

THE DANGERS OF IMMORALITY

TEXT: I CORINTHIANS 6:9-20

INTRODUCTION:

1. The great Greek cities, such as Corinth, Athens, and others, were noted for their acceptance of sex outside of marriage.
2. There was in Corinth the temple of Aphrodite, which was devoted to the worship of sex. Corinth at one time had 1,000 prostitutes in this temple.
3. Because of the notorious immorality in Corinth, a word was invented: "To Corinthianize," meaning "to be licentious" or "to practice sexual immorality."
4. Therefore, it is not surprising that the church in Corinth was affected (cf. I Corinthians 5:1, 9).
5. I am going to speak tonight on the dangers of immorality. Verse 18 says, "Flee fornication."

I. IMMORAL PEOPLE CANNOT GET INTO HEAVEN (6:9, 10).

1. There are many dangers associated with immorality. For example, immoral people have a bad reputation. Consider Bill Clinton or Bill Cosby.
2. And, there are sexually transmitted diseases, such as herpes, gonorrhea, syphilis, or AIDS.
3. The Center for Disease Control recently came out with a report, entitled, "Reported Cases of Sexually Transmitted Diseases on the Rise, Some at Alarming Rate."
4. Sin can make people physically sick and can even lead to depression, instability, anxiety, insanity, and suicide.
5. There are many dangers associated with immorality, but the greatest danger is the danger of spending eternity in hell (I Cor. 6:9, 10; Galatians 5:19-21).
6. Hebrews 13:4 says, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."
7. Revelation 21:8 says whoremongers shall be cast into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.
8. Revelation 22:15 says that whoremongers, along with sorcerers, and murderers, and idolaters, and liars are kept outside of heaven.
9. In I Corinthians 6:9, 10, the apostle Paul is stating that the wicked are not children of God, and therefore they are not fit for heaven.

10. This does not mean that anybody who has ever committed one of these sins will be denied entrance to heaven, but the Bible clearly teaches that a person who continually engages in sin cannot be a Christian.
11. A true Christian will repent, and will be forgiven and restored. For example, King David committed adultery with Bath-sheba, and then had her husband killed. But he repented and was forgiven, and he is in heaven now.
12. Sadly, David's life was never the same after that, but he did go to heaven.
13. The Bible teaches that people whose lives are characterized by immorality are not saved, and therefore "shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 6:9).
14. First John 3:9 says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit (continue to practice) sin."
15. Today we hear about so-called gay churches and gay ministers, etc., but this is contrary to Scripture. A homosexual can only become a Christian if he repents.
16. First Corinthians 6:9, 10 refers to fornicators, and adulterers, and effeminate, and abusers of themselves with mankind (homosexuals), but also mentions idolaters, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners. The Bible says that none of these sinners shall inherit the kingdom of God.
17. Verse 11 says, "And such were some of you..." They were guilty of these sins before they were converted to Christ. I remember hearing a certain evangelist preach many years ago. He said he mentioned to a certain pastor how impressed he was with his members.
18. The pastor said that one of his Sunday School teachers was a prostitute before she got saved. One of his deacons was a drunkard and an adulterer, etc.
19. "And such were some of you..." (6:11).
20. I remember another evangelist saying he was preaching in a good church in California, and he had heard that several of the members had been homosexuals before they were saved.
21. "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (6:11b).

II. HOW ARE ALL THINGS LAWFUL? (6:12)

1. "All things are lawful unto me" (6:12) does not include things that are clearly unlawful (cf. 6:9, 10).

2. When Herod committed adultery with his brother's wife, John the Baptist said to Herod, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife" (Mark 6:18).
3. What Paul means is that things that are not clearly prohibited by the Bible are lawful. But they may not be "expedient." They may not be helpful, or profitable, or advantageous. In fact, they may hinder our ministry, and they may be a stumbling block to others (6:12; cf. 10:23, 24; Romans 14:14, 15).
4. Albert Barnes thought that, "All things are lawful unto me" (6:12) was a common saying, and that the fornicators in Greece would often say it in defense of their sinful conduct.
5. Another commentator said that he thought it was a slogan of the Gnostics in Corinth, who chafed at the restraints of conventional morality (S. Lewis Johnson, "Desecrating the Temple of God").
6. We see the same thing today in America. Today people defend adultery if the adulterers are "in love." Or if one of the adulterers is separated from his mate.
7. Or they defend pre-marital sex by saying it only "normal." And, the public school distribute condoms and provide abortion referrals, etc.
8. Today many Americans are following Hollywood, and not the Bible.
9. Barnes said that many people in Corinth understood all things to be lawful in the sense that, "God has formed all things for our use, and there can be no evil if we use them."
10. I have heard people say this to justify promiscuous sex, taking drugs, smoking tobacco, drinking alcohol, etc.
11. Their interpretation of verse 12 contradicts other Scriptures (cf. 6:9, 10).
12. First Timothy 6:17 says that God has given us richly "all things to enjoy." But "all things" does not include sinful things (pornography, illegal drugs, etc.).
13. To say that nothing in itself is unlawful is absurd. If that were true it would be perfectly acceptable to murder and to rob banks and to commit perjury, etc.
14. Barnes wrote, "That there were many vicious persons who held this sentiment there can be no doubt; and though it cannot be supposed that there were any in the Christian church who would openly advocate it, yet the design of Paul was to cut up the plea altogether, wherever it might be urged, and to show that it was false and unfounded" (*Barnes' Notes*).
15. By stating, "I will not be brought under the power of any" (6:12b), Paul is saying, "I will not be subdued by it; I will not become the slave of it." Habits tend to control people, and even Christians need to be careful. (Ex.: Internet).

16. That is why Paul said, “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (I Cor. 9:27).

III. IMMORALITY IS DISHONORING TO GOD (6:13-20).

1. The body of the Christian is sacred to God. He owns it; He has redeemed it; and He dwells in it (6:13-20).
2. Our bodies were designed by God. David said in Psalm 139:14, “I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”
3. Verses 19 and 20 says, “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”
4. Just as it is wrong to overindulge in food, it is also wrong to indulge in immorality because our bodies belong to God (6:13, 14).
5. Food is good if used properly, and sex is good if used properly.
6. In verse 15, Paul is speaking specifically to Christians. He points out how horrible it would be to take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot. He says, “God forbid” (6:15).
7. In delicate language, Paul describes the intimacy of marriage (6:16). He is referring to Genesis 2:24, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”
8. In arithmetic, one plus one equals two, but in marriage one plus one equals one (6:16).
9. If you are saved, you are “joined unto the Lord,” in such a way that God says you are now “one spirit” (6:17). This makes the thought of fornication all the more terrible. This should influence our thinking, not Hollywood!
10. Since our bodies belong to God, we must be very careful how we conduct ourselves, how we dress, and even how we think (6:15-17).
11. Even how we think. There are many Scriptures which warn us to guard our thoughts. Consider Amnon, the son of King David. The Bible says that Amnon became so obsessed with his half-sister Tamar that he was vexed, and became sick (II Samuel 13:1, 2). This eventually led to rape, and then to revenge and murder.
12. God say, “Flee fornication” (6:18). A good example of this is when Joseph fled from Potiphar’s lascivious wife. Joseph lost his garment but he kept his purity (Genesis 39).

13. If Joseph would have lingered, he would have been in danger of crossing the point of no return (cf. I Cor. 10:13). The book of Genesis, and the history of Israel, would have turned out much differently.
14. Second Timothy 2:22 says, “Flee also youthful lusts.”
15. Sexually immoral people sin against God. Joseph said to Potiphar’s wife, “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Gen. 39:9).
16. After David committed adultery with Bath-sheba, he prayed, “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight” (Psalm 51:4).
17. But not only do sexually immoral people sin against God, they also sin against their own bodies (6:18).
18. Earlier, I mentioned the danger of diseases. Women who have had an abortion face a greater risk of cervical cancer. Some women cannot conceive now because they have had abortions.
19. God created us for a purpose, and Christ redeemed us for a purpose (6:19, 20). Therefore, it is dishonoring to God to engage in immorality.
20. We “are bought with a price” (6:20), and that price is the precious blood of Jesus. Therefore, Paul says, “glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (6:20).

CONCLUSION:

1. One preacher gave the following illustration to make his point: He said how would you feel if a neighbor came and brought a whole bunch of dirty pigs to your yard, and let the pigs tear up the yard.
2. His point: it would be inconsiderate; it would be unlawful; and it would be dishonorable. Your yard was not meant for dirty pigs.
3. And so it is with our bodies. God created us, and He redeemed us, and our bodies belong to Him.
4. Therefore, it is wrong to engage in immorality.