

Chapter 8: Holy Living in the Church

1 Corinthians 6:1–20

After insisting upon the necessity of purging the evil person from the church's midst, Paul now amplifies the importance of holy living in the church in 1 Corinthians 6. Paul puts the primary focus on the subjects of greed and sexual immorality, which receive extended treatment at the beginning and the end of the chapter, respectively. Additionally, Paul lists out several variations on these subjects in his vice list in 1 Corinthians 6:9–10. The heart of this chapter is in v. 11, where Paul reminds the church, "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." All have been born unrighteous, but Christians are radically transformed. Here, Paul articulates the glory of the gospel for sinners: *in Christ, you are not now what you were once.*

Unrighteous Judges (1 Cor. 6:1–6)

At the end of the previous chapter, Paul stated that his responsibility was not to judge outsiders, but insiders—that is, professing Christians inside the church (1 Cor. 5:12). While Paul was addressing the sin of sexual immorality in 1 Corinthians 5, he mentioned other sins, including those who are greedy and swindlers (1 Cor. 5:10, 11). Now, we see that Paul is concerned with insiders who are guilty of these very sins by suing their fellow believers in front of unrighteous judges (1 Cor. 6:1).¹ Not only are they unconcerned to judge insiders guilty of serious sins, but they are asking outsiders to judge their insider, fellow Christians! Paul emphatically expresses his disappointment in their actions by bringing the word "dare" to the very front of the sentence in the original Greek.² By the word "dare," Paul is not describing "the boldness of the act involved but the lack of shame thus shown."³ This is the first of eight "staccato-like" questions that Paul uses to puncture the arrogance of their shameless lawsuits.⁴

Why, though, do their lawsuits exasperate Paul? Paul does not condemn *all* uses of the public magistrates, since he himself appealed to Caesar when he could not get justice from his fellow Jews (Acts 25:11).⁵ Here, Paul's concern is that the Corinthians are bringing fellow believers "before the unrighteous instead of the saints" (1 Cor. 6:1). Paul will use this word "unrighteous" again only a few verses later, to insist that the "unrighteous" will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9). As David Garland observes, "The link between 6:1 and 6:9 is deliberate and makes clear that they are hauling brothers in Christ before the wicked, who will be barred from God's kingdom."⁶ Still, this does not necessarily mean that these judges were thoroughly corrupt in their *character*, but in their lack of *faith*.⁷ That is, they brought their lawsuits before unbelievers. In so doing, they gave those unbelievers an opportunity to scoff at the gospel, they treated their brethren in the Lord disdainfully, and they destroyed the unity of the church.⁸

Judging the World and Angels (1 Cor. 6:2–3)

Paul then asks two related, rhetorical questions. First, if believers will judge the world, then why do those with lawsuits consider fellow believers to be incompetent to try these small cases (1 Cor. 6:2)? That is, how much *less* serious are these lawsuits than the requirement of judging the world? Second, if believers will judge angels, then how much more should believers judge in matters pertaining to this life (1 Cor. 6:3)? That is, how much *more* competent are believers for judging worldly matters than they will need to be to judge angels?

Now, Paul does not mean to say that believers will individually and independently judge the world or angels. Rather, he means that we will judge the world and angels “as derivatively and corporately sharing in Christ’s own glory as Judge.” We will be assembled with Christ in his tribunal on the last day to judge the world and angels alike.¹⁰ Although the reference to judging angels could describe judging and condemning *fallen* angels, this could also refer to the idea of entering into an estate where believers *rule* over good angels for the rest of eternity.¹¹ In regard to both judging the world and judging angels, Paul asks, “Do you not know...?” to scold the Corinthians who should know better—the first two such questions out of six total in this chapter alone.¹²

Those Despised by the Church (1 Cor. 6:4)

In verse 4, Paul criticizes the bench of judges the Corinthians have put in authority over themselves in these cases, but there are two possible ways to translate what exactly he says. On the one hand, the King James Version translates the verse as an imperative: “If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.” If this is the correct translation, then Paul is appealing to his earlier distinctions between those who are weak in the eyes of the world (“least esteemed”), by insisting that those such people indeed wield the power of God in their judgments. On the other hand, the ESV translates the verse as another rhetorical question: “So if you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who have no standing in the church?” The ambiguous grammar of the sentence fits both translations. Nevertheless, while the imperative (KJV) translation fits the larger themes in 1 Corinthians, the rhetorical question translation probably best fits in the immediate context surrounded by so many other rhetorical questions.¹³ Paul is shocked that Christians would subject themselves for judgment to those with no standing in the church.

Settling Disputes vs. Defrauding Brothers (1 Cor. 6:5–8)

All of this, Paul insists, should bring the Corinthians to shame (1 Cor. 6:5). They should not “dare” to continue doing what they are doing, but repent in humiliation and sorrow (cf. 1 Cor. 6:1). Then, Paul puts his finger on one of the central ironies of this whole situation: the Corinthians have made much of their wisdom, and yet they do not trust the wisdom of anyone within their midst to settle their disputes (1 Cor. 6:5).¹⁴ The verb translated as “settle a dispute” in v. 5 (*diakrinai*) refers to arbitration, and is subtly, but importantly, different from the idea of “going to law” (*krinesthai*; 1 Cor. 6:1) to seek a judgment in a lawsuit.¹⁵ In the case of Christian arbitration, believers are helping to settle disputes by believers rather than judging which side should “win.”¹⁶ In such a *wise* community, why should believers resort to hauling their fellow believers before unbelieving judges?

Being Defrauded vs. Suffering Defeat (1 Cor. 6:7–8)

Indeed, Paul insists that in such lawsuits, no one wins—not even the person who wins the judgment. For, “to have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you” (1 Cor. 6:7). This “defeat” has to do with much more than the judgment rendered, but with “a great loss in honor and in dignity for one thing and an equally great loss in Christian fellowship and love.”¹⁷ Or, as David Garland puts it, “No matter who wins or loses the lawsuit, all lose spiritually.”¹⁸ It would be better to be defrauded than to pursue one’s “rights” in this way (1 Cor. 6:7). On this point, R. C. H. Lenski is worth quoting in full:

This is exactly what Christians so often forget. When a fancied or a real wrong has been done them, they think they must demand and secure redress. They at least feel that the brother who supposedly wronged them or who actually did them wrong must be humbled and made to ask their pardon. Or to take a more specific case, this is also true when one is defrauded or thinks he is. Simply to suffer the wrong, the injustice, or the injury does not occur to many Christians. The least they do is to set up a loud complaint and then continue complaining and ill will. To forgive at once and to forget so thoroughly as to make no complaint at any time, is an unknown ethical practice even to brethren who think they are σοφοί [*sophoi*; “wise”], well read in the Scriptures and rather advanced Christians. Of course, when Paul asks the Corinthians why they do not rather suffer wrong he in no way excuses those who actually do wrong, nor encourages them to continue their wrongdoing. What obligation they have is plain; it needs no elucidation here.¹⁹

In the final verse in this section, Paul makes clear that it is not only that Corinthian Christians are unwilling to *be* defrauded, but that they themselves *do* the defrauding by their lawsuits (1 Cor. 6:8). How much worse is the wrong that they inflict?²⁰

But You Were Washed... (1 Cor. 6:9–11)

In verses 9–10, Paul draws the fundamental boundary line between the righteous and the unrighteous. Believers should not submit themselves to the jurisdiction of the “unrighteous” (1 Cor. 6:1) because the “unrighteous” will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9). Paul makes his point emphatically in at least four ways. First, he once again asks the question, “Do you not know...?” by which he suggests that the Corinthians *should* know better. Second, to add even more weight to the rhetorical question “Do you not know...?”, Paul adds an explicit warning: “Do not be deceived” (1 Cor. 6:9).²¹ Third, he structures the whole passage with a rhetorical device called an *inclusio*, where he begins and ends with the same phrase: “...will [not] inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 6:9, 10).²² Fourth, Paul gives further definition about who will not enter the kingdom of God by listing exactly ten representative vices, since ten is a number of completion.²³

Inheriting the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9, 10)

What, though, is at stake here? What does it mean to inherit the kingdom of God, and why should the unrighteous fear the possibility of missing out? Paul is not describing an inheritance “in a strict sense,” where a son takes possession of property after the father dies, but simply an inheritance

of entering “into full possession of” something.²⁴ Still, even though the death of a father is not in view, the idea of inheritance is closely associated in the Bible with the *adoption* of God’s people as his sons (cf. Rom. 8:17; Gal. 4:30; Heb. 1:4, 14).²⁵ The kingdom of God refers to God’s reign and rule, as Jesus himself defines it in the second and third petitions of the Lord’s Prayer: “Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10). For God’s kingdom to come would mean that his will would be done on earth as it is done in heaven—that is, *perfectly*. To enter into full possession of the kingdom of God as sons, then, means that we will share in God’s own reign and rule over his creation as co-heirs with Jesus himself (Rom. 8:17).

The Unrighteous (1 Cor. 6:9–10)

The unrighteous, however, will not inherit the kingdom of God. That is, they will have no share in the glories of the life to come, because they refuse to trust in Christ for their salvation. Because of their unbelief, their lives produce all kinds of rebellious, wicked behavior. Where the world tends to understand religion as the performance of outward, external duties, true Christianity is spiritual and internal first, and external and outward secondarily, growing as the fruit from our personal piety. Therefore, it is not enough simply to perform various religious rites, or even merely to subscribe to specific doctrines, since only true, whole-hearted devotion and obedience will do.²⁶ Importantly, Paul is talking about ongoing, unrepentant *patterns* of sin, rather than isolated sins that a believer stumbles into in weakness, but then repents from them.²⁷ Indeed, all of us are born as unrighteous sinners because we inherit Adam’s original sin (cf. Rom. 5:12–21). It is not that we become unrighteous only after we commit any of these sins; rather, we commit these sins *out* of the unrighteousness that we receive from Adam.

In verses 9–10, Paul builds off of the vice lists from 1 Corinthians 5:10, 11, but adding four more terms: adulterers, two terms that the ESV translates collectively as “men who practice homosexuality,” and thieves. All of these new terms fall under the two major headings of these lists in 1 Corinthians 5:10, 11: three of the terms fall under the general heading of sexual immorality, while the last falls under the heading of greed and swindling.²⁸ The term for “adulterers” very simply refers to married people who engage in sexual activity outside of their marriage. Likewise, thieves also has a fairly straightforward definition: “it ordinarily refers to actual robbery rather than to the kind of underhanded stealing suggested by our word ‘defraud.’”²⁹

The precise definition of the two terms translated together in the ESV as “men who practice homosexuality,” however, are a bit more controversial, especially among interpreters who would seek to legitimate homosexual behavior. The first word, *malakoi*, means “soft” or “effeminate” (KJV), referring ultimately to the passive sexual partner in a male homosexual act.³⁰ Some have argued that this word refers only to the passive partner in a relationship with a young boy—a relationship called *pederasty*—but Paul could have (and yet, did not) use the term “pederast” (*paiderastēs*) if that was the only behavior he wished to condemn.³¹ The second word, *arsenokoitai*, seems to be a word that Paul himself coined, and it “almost certainly” arises by combining the words “man” (*arsenos*) and “sexual relations” (*koiitēn*; lit., “bed”) from the Greek Septuagint version of Leviticus 18:22: “Do not have *sexual relations* with a *man* as one does with a woman” (Lev. 18:22; cf. Lev. 20:13).³²

Thus, these two words “refer to the passive and active partners in consensual homosexual acts,” as the ESV footnote explains. Or, to put this more explicitly, biblical scholar Robert Gagnon summarizes his research by explaining these two words “are correctly understood in our

contemporary context when they are applied to every conceivable type of same-sex intercourse.”³³ This text clearly states that ongoing, unrepentant homosexual practice (along with other forms of sexual immorality and/or covetous greed) will disqualify someone from inheriting the kingdom of God. This does not mean that those who have *ever* committed such sins are disqualified from inheriting the kingdom of God, but that such behavior is sin that someone must repent from in order to be saved. It is to the possibility of redemption that Paul turns next.

Such Were Some of You (1 Cor. 6:11)

In verse 11, Paul reminds the Corinthians that *some* of the Corinthians had these exact sins in their pasts: “Not all the Corinthians had been fornicators, not all thieves, and so on, but in the Corinthian congregation a good assortment of such immoral and criminal persons was to be found.”³⁴ Though these sins formerly held these men and women captive, Paul insists that these sins are *no longer* their current identity. Instead, God has broken the power of these sins over their lives through the gospel: “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 Cor. 6:11). By these three terms, *washed*, *sanctified*, and *justified*, Paul is not describing three sequential steps in the order of salvation.³⁵ Instead, Paul “makes use of three terms to express one and the same thing, that he may the more effectually deter them from rolling back into the condition from which they had escaped.”³⁶ In the original Greek, Paul repeats the word “but” before each term, powerfully reinforcing the stark contrast between their former lives and their lives in Christ: “*but* you were washed, *but* you were sanctified, *but* you were justified....”³⁷

Still, each word captures a different facet of the salvation that God’s people have gained through faith. The first word, “washed,” generally refers to a general purification from something like guilt or pollution.³⁸ This is not a direct reference to baptism; however, this word points to the spiritual reality to which the visible sign and seal of baptism points.³⁹ The only other place where this verb is used, in the same form, is in Acts 22:16: “Rise and be baptized and *wash away* your sins, calling on his name.” Baptism, therefore, symbolizes and confirms the reality of this spiritual washing that Paul describes here. Elsewhere, the Apostle Peter makes the same point: “Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience...” (1 Pet. 3:21). Baptism is not a washing for physical dirt, but a washing that appeals to God by faith for cleansing from spiritual dirt.⁴⁰

The second word, “sanctified,” means “made holy.” Here, *sanctified* does not refer to our gradual growth in grace as we live out our calling as saints (1 Cor. 1:2b). Instead, this refers to our immediate change in identity as “those sanctified in Christ Jesus” (1 Cor. 1:2a). In this sense, *sanctified* describes how we are set apart unto the Lord as “devoted to the service of God.”⁴¹ We should recall that the main theme of the previous chapter is that we, having been made holy, should take care not to allow any unholy, old leaven of sin to creep back into our lives (cf. 1 Cor. 5:8). The third word, “justified,” means “acquitted”⁴² and “counted/declared righteous.”⁴³ Notice the two sides of justification: (1) we are *acquitted* when God forgives our sins, and (2) we are *counted/declared righteous* by the imputation (i.e., the *crediting*) of Christ’s own righteousness to us.

All of this happens, Paul explains, “in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” and “by the Spirit of our God.” By “the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,” Paul refers to the great power and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.⁴⁴ Our Lord Jesus Christ has purchased and accomplished our washing,

sanctification, and justification by the cleansing of his blood and the power of his resurrection. Then, the Spirit of our God takes everything that Christ has *accomplished* and *applies* it to believers through faith.⁴⁵ By describing the Holy Spirit as the “Spirit of *our God*,” Paul makes an allusion to the Father, thus demonstrating the unified work of all three Persons of the Trinity in securing our salvation.⁴⁶ In the economy of redemption, the Father sends the Son into the world to accomplish our salvation, and then the Father and the Son send the Holy Spirit into the world to apply that salvation to our lives through faith. Here is how John Calvin describes the whole scene:

With propriety and elegance he distinguishes between different offices. For the blood of Christ is the procuring cause of our cleansing: righteousness and sanctification come to us through his death and resurrection. But, as the cleansing effected by Christ, and the attainment of righteousness, are of no avail except to those who have been made partakers of those blessings by the influence of the Holy Spirit, it is with propriety that he makes mention of the Spirit in connection with Christ. Christ, then, is the source of all blessings to us from him we obtain all things; but Christ himself, with all his blessings, is communicated to us by the Spirit. For it is by faith that we receive Christ, and have his graces applied to us. The Author of faith is the Spirit.⁴⁷

Paul marvels at this salvation, though, to make a specific point: because of what we *are* now from the Father, through Christ, and by the Spirit, we must not go back to what we *were* once. Or, in the words of the author of Hebrews, “how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?” (Heb. 2:3).

Flee from Sexual Immorality (1 Cor. 6:12–20)

After drawing such a clear-cut contrast between the unrighteousness that disqualifies someone from the kingdom of God and the new identities received by those in Christ, Paul now acknowledges that not all matters are so serious. Some matters are what theologians call *adiaphora*, or *indifferent* to the Christian life. For example, while the old covenant strictly regulated the kinds of foods God’s people could eat, food is now *adiaphora* to the Christian life.⁴⁸ Christ has abolished the ceremonial food laws (Mark 7:19; Acts 10:15), and Paul strengthens that claim by providing deeper theological justifications for why the food we eat is indifferent to our faith.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, Paul traces the limitations of Christian liberty for things *adiaphora* and for what God has explicitly forbidden.

All Things are Lawful (1 Cor. 6:12)

Although not explicit, most Bible scholars believe that the Corinthians had adopted the saying, “All things are lawful for me” as a slogan, and many Bible translations reflect this understanding by putting this slogan in quotation marks. It is less clear, however, from whom the Corinthians took this idea. Some have suggested that the Corinthians are echoing Paul’s own teaching against legalism,⁵⁰ while others have suggested that the Corinthians may have adopted this slogan from Jesus’ teaching on what is and is not “lawful” (e.g., Mark 3:4; 7:19).⁵¹ Regardless of the original source, Paul recognizes that the Corinthians have begun to abuse this principle of Christian liberty to justify anything at all.⁵²

What is Profitable (1 Cor. 6:12a)

The word translated as “lawful” (*exestin*) has to do with the “right to determine” something (e.g., “authority”), and it appears several times in a few different forms in this passage and throughout the rest of the letter (1 Cor. 8:9; 9:3–18).⁵³ Indeed, the principle of Christian liberty insists that Christians have the authority to employ their own wisdom to make choices in a variety of areas; however, Christian liberty has three major limits. First, Paul insists that our liberty is limited to whatever is *profitable*. Paul writes, “‘All things are lawful for me,’ but not all things are helpful” (1 Cor. 6:12a). As Charles Hodge writes, “It is both absurd and wicked to do anything which is injurious to ourselves or others, simply because it is not in its own nature sinful.”⁵⁴ It is not enough merely to insist that something is *permissible* if it is not also *profitable*. This even means more than whether my choices will be profitable for *me*, for elsewhere Paul insists that we must also guard our actions in relation to what is profitable for others too (1 Cor. 10:23–33).⁵⁵

What Does not Render Us Powerless (1 Cor. 6:12b)

Second, our Christian liberty should not render us *powerless*: “‘All things are lawful for me,’ but I will not be enslaved by anything” (1 Cor. 6:12b). A particular food or behavior may not be forbidden in itself, but “it is wrong to be in bondage to any appetite or habit.”⁵⁶ The word “enslaved” (*exousiasthēsomai*) describes power or authority wielded over someone, and it is closely related to the word “lawful,” which refers to the power or authority of Christian liberty that the Corinthians were claiming for themselves.⁵⁷ This limitation, then, is not so much a limitation as a warning: don’t assert your liberty in such a way that you end up relinquishing your liberty.⁵⁸

This point particularly illustrates the paradox of Christian liberty. When we insist upon freedom *from* God, we end up as slaves to sin, under the oppressive tyranny of Satan himself. On the other hand, when we voluntarily enslave ourselves to Christ by faith, we are free indeed (cf. John 8:36). Our slavery to Christ compels us to servanthood to our Lord and to others, and yet only in this life of service are we actually free to live as God created us. Martin Luther captures this paradox with one of his characteristic contrasts: “A Christian is the most free lord of all and subject to none; a Christian is the most dutiful servant of all and subject to all.”⁵⁹ Those who are free indeed relish living in the tension of this paradox of Christian liberty.

What is not Prohibited (1 Cor. 6:13–14)

Third, our Christian liberty does not allow us to do what God has otherwise *prohibited*. To make this point, Paul begins by quoting what is likely another slogan of the Corinthians: “Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food” (1 Cor. 6:13a). In this life, God has designed food for our stomachs, and he has fitted our stomachs to find nourishment for the body from food.⁶⁰ Then, Paul quickly acknowledges another fact: “God will destroy both one [the stomach] and the other [food]” (1 Cor. 6:13b). This statement probably has two levels of meaning. First, this statement refers to the decay of our bodies and of food. At death, our bodies decay (including our stomachs), and food rots too. If we eat the food, that food passes through our stomachs and is expelled, where it also decays (cf. Mark 7:19).⁶¹ Thus, God destroys both one and the other in the short term. Christians, therefore, should not be overly concerned about what we eat, for “the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking” (Rom. 14:17).⁶²

In the longer-term, Paul may also have in view the reality of life after the resurrection. The Scriptures reveal that our resurrected bodies will have the capacity not only to eat (Luke 24:41–43), but even to feast on rich food and to drink well-aged wine (Isa. 25:6; Rev. 19:9). Nevertheless, our new, glorified bodies will not depend on food to live in the same way that we do now. This is another reason we should not be overly concerned about food: our current need of food is a “mere temporary arrangement.”⁶³

Paul says all of this in order to draw a bright contrast between food and sexual immorality. While food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food, it is not true that the body is meant for sexual immorality, and sexual immorality for the body. Instead, God designed the body “for the Lord, and the Lord for the body” (1 Cor. 6:13c). As Thomas Schreiner points out, “The word *Lord* signals that Jesus is the master over one’s body; he rules over what believers do with their bodies.”⁶⁴ Because God has prohibited sexual immorality, sexual immorality is neither adiaphora or lawful for the Christian.

Importantly, the word Paul uses here for “body” (*sōma*) “means more than animal tissue....*Body* in fact is one of several terms used by Paul to denote not one part of man’s nature but man as a whole. The *belly* is a material organ which I use for a short time; the *body* is myself.”⁶⁵ Sexual immorality is not merely physical, but an act that involves the whole person, physically and spiritually. Moreover, just as God raised up the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, so also will he raise us up from the dead.⁶⁶ Not only is the body *not* for sexually immorality in the same way that the stomach is for food; moreover, God also will *not* destroy the body in the same way that he will destroy the stomach—rather, he will resurrect the body.⁶⁷ As Leon Morris puts it, “The resurrection forbids us to take the body lightly.”⁶⁸

Members of Christ (1 Cor. 6:15–17)

In v. 15, Paul explains and amplifies his argument against sexual immorality.⁶⁹ Once again, Paul scolds them with the rhetorical question, “Do you not know...?”, reminding them that they do know better than this.⁷⁰ The Corinthians *know* that their bodies (again, their *selves*) are members of Christ. To engage in sexual immorality with a prostitute, then, constitutes nothing less than taking away a member from the body of Christ and joining that member to the prostitute. While our English versions largely translate this phrase as “Shall I then *take* the members of Christ...,” the verb is actually “take *away*.”⁷¹ The member must sever his relation to Christ in order to join himself to a prostitute.⁷² The imagery, however, is more horrifying even than that, since “members” does not imply that this is a simple “membership transfer.” Rather, these members are the “limbs and organs” of Christ, and these limbs and organs are being ripped out of the body of Christ in order to be joined to the prostitute.⁷³ Rather than gouging out *his own* eye or cutting off *his own* hand to *avoid* sexual immorality, the Christian who commits sexual immorality is gouging out the eyes and cutting the hands of *Christ’s* body (cf. Matt. 5:29–30).

As the next logical step in his argument, Paul insists that whoever joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her, citing Genesis 2:24 that “the two will become one flesh” (1 Cor. 6:16). Sexual activity joins and entangles the sexual partners into a closer and more complicated relationship than we necessarily realize.⁷⁴ The verb translated as “joined” (or, better, “joins *himself*”)⁷⁵ literally means “to glue” (in woodworking) or “to weld” (in metallurgy).⁷⁶ In the Bible, this verb not only describes the bonds of sexual unions, but also the spiritual bonds to God (or gods), where it is often

translated as “hold fast.”⁷⁷ This is not coincidental, since Paul observes that the whole reason Christians may eat any foods but *not* have any sex is that food is purely physical and temporary, while sex involves our whole person, body and soul (1 Cor. 6:13). So, while God has blessed and sanctified sex within the lifelong, covenantal, one-flesh bond of marriage between one man and one woman, God has forbidden sex in any other context.⁷⁸ This does not mean that every act of sex *marries* those involved, but it does mean that sex bonds the two parties in deeper ways than either of them realize.⁷⁹ As Leon Morris writes, “‘Casual sex’ is anything but casual.”⁸⁰

The primary problem of sexual immorality, then, is that it disrupts the fundamental bond that we were created to enjoy: our spiritual union with the Lord Jesus Christ. This union is so close that we become “one spirit” with him (1 Cor. 6:17). That is, our spirits become united with him by the Holy Spirit he sends to us. It is in this spiritual *joining* that we see the resemblance between marriage and the Church’s relationship to Christ (cf. Eph. 5:22–33).⁸¹ Paul Barnett puts it this way: “The Father bestowed the Spirit on the Son at his baptism in the Jordan and at his ascension (Luke 3:22; Acts 2:33). The risen Lord now gives the same Spirit to his people, joining them to him as ‘one Spirit.’”⁸² Sexual immorality destroys not only the one-flesh union of marriage, but also our one-spirit union with Christ.

Flee Sexual Immorality (1 Cor. 6:18)

In light of all this, Paul pleads, “Flee sexual immorality!” (1 Cor. 6:18, my translation). Later in this letter, Paul will write similarly about idolatry: “Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry” (1 Cor. 10:14).⁸³ Here in 1 Corinthians 6:18, however, Paul writes more tersely and emphatically, “Flee sexual immorality,” omitting the word “from” that appears in 1 Corinthians 10:14, “flee *from* idolatry.”⁸⁴ Just as Joseph fled from sexual immorality with Potiphar’s wife, so the Corinthians must flee sexual immorality wherever they may encounter it.⁸⁵ Indeed, the present imperative form indicates “habitual action”—we must make it our “habit” to flee sexual immorality.⁸⁶ This imperative has important pastoral, practical applications, as Lenski observes:

Some sins we must necessarily face, fight, and thus conquer. From others we recoil with a shock, their baseness and their stench repel us, we flee. Fornication [“sexual immorality”] is and should be one of these. Paul writes φεύγετε [*phuegete*; “flee”] for another reason. He recognizes the danger that lies in our sinful flesh. So he admonishes: flee lest a spark ignite the tinder and fire the passion and the lust, and you be scorched in the flames, Prov. 7:6–27.⁸⁷

By God’s grace, we must train our hearts and minds to regard sexual immorality with utter revulsion, while at the same time cultivating a healthy wariness of recognizing that this temptation could all too easily ensnare us, if we get too close to it. Therefore, flee sexual immorality!

To these practical reasons for fleeing sexual immorality, Paul adds another: “Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body” (1 Cor. 6:18). The word “other” (“every *other* sin...”) does not appear in the Greek, but is supplied to give sense to the logic of Paul’s statement. Literally, the text reads, “Every sin that, if a man does [it], is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body” (1 Cor. 6:18, my translation). Paul is not contradicting himself when he says that *every* sin is outside the body, but that sexual immorality is against the body. On the contrary, the conjunction “but” is “exceptive,

qualifying ‘every sin’ to mean ‘every other sin’ except the one spoken of in this clause.”⁸⁸

In what sense, though, is sexual immorality different from other sins, especially other sins that we seemingly commit against our own bodies, such as drunkenness, gluttony, or even suicide?⁸⁹ The context leading up to this verse helps to answer this question. In the case of sexual immorality with a prostitute, this sexual intimacy rips the body out of union with Christ and joins itself in an unauthorized union elsewhere (1 Cor. 6:15).⁹⁰ The reason for this is that sexual immorality uniquely joins two people together in their bodies—not just in their physical bodies, but spiritually too (1 Cor. 6:16).⁹¹ As Barnett observes, “The ‘body’ is not merely flesh, organs and bones, but the total person including mind, memory, conscience and emotions.”⁹² Additionally, as Garland explains, “drunkenness does not have the capacity to make a person one flesh with alcohol. This one-flesh union is true only of the sex act....In the context, sex with a prostitute severs the union with Christ and sabotages its resurrection destiny.”⁹³ As Hays observes, it is striking that throughout this context, Paul does not much dwell on the idea of sexual immorality as adultery (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9), even though most of these believers would have been married: “Perhaps the specific fornicators he had in mind were not married, but another explanation seem likelier: he regards sexual promiscuity not primarily as an offense against any human relationship but, most fundamentally, as a sin against God. The union with prostitute violates the believer’s prior bond with Christ.”⁹⁴

A Temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19a)

To all of these ideas, Paul adds yet another to strengthen his warning: each believer’s body is individually a temple of the Holy Spirit, who dwells within us (1 Cor. 6:19a). For the eighth time in this letter and the sixth time in this chapter, Paul frames this point on the criticizing question, “Do you not know...?”⁹⁵ Earlier, Paul wrote that the church as a whole (“you” plural) functions collectively as a holy temple for God’s Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16–17). Now, Paul argues that each single body of a believer is individually a temple for God’s Holy Spirit. In both passages, Paul uses the word *ναός* (*naos*), referring to the inner sanctuary of the temple, rather than *ἱερόν* (*hieron*), which may refer to the entire temple complex, especially its outer courts.⁹⁶ Paul’s point is beyond simply drawing a vague religious analogy between our bodies and temples. Much more, Paul is insisting that the Holy Spirit dwells in our bodies just as he formerly dwelt in the holy places of the temple. Therefore, we dare not profane the Holy Spirit’s holy dwelling place by any sin, much less by sexual immorality with its defiling effects on the body in its physical and spiritual unity.⁹⁷

Glorify God in Your Body (1 Cor. 6:19b–20)

After reminding the Corinthians that their bodies are individually temples, Paul takes his logic two steps further by asserting first that they are not their own, for they were bought with a price, and second that they must glorify God in their bodies. If indeed our bodies serve as the temple of the Holy Spirit, then our bodies do not belong to us, but to God, and they may “only be used for the purposes for which he designed it.”⁹⁸ They may not pay to hire a prostitute, since their bodies have already been bought at a price—the price of Christ’s death for them on the cross (1 Cor. 6:19b–20).⁹⁹ Some scholars point to the contemporary idea of “sacral manumission, by which a slave was bought ‘for freedom’ (cf. Gal. v. 1) in the name of a god...but the fundamental idea of ransoming Paul derived from the Old Testament, where the words are used in a wide variety of senses (e.g. Exod. vi. 6; xiii. 13; Ruth iv. 4ff.; Ps. ciii. 4; Isa. xliii. 1).”¹⁰⁰ Paul will say something similar in 1 Corinthians

7:22b–23a: “Likewise he who was free when called is a bondservant of Christ. You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men.”¹⁰¹ We do not have the freedom to do as we please, because we have been purchased as bondservants at the price of the blood of Christ. This is not a burden, but a glorious reminder that not only do we belong to him, but also that God graciously gives himself to us in this arrangement.¹⁰²

Therefore, Paul insists, we must glorify God with our bodies. The conjunction translated as “so” in the ESV is difficult to translate into the English, but Leon Morris gives a helpful explanation:

Therefore translates *dē*, a shortened form of *ēdē*, ‘already’. It is sometimes added to an imperative to give it a note of greater urgency. ‘Do it so speedily that it is already done!’ The use of the aorist rather than the present imperative agrees with this. There is an urgency about it. Let there be no delay.¹⁰³

In contemporary English, we might then paraphrase Paul’s words as, “Get it done—and do it *yesterday!*” That is, because God owns us, we must “devote ourselves wholly and entirely to his service, that he may by his word regulate even the outward actions of our life.”¹⁰⁴ Contrary to the teaching of Gnostic philosophy, our bodies are not husks to be cast off at death for the liberation our souls. Rather, God created us holistically, body and soul, and what we do in our bodies matters, whether we defile our bodies through sexual immorality, or whether we glorify God in our bodies.¹⁰⁵

Discussion Questions

- 1) Why were the Corinthians bringing their disputes to law before unrighteous judges rather than for arbitration by fellow believers? What is the actual result when we seek to *win* against fellow believers (1 Cor. 6:7)? Where do your own greedy desires trying to win against fellow believers? How might fellow believers help you settle your disputes?
- 2) Why can’t the unrighteous inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9)? Do people become unrighteous after committing these sins, or do people commit these sins because we are born unrighteous (cf. Rom. 5:12–21)? How does the doctrine of original sin affect the way we view ourselves and our need for a Savior?
- 3) How many of us have committed *all* the sins listed in 1 Corinthians 6:9–10? Even if we haven’t committed all these sins, how many of us were unrighteous? What does it mean to have been “washed”? “sanctified”? “justified”? What does 1 Corinthians 6:11 teach us about our new identity in Christ, through the Spirit of our God?
- 4) What kinds of things are *adiaphora* (indifferent) to the Christian life (1 Cor. 6:12)? What significance does food have for Christian living (1 Cor. 6:13)? Why is sexual immorality so different from food (1 Cor. 6:12–18)? What were our bodies actually created for, if not for sexual immorality (1 Cor. 6:19)? How, then ought we to live (1 Cor. 6:20)?

Notes

1. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 250.

2. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 195.

3. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 234.

4. Barnett, *1 Corinthians: Holiness and Hope of a Rescued People*, 90.

5. Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 93–94.

6. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 196.

7. “As the terms holy and righteous are often used in a technical sense to designate the professed people of God without reference to personal character; so the terms sinners and unjust are used to designate the heathen as distinguished from the people of God....The complaint against the Corinthians was not that they went to law before unjust judges, but that they appealed to heathen judges. It is true their being heathen proved them to be unrighteous in the scriptural sense of the term; but it was not their moral character, so much as their religious status, that was the ground of the complaint.” (Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 93.)

8. For the first two issues, see Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, 198. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.i.html>>. For the third issue, see Hays, *First Corinthians*, 92–93.

9. Thiselton, *First Corinthians: A Shorter Exegetical & Pastoral Commentary*, 89.

10. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, 200. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.i.html>>

11. “As, according to Scripture, only the fallen angels are to be judged in the last day, most commentators suppose the word must here be restricted to that class. Not only men, but fallen angels are to stand before that tribunal on which Christ and his church shall sit in judgment. If agreeably to the constant usage of the Scriptures, according to which (as remarked above, 4, 9) the word when unqualified means good angels, it be understood of that class here, then the explanation is probably to be sought in the comprehensive sense of the word to judge. As kings were always judges, and as the administration of justice was one of the principle functions of their office, hence to rule and to judge are in Scripture often convertible terms. To judge Israel, and to rule Israel, mean the same thing. And in Matt. 19, 28, ‘sitting on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel,’ means presiding over the twelve tribes. So in the case before us, ‘Know ye not that we shall judge angels?’ may mean, ‘Know ye not that we are to be exalted above the angels, and preside over them; shall we not then preside over earthly things?’ This explanation avoids the difficulty of supposing that the good angels are to be called into judgment; and is consistent with what the Bible teaches of the subordination of angels to Christ, and to the church in him.” (Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 95–96.)

12. Morris, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 94.

13. “Set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. The original admits of this translation. If the passage be so rendered, then it has a sarcastic tone. ‘Set your least esteemed members to decide such matters.’ It may, however, be read interrogatively, ‘Do ye set as judges those least esteemed in (i.e. by) the church (that is, the heathen)?’ This translation is generally preferred as best in keeping with the context. The sentence is emphatic. ‘Those despised (see 1, 28) by the church,—those do you set to judge?’ It is an expression of surprise at their acting so unworthily of their high calling.” (Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 96.)

14. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 236.

15. Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 97.

16. “For when a Christian brother or several Christian brethren act in a case of dispute between their brethren they do not function as legal judges in a secular court but render a Christian decision which involves

much more. Their chief difficulty will also usually be with the complainant who comes with charges against a brother and demands ‘high rights,’ or insists on admissions on the part of his brother, or demands that the brother be expelled.” (Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 242.)

17. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 244.

18. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 209.

19. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 245.

20. “*But ye do injury*. Hence we see for what reason he has inveighed against them with so much bitterness — because there prevailed among them such a base desire of gain, that they did not even refrain from *injuring* one another. He premised a little before, with the view of exposing the magnitude of the evil, that those are not Christians who know not to endure injuries. There is, then, an amplification here, founded on a comparison: for if it is wrong not to *bear* injuries patiently, how much worse is it to *inflict* them?” (Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, 207. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.i.html>>)

21. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, 209. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.ii.html>>

22. Barnett, *1 Corinthians: Holiness and Hope of a Rescued People*, 95–96.

23. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 248.

24. Morris, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 96.

25. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, 209–10. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.ii.html>>

26. “The tendency to divorce religion from morality has manifested itself in all ages of the world, and under all forms of religion. The pagan, the Jew, the Mohammedan, the nominal Christian, have all been exact in the performance of religious services, and zealous in the assertion and defence of what they regarded as religious truth, while unrestrained in the indulgence of every evil passion. This arises from looking upon religion as an outward service, and God as a being to be feared and propitiated, but not to be loved and obeyed. According to the gospel, all moral duties are religious services; and piety is the conformity of the soul to the image and will of God. So that to be religious and yet immoral is, according to the Christian system, as palpable a contradiction as to be good and wicked.” (Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 98.)

27. “These are patterns of life, not isolated sins.” (Thiselton, *First Corinthians: A Shorter Exegetical & Pastoral Commentary*, 90.)

28. “Vice lists are used for a variety of purposes, but they consistently denote that one is an unbeliever or that one is headed for eschatological destruction. In this list, sexual sins and sins that involve coveting and stealing dominate, showing that the vice list is crafted to speak to the Corinthian situation.” (Schreiner, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 121.)

29. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 268.

30. Morris, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 96.

31. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 213.

32. Schreiner, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 122.

33. Robert Gagnon, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2001), 330. (Cited by Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 215.)

34. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 141.

35. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 216.

36. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, 211. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.ii.html>>

37. Barnett, *1 Corinthians: Holiness and Hope of a Rescued People*, 95–96.

38. Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 100.

39. “Of the three verbs, the second and third are in the passive voice; the first is in the middle voice, which normally, though not simply the equivalent of a reflexive, denotes an action performed with reference to the agent, and may sometime be best rendered by a reflexive. It may be so here (and in English the intransitive ‘You washed’ could in this case be used), but the passive form of the verb (and its compounds) is rare, and it is perhaps better to suppose that the middle is used for the passive....The same verb is used, in the same voice, in Acts xxii. 16, where Ananias exhorts Paul, at the time of his conversion, Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling upon his [Christ’s] name. In the present verse the reference to *the name of the Lord Jesus Christ* makes it probably that baptism is in mind, though the use of the non-technical word (when ‘you were baptized’, ἐβαπτίσθητε, would have been as easy to use) shows that it is the inward meaning rather than the outward circumstances of the rite that is important to Paul.” (Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 141.)

40. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 216.

41. Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 100.

42. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 217.

43. Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 100–01.

44. “*In the name of the Lord Jesus*. ‘The name of God,’ or ‘of Christ,’ is often a periphrase for God or Christ himself. To call upon the name of God is to call on God. To baptize unto the name of Christ, and to baptize unto Christ, are interchanged as synonymous expressions. So here, to be justified or sanctified in the name of Christ, means simply by Christ; see John 20, 31, ‘That believing ye might have life through his name.’ Acts 10, 43, ‘That through his name whoso believeth in him might have remission of sins.’ Though these forms of expression are substantially the same as to their import, yet the ‘name of God’ means not strictly God himself, but God as known and worshipped.” (Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 101.)

45. For more on this distinction, see John Murray’s classic book, *Redemption—Accomplished and Applied* (London: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1961).

46. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 253.

47. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, 212. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.ii.html>>

48. Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 101.

49. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 255.

50. e.g., Hays, *First Corinthians*, 101–02.

51. Barnett, *1 Corinthians: Holiness and Hope of a Rescued People*, 102.

52. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, 213. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.iii.html>>

53. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 278.

54. Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 102–03.

55. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 278–79.

56. Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 103.

57. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 278.

58. “Christian liberty is not licence, for licence is not more but less than liberty.” (Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 146.)

59. Martin Luther, *Concerning Christian Liberty*. Cited in Thiselton, *First Corinthians: A Shorter Exegetical & Pastoral Commentary*, 98.

60. Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 103.

61. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 146–47.

62. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, 215. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.iii.html>>

63. Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 103.

64. Schreiner, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 127.

65. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 147.

66. “Regarding the assertion that Paul intends to indicate no difference between the verb ἤγειρε used with reference to Christ, ‘raised,’” and ἐξεγερεῖ used with reference to us, ‘will raise up,’ the reverse is true. Christ’s body never saw corruption, our bodies are subject to corruption and thus rot in the grave and turn to dust, I. Cor. 15:50–54. The proposition ἐκ thus suggests the grace and its decay ‘from’ or ‘out of’ which God will raise our bodies.” (Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 260.)

67. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 282.

68. Morris, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 99.

69. “Here we have an explanation, or, if you prefer it, an amplification of the foregoing statement.” (Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, 217. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.iii.html>>

70. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 261.

71. “Gk. ἄρα; ‘take up’ or ‘take away,’ not simply ‘take,’ which would be λαβών.” (Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 285, note 304.)

72. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 262.

73. Thiselton, *First Corinthians: A Shorter Exegetical & Pastoral Commentary*, 95.

74. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 234.

75. “The body as such could, of course, never belong to the Lord, it is always the person as such that belongs to him and thus the body: ‘he who joins *himself*’ (middle, not passive as in our versions). This belonging of our body to the Lord and of the Lord to our body is on the part of him who so belongs, not a passive, but an active relation, one of the great activities of our faith and our love. This activity marks the character of that person, he is ὁ κολλώμενος. Yet we must say that, while in the opposite case a single act of fornication is enough to bestow the evil character, here the very nature of faith and of love is durative and the spiritual character is bestowed accordingly.” (Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 264–65.)

76. Thiselton, *First Corinthians: A Shorter Exegetical & Pastoral Commentary*, 95.

77. “The verb κολλᾶν is used in the LXX to refer both to sexual union and spiritual bonds. In the latter usage, it simply means ‘to hold fast.’ In Deut. 10:20, for example, Israel is commanded to fear the Lord their God, worship him alone, and ‘hold fast’ to him. Hezekiah is commended for ‘holding fast’ to the Lord and keeping his commandments (2 Kings 18:6 LXX). By contrast, Solomon is chided for doing what was evil in the Lord’s sight by violating the Lord’s command in loving and marrying many foreign women and ‘clinging’ to them in love. ‘Cleaving’ to these women with their idolatrous sentiments influenced him to turn away his heart to other gods (1 Kings 11:1–8 LXX).” (Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 235.)

78. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, 218–19. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.iii.html>>

79. Schreiner, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 128.

80. Morris, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 100.

81. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 264–66.

82. Barnett, *1 Corinthians: Holiness and Hope of a Rescued People*, 103.

83. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 150.

84. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 266.

85. Hays, *First Corinthians*, 105.

86. Morris, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 101.

87. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 266.

88. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 290.

89. Thiselton, *First Corinthians: A Shorter Exegetical & Pastoral Commentary*, 96.

90. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 290.

91. “This does not teach that fornication is greater than any other sin; but it does teach that it is altogether peculiar in its effects upon the body; not so much in its physical as in its moral and spiritual effects. The idea runs through the Bible that there is something mysterious in the commerce of the sexes, and in the effects which flow from it. Every other sin, however degrading and ruinous to the health, even drunkenness, is external to the body, that is, external to its life. But fornication, involving as it does a community of life, is a sin against the body itself, because incompatible, as the Apostle had just taught, with the design of its creation, and with its immortal destiny.” (Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 105–06.)

92. Barnett, *1 Corinthians: Holiness and Hope of a Rescued People*, 104.

93. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 238.

94. Hays, *First Corinthians*, 109.

95. The “eighth use”: Thiselton, *First Corinthians: A Shorter Exegetical & Pastoral Commentary*, 97. The “sixth time in this chapter”: Morris, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 101.

96. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 269.

97. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, 220. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.iii.html>>

98. Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, 106.

99. Morris, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 102.

100. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 152.

101. Hays, *First Corinthians*, 106.

102. “The blessed fact that we are the Spirit’s sanctuary has two sides: one that he is ours, and the other that we are his.” (Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*, 269.)

103. Morris, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 103.

104. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, 221. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom39.xiii.iii.html>>

105. “Second, this passage needs to be heard again and again over against every encroachment of Hellenistic dualism that would negate the body in favor of the soul. God made us whole people; and in Christ he has redeemed us wholly. In the Christian view there is no dichotomy between body and spirit that either indulges the body because it is irrelevant or punishes it so as to purify the spirit. This pagan view of physical existence finds its way into Christian theology in a number of subtle ways, including the penchant on the part of some to ‘save souls’ while caring little for people’s material needs. The Christian creed, based on NT revelation, is not the immortality of the soul, but the resurrection of the body. That creed does not lead to crass materialism; rather, it affirms a holistic view of redemption that is predicated in part on the doctrine of creation—both the physical and spiritual orders are good because God created them—and in part on the doctrine of redemption, including the consummation—the whole fallen order, including the body, has been redeemed in Christ and awaits its final redemption.” (Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 294.)