joined to the Lord?
 - 2. Romans 6:5 ESV *For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.*
 - 3. Romans 6:13 ESV *Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.*
 - a. Shall I take what belongs to Christ, my body, and join its members in sin to a prostitute?
 - b. What I do with my body I am doing with Jesus' body.
 - c. Wherever I go Jesus is there, and the Spirit of God
 - d. Shall I make Christ's members enslaved by my passions?
 - e. Shall I give my members again over to what enslaved me before? Am I to continue to witness to death or am I alive in Christ?
 - 4. To be united with Jesus we have to die with Him and be buried with Him through baptism. As we continue our walk in newness of life we express Him, no longer ourselves:
 - 5. Galatians 2:20 ESV *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*