

Lesson 4 23 February 2014

Glorifying God in Your Bodies

Lesson Scope: [1 Corinthians 6](#)

Lesson Focus

The city of Corinth was very wicked. Their licentious practices were well-known and commonly accepted. This environment had a subtle influence on the church. It is no surprise that Paul continually needed to address these issues.

The thoughts of chapter 5 continue in chapter 6. Paul challenges the church on the matter of suing at law. His many questions help his audience to think through the issues. He points out why suing is wrong and what course of action the Gospel requires. Using the civil courts of the land to judge one another is as sinful as any moral vice of mankind (6:9). He presses the point home by saying, "And such were some of you." Then he immediately enumerates what they are now in Christ by the Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:11). In the following verses, the apostle states emphatically how seriously immorality affects this new relationship. Christian liberty does not give license for sin. "Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:20).

The Christian is washed, sanctified, and justified in the Name of Jesus by the Spirit. As a result of this cleansing, all carnality and fleshly indulgence must be mortified in order to glorify God.

"If Christ be in you, . . . the Spirit is life because of righteousness" (Romans 8:10). Jesus provided the life that is more abundant (John 10:10). He is the Good Shepherd that gave His life for the sheep. We have been redeemed by His precious lifeblood. To maintain the privileges of being members of His body, and of our bodies being the temple of His Spirit, we must keep His commandments. Herein are found all the characteristics of a life that glorifies God. Therefore we need to take heed to the warnings in this study of 1 Corinthians 6. "Be not deceived"—know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. "Flee fornication"—know that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost.

Lesson Aim: To identify characteristics of a life that glorifies God.

Theme Verse: 1 [Corinthians 6:20](#). For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Lesson Text

"Why Do Ye Not Rather Take Wrong?"

1 [Corinthians 6:1-8](#) ¹ Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? ² Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? ³ Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? ⁴ If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. ⁵ I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? ⁶ But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. ⁷ Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather *suffer yourselves* to be defrauded? ⁸ Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that *your* brethren.

"Your Bodies Are the Members of Christ"

1 [Corinthians 6:9-20](#) ⁹ Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, ¹⁰ Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you: 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. ¹² All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. ¹³ Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body *is* not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴ And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. ¹⁵ Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make *them* the members of an harlot? God forbid. ¹⁶ What? know ye not that he which

is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. ¹⁷ But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. ¹⁸ Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. ¹⁹ 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? ²⁰ For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Questions for Study

"Why Do Ye Not Rather Take Wrong?"

1. Describe the issue Paul was addressing in these verses.
2. How are the least esteemed in the church a better source than the ungodly for resolving conflict between brethren?
3. Give some practical guidelines for resolving disputes.

"Your Bodies Are the Members of Christ"

4. What do the "know ye not?" questions in these verses teach us?
5. How do our bodies become the members of Christ?
6. Why is purity imperative?
7. Discuss the boundaries of Christian liberty.
8. In summary, list characteristics that identify a life that glorifies God.

Analyzing the Passage

Paul uses fourteen questions in this chapter to help his audience think through the issues in focus. "Dare any of you?" (1 Corinthians 6:1) suggests their boldness to do what one should fear to do. If saints will judge the world and angels (1 Corinthians 6:2-3), surely they are able to judge matters among themselves. Apparently the wise, right-thinking persons were being despised. "Not a wise man among you" (1 Corinthians 6:5) was a sharp rebuke to this group who prided themselves in their wisdom.

The questions containing "know ye not?" (1 Corinthians 6:9, 15-16, 19) and the logic that follows were given to arrest their attention. They point out the inconsistency and sin in their practice and emphasize the privileges of blood-cleansed saints, justified "in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11).

"All things" (1 Corinthians 6:12) obviously are limited to non-moral issues and should be exercised according to expediency (profitability).

They may not, however, become one's master. Eating is normal for the body but fornication is not normal. The body was made for the Lord (1 Corinthians 6:13; see also Hebrews 10:5), who died and rose (1 Corinthians 6:14). That same resurrection power will be effective on the bodies of all who die as members of Christ (1 Corinthians 6:14-15; see also Romans 8:23). When one yields his body to immorality, not only his body but also his spirit is subject to the power of that evil union (1 Corinthians 6:15-16). When one's spirit is joined to the Lord, the body is brought into subjection, and there are no regrets (1 Corinthians 6:17). But moral sin brings one's body into an involvement that is very different from other sins. Therefore flee the danger (1 Corinthians 6:18)! The price of the purchased possession is the precious blood of Jesus Christ on Calvary. One who is bought by another is no longer subject to his former master. So live to the praise of His glory in body and spirit (1 Corinthians 6:20).

Important Teachings

1. Members who sue at law bring reproach upon the church (1 Corinthians 6:1, 6).
2. God has placed sufficient resources of wisdom among the brotherhood to resolve grievances between individuals (1 Corinthians 6:2-4).
3. The Gospel way is to take wrong rather than to wrong others (1 Corinthians 6:7-8).
4. God's purpose in cleansing and sanctifying is to deliver from sin (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).
5. To glorify God, we must respect the boundaries of personal Christian liberty (1 Corinthians 6:12).
6. He who is joined to the Lord must keep his body and actions holy (1 Corinthians 6:13-17).
7. Those who wish to glorify God acknowledge the powerful temptations and severe consequences associated with moral sin (1 Corinthians 6:18).
8. God is glorified when we treat the body as His purchased possession and dwelling place (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Principles and Applications

"Why Do Ye Not Rather Take Wrong?"

1. Members who sue at law bring reproach upon the church (1 Corinthians 6:1, 6). The church is the body of Christ, who is the Prince of Peace and who taught His followers to "resist not evil." How then can a professed follower of Christ turn to ungodly men and carnal measures to have his wrongs redressed? It is better to suffer injustice than to seek justice before an ungodly court.

2. God has placed sufficient resources of wisdom among the brotherhood to resolve grievances between individuals (1 Corinthians 6:2-4). Grievances definitely indicate that someone is not acting wisely. And if we are hesitant to seek godly counsel from our own brethren, something is wrong. But what a blessing it is to confer with other faithful brethren to help make proper judgment! Jesus gives this wisdom: "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24). God forbid that Jesus would need to say, "Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" (Luke 12:57).

3. The Gospel way is to take wrong rather than to wrong others (1 Corinthians 6:7-8). Jesus is our example and pattern. "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not" (1 Peter 2:23). "For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God" (1 Peter 2:20). In other words, practice the Golden Rule!

"Your Bodies Are the Members of Christ"

4. God's purpose in cleansing and sanctifying is to deliver from sin (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). How could God declare more explicitly that unrighteousness shall not inherit the kingdom of God? "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you" (Romans 6:17). "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" (Galatians 4:9).

5. To glorify God, we must respect the boundaries of personal Christian liberty (6:12). Obviously, non-moral issues are in focus. Christian liberty is controlled by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17). Do I have the

Spirit of life in Christ Jesus? Christian liberty is also governed by the law of offenses. How expedient are my actions in light of my brother's conscience (Romans 14:21)? We cannot glorify God while making it difficult for others of His people.

6. He who is joined to the Lord must keep his body and actions holy (6:13-17). The Old Testament directive "For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy" (Leviticus 11:44) takes on new meaning to the New Testament saint. Our God is holy, and we are the body of His holy Son. Do we walk carefully enough? Are we staying free from the impurity of our godless, immoral society? Are we giving our youth sufficient direction to ensure that they will remain unstained by the world?

7. Those who wish to glorify God acknowledge the powerful temptations and severe consequences associated with moral sin (1 Corinthians 6:18). Adultery and fornication involve one's body in ways that other sins do not. The enemy exalts the moment of self-gratification, obscuring the knowledge of the regrettable consequences that will surely follow. In spite of this knowledge, the heat of temptation and the enticement of our own lusts will surely cause us to fall if we are not "strong in the Lord." To avoid the consequences, we must believe that since even "the thought of foolishness is sin," certainly the contemplation of sin is hateful to God. To glorify God, we must react promptly to temptation, imploring Him for immediate help to stop the process of wrong thoughts. We must wield the Sword of the Spirit, our most powerful offensive weapon against the enemy (Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12).

8. God is glorified when we treat the body as His purchased possession and dwelling place (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). We are bought with a price—the very life and blood of God's dear Son. Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit. We cannot afford risk in regard to spiritual safety. We must exercise caution and propriety in every level of life—home, church, school, business, and so forth. At all cost, we must keep ourselves—body, soul, and spirit—for Him who for our sakes sanctified Himself.

Answers to Questions

1. Describe the issue Paul was addressing in these verses.

Members were using the civil courts and unjust judges of the city to set-

tle disputes among themselves. They were defrauding one another by failing to apply the principle of nonresistance (1 Corinthians 6:7-8). Instead of being willing to suffer wrong, they were fighting for their rights.

2. How are the least esteemed in the church a better source than the ungodly for resolving conflict between brethren?

No court of the land or ungodly judge looks at issues as impartially and fairly as sincere, godly men. Godly men use godly wisdom to resolve issues; whereas the ungodly resort to carnal scheming and humanistic reasoning.

3. Give some practical guidelines for resolving disputes.

Practice the Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12). Use the Bible way outlined by Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17. Utilize the wise counsel available in the spiritual brotherhood. Be willing to compromise where you can on non-moral issues. Of course, compromising Bible principles is never an option in any controversy.

4. What do the "know ye not?" questions in these verses teach us?

The question in verse 9 brings to light the seriousness of sin, which will bar us from inheriting the kingdom of God unless we repent. The question in verse 16 implies the same truth, explaining how immorality brings the body into an involvement with evil in a way other sins do not (1 Corinthians 6:18). On the positive side, the questions in 1 Corinthians 6:15 and 19 show what lofty positions are given to the blood-washed saints. Hence the Scriptural logic—since our bodies belong to the eternal Godhead, we must not yield to anything less!

5. How do our bodies become the members of Christ?

Redemption for mankind has been accomplished at a great price (1 Corinthians 6:20), the precious blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God. All who have their souls washed, sanctified, and justified in the Name of Jesus, by the Spirit of our God (1 Corinthians 6:11), and who have their bodies washed with pure water (Hebrews 10:22) become members of Christ. Jesus gave power to become the sons of God to them that believe on His Name (John 1:12). In this manner we become members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones (Ephesians 5:30).

6. Why is purity imperative?

Purity is imperative because God is holy. Purity is imperative because we are members of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 6:15), which is ho-

ly. Purity is imperative because our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19), who likewise is holy. Since God has freely provided such a close relationship with His holy personage, He forbids anything short of the holiness that He has provided for.

7. Discuss the boundaries of Christian liberty.

Christian liberty is controlled by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17). The liberty of the Spirit is always in tune with the Word of God. Christian liberty is also governed by the law of offenses—how expedient are my actions in light of my brother's conscience? When we allow even lawful things to enslave us, we step out of the proper boundaries. Obviously, only non-moral issues are within its boundaries. The Christian is never free to sin.

8. In summary, list characteristics that identify a life that glorifies God. Characteristics of a life that glorifies God include the following: a pure heart, a holy life (without the practice of sinning), nonresistance, a faithful life of love and obedience, thankfulness to God for redemption through Jesus' shed blood, proper use of our bodies physically and spiritually (which includes proper propriety in the home, school, church, and every other area of our lives), and exercising forgiveness to all men.

Summarizing the Lesson

Oh, for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free!
A heart that's sprinkled with the blood
So freely shed for me.

A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
My dear Redeemer's throne;
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone.

A heart in ev'ry thought renewed,
And full of love divine;
Perfect, and right, and pure, and good
A copy, Lord, of Thine.
—Charles Wesley

Research Guide

1. For inspiration, meditate on the Book of Ephesians, focusing on what we were before conversion, what we become through conversion, and what we shall be in glory.
2. Study Romans 6, especially noticing the word yield and the consequences associated with the choice of either sin or righteousness (see also Romans 2:1-11).