

**I CORINTHIANS**  
**Chapter 6:9-20**

**VERSES 9-11:**

Paul reminds them that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God, then he gives a list of sins and transgressions against God, nature and man.

As he repeats this awful list, he turns to those who had been redeemed and says - **"And such were some of you"**. These are the things from which you have been saved. These are the sins that you have had forgiven; from these unholy, wicked, impure things you have been cleansed. You were dead in trespasses and sin and were contented to wallow in the cesspool of sin, but God has forgiven all of them.

In 1972, there was a very popular song that pretty well expresses the meaning of this portion of scripture; the title was, "Thanks to Calvary." One verse goes something like this:

Today I went back to the place where I used to go,  
Today I saw the same old crowd I knew before.  
And when they asked me what had happened, I tried to tell them:  
Thanks to Calvary I don't come here anymore.

Many of us can say, "Thanks to Calvary, I'm not the man I used to be." When we came to know the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, He made us a new creature in Christ Jesus.

On the grave of John Newton, author of "Amazing Grace," are these words:

John Newton Clerk:  
Once an infidel and libertine,  
A servant of slaves in Africa,  
Was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour,  
Jesus Christ,  
Preserved, restored, pardoned,  
And appointed to preach the faith  
He had long labored to destroy.

On one occasion Newton said to a friend, "I am not all that I should be or what I want to be, but thank God I am not what I used to be." Jesus makes us a new person and salvation brings a new life. Our text is a wonderful description of the difference Jesus makes in the life of a person. (Note: If you have never read the life of Newton, you should as it will bless your heart and make you see why he wrote the song, "Amazing Grace".)

What great and exceeding grace of God to forgive such persons from sins so debasing and degrading. It is well for Christians to look back on what they once were. It will produce humility, gratitude, and a deep sense of the great sovereign mercy of God as well as an earnest desire that others be saved in like manner.

The purpose of this is to remind them of what they were. To show them that they were now under obligation to lead better lives because of the mercy which God had shown toward them in saving them from sins so degrading, and from a condition so horrible.

**VERSE 11:**

A sharp contrast is drawn between their past practice and their present position. They were to recognize that God had saved them from the very lifestyle of those before whom they were taking their petty differences.

The opening phrase indicates that God not only can save all types of sinners, but that He had already done so for several members of their own church. Salvation involves not only a past deliverance from the guilt and penalty of sin, but also the power and practice of sin - **Titus 2:11-14**.

The meanings of the three verbs -- "**washed, sanctified, and justified**", shows the believer's unchangeable standing. It indicates that these acts of God occur at the very moment of salvation. Hodge observes in his commentary, "Their sins, considered as filth had been washed away; considered as pollution, they had been purged or purified; considered as guilt, they had been covered with the righteousness of God."

The believer's body is to be subjected to the Lord's plan. The body was not designed with the purpose of fulfilling our own desires, but to fulfill the purposes of the Lord. The purpose of the body is not for self gratification but glorification.

The verb - "**washed**" refers to the cleansing of regeneration - **Titus 3:5**. This non-repeatable event removes the moral guilt from the believing sinner and gives him a permanent position of spiritual cleanliness. Some believe this passage refers to the washing with water baptism. If that had been Paul's intent, he would have used the Greek word for baptism. Also, the order would be wrong if that had been the case. Water baptism follows, not precedes, justification.

The word - "**sanctified**" refers to positional sanctification - **1:2; Acts 20:32; Heb. 10:10-14; Jude 1**, the act of God whereby the believing sinner is forever set apart from the world to God.

The verb - "**justified**" refers to that act of God whereby He declares righteous that sinner who has been made righteous through faith in Christ. **Romans 3:24; Romans 11:6**.

As a believer we have not come into any legal relationship with God. We are under grace and not under law. As a believer there is an amazing liberty, but not a liberty to do wrong. The very fact that I am in Christ means that God has claims upon me that He did not stress when I belonged to the world. Then I was allowed to take the way of my depraved nature, but now that I am in Christ, I am called upon to present my body, not merely my spirit, as a - "**living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is but my reasonable service.**"

**VERSE 12:**

Paul now speaks of physical desires and what our attitude should be about those physical desires.

Physical desires should be secondary, - "**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.**"

He is showing that satisfaction of his God-given desires were right when fulfilled in God's will. The desire for food, drink, and even sexual desires are physical desires that God has placed within the body. There is nothing wrong with the fulfillment of those desires as long as they are fulfilled according to the Word of God.

He states that the fulfillment of these desires is not always - "**expedient**" which means that which is to our benefit or profit. He is telling them that it is not wrong to fulfill our physical desires, but there are limitations to the fulfilling of those desires. When those desires are fulfilled according the flesh and not the Word of God it is wrong and a sin.

Our bodies have needs to drink, but that desire can be fulfilled in a way that is not to our profit. God puts the desire in us that craves drink, but when we satisfy that desire with alcoholic drinks, then we have not only fulfilled those desires outside of God's will, but also in a way that is not profitable for us.

We all have sexual desires and there is nothing wrong with the fulfillment of those desires if fulfilled as God intended. When we fulfill those desires in pre-marital and extra-marital sexual relations then those desires have been fulfilled outside of God's will and unprofitable to us.

To fulfill any God-given desire outside of God's will is not - "**expedient**". It is not to our advantage. The fulfillment of our God-given desires in God's way and will is always to our profit and advantage. When God permits His children to fulfill the natural desires in an ungodly way there will always be consequences. Those consequences may cost more than one is willing to pay. Samson is a good example.

Paul is telling us that the fulfillment of our physical desires is to be subjected to God's plan and purpose. The fulfillment of our physical desires is to be secondary to the fulfilling of His will. God's will always comes first and the fulfilling of any of our desires comes second. That is why Paul said - "**all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.**"

The physical must not be the force that controls our actions and conduct. The plan and purposes of God for our life must take priority over our flesh and its desires. We cannot let the physical desires of our body dictate to us what we do. We must let the will of God determine what we do.

It is true I am not under law, but under grace. On the other hand, there are many things that are inappropriate to a Christian; things that would bring my testimony into shame. There are a great many things that God does not give direct answers to in the Bible. Because God does not say yes or no on some issues it is thought that it does not make any difference to God. Often times these things are looked upon and judged right and wrong because of what others do and don't do. You have heard the old saying, "Everybody is doing it, and therefore it must be ok". The question is not if it is right or wrong for me to do but the question is, "What effect would it have on other people if I as a Christian were to indulge in them?" I belong to Christ, and men will judge Christ as they look upon me, and my behavior. Therefore, my conduct and actions must always be looked at as to whether or not it will glorify God or bring shame to His name.

**"All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any."** - It is a bad thing to create habits that are not easily broken, and the apostle says, **"I will not be brought under the power of any."** I will not allow myself to be a slave to fleshly appetites. There are things with which one cannot meddle without being brought

under the power. Your liberty is gone when something controls your life. You become a slave to the habit and not to the power of God.

Yes, as Christians we are free, but we are free to please Him and not free to please ourselves.

### **VERSE 13:**

The phrase - **"and the Lord for the body"** means that the body was made so that God could use our bodies to fulfill His purposes. They are the vessels of the Lord. Our bodies are an instrument that God uses to fulfill His purposes.

**"Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats."** - The two are suited, the one for the other. Food is suited to the digestive tract and the digestive tract is suited to provide the nutritional physical needs of the body, but there will come a day when there will not be a need for either.

Paul is looking to eternity when we live in glorified bodies when we will have no need to eat. One day when their purpose is fulfilled God will do away with such things. The point that Paul is making is that since physical desires are temporary they should not be first and foremost in our life.

**". . . but God shall destroy both it and them."** - Therefore do not live as though your greatest business in life is the gratifying of your appetite. As Christians your business is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then he speaks of the sexual desire, for there were those who said, "God has implanted certain appetites in the bodies of men and women, therefore it does not make any difference how people indulge these appetites in or out of the marriage relationship." - **". . . the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord: and the Lord for the body."** It is not to be used for vile gratification, that is contrary to the holiness of God. If I am going to have my body in the resurrection, then I must remember it is not to be used for any degrading purpose here on earth.

### **VERSE 14:**

**"And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by His own power."** God raised up the body of the Lord Jesus and will one day do the same for us. If one day our bodies will be glorified in heaven by God, they should be used to glorify God on earth. This is the purpose of the believer's body.

The Corinthian's were known for their immorality. The very name Corinth was synonymous with debauchery and immorality. On the hill of Acropolis stood the temple of Aphrodite, the goddess of love. To that temple were attached 1,000 priestesses who were sacred prostitutes. In the evening they come down from Acropolis and practiced their trade on the streets. To have sex with a prostitute was a common thing in Corinth. You might say it was a way of life. It was so common that the practice came to be called, "Corinthianizing."

Many of the believers at Corinth had previously been involved in such immorality. It seems that because of the pagan idea that the body was unimportant and therefore what was done in the flesh was not wrong. There were some that still had not given up such a

practice or were having a hard time giving up the old way of life. In **verses 15-18** Paul describes such immorality as a perversion of the body. He explains why it is such a perversion of the believer's body.

What a terrible shame and sin that the Corinthians were committing. They felt that they could abuse their bodies as they desired and they could satisfy their appetites the way they wanted. Paul tells them the fact that Jesus Christ Himself was raised by the power of God, so also would the bodies of believers. Therefore, our bodies were not to be used for selfish and sinful lust, but to be used for the glory of God.

One day the belly and meat would be done away with, but the body would live on in the glorified state.

#### **VERSE 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."**

Paul was shocked by their ignorance over sexual matters - **6:15, 16,19**. Using questions and basic logic, he showed them why it was spiritually inconsistent for them to be involved in any form of sexual perversion.

Can you imagine the holy, spotless, sinless Lord Jesus Christ, lying with a prostitute? God forbid that we even think of such a thing. Yet, when a saved person does certain immoral things they are actually associating the Lord Jesus with that immorality. To even think of doing such a thing should make the believer shudder.

As believers, we must never forget that our bodies are the members of the Body of Christ. What we do in these bodies associates the Lord Jesus with what we are doing.

#### **VERSE 16:**

**"What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh."** Paul is referring to the book of Genesis and speaks of God's description of marriage. That description is given in - **Genesis 2:24 - "Therefore shall a man leave father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."**

From what Paul said it is clear that the phrase **"one flesh"** involves a sexual union. It is a union that is experienced and enjoyed by a husband and wife. God intended sex to be between a "man" and a "woman" who were also a husband and wife. Sex outside of marriage is sin!

Paul's argument was that when they had sexual relations with a harlot they were entering into that oneness God described.

#### **VERSE 17:**

**"But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."** Just as a husband and wife enter into a oneness with one another, two become one, believers have entered into such a relationship with Christ. To have sexual relations with a harlot was not only associating

Christ with that harlot, but was also committing spiritual adultery. It is a matter of being unfaithful to Christ.

In light of the fact the Holy Spirit dwells within us and we are joined as His body, to Him we should do nothing that would be contrary to that relationship.

### **VERSE 18:**

He says in **verse 18** that such a sin, is a sin against a person's own body. But what was far worse and more serious is that is it a sin against Christ's body.

There is only one preventive solution. **"Flee fornication."** This is basic and simple, but it is also very true. Note that Paul uses the present tense. The idea is to - **"keep fleeing,"** or make it your habit to flee. Joseph did - **Genesis 39:10-12**. David did not - **II Samuel 11:2-4**. Elsewhere Paul gives a warning - **"But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof"** - **Romans 13:14**.

Understanding what Paul says, the believer should use their body for the Lord's purposes, and guard their body from an unholy purpose. What one does with their body and in their body is important. The Lord Jesus Christ is involved.

Whether it be fornication or anything else that would pervert the body, we should flee. Why? Because we are members of Christ and one with Him.

### **VERSE 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."** Here is one of the most amazing truths in all the Bible. God lives within the believer through the person of the Holy Spirit. Our body is God's earthly dwelling place.

He first pointed out that the physical body of the Christian is - **"the temple of the Holy Spirit."** The word for **"temple"** was used for the inner sanctuary, the most holy place where God dwelt, not the general temple area.

The indwelling (**"in you"**) and the possession (**"which ye have"**) of the Spirit are given by God (**"of God"**). The believer did not work for salvation or the indwelling presence of the Spirit; both are eternal gifts from God.

The believer therefore does not belong to himself. His very personality, (intellect, emotions, and will), his ambitions and abilities, and his body with all of its desires are not his to command and to please. He totally belongs to His divine occupant.

### **VERSE 20:**

**"For ye are bought with a price."** The word **"bought"** speaks of the price of redeeming a slave. We were slaves to sin and Satan, but the Lord Jesus purchased our redemption through His own blood. The point that Paul makes is that we are not our own. We belong to God.

The final reason of divine ownership is the fact that all believers were redeemed from the penalty and power of sin with the price of Christ's precious death - ***I Peter 1:18-19***. Christ bought each Christian. The right of ownership goes with the price of redemption. Believers never did own themselves. Once they were owned by sin, but they were purchased from that slavery to be owned by the divine master.

Since the believer belongs to God, there is only one purpose that should mark his will: glorify God. In his body with its natural desire and in his spirit he should magnify his new owner (his Creator, Saviour, and Lord), rather than gratify his selfish desires and lusts.

**I CORINTHIANS 6:9-20**  
**Study Guide**

1. Paul reminds the Corinthians that the \_\_\_\_\_ shall not inherit the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.
2. When a child of God looks back to what they were before they were saved should produce \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. A sharp contrast is drawn between their past \_\_\_\_\_ and their present \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Salvation involves not only a \_\_\_\_\_ deliverance from the guilt and penalty of sin, but also the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. As a believer there is an amazing liberty, but \_\_\_\_\_ liberty to do \_\_\_\_\_.
5. He is showing that satisfaction of his God-given desires were right when fulfilled in \_\_\_\_\_'s \_\_\_\_\_.
6. To fulfill any God-given desire outside of God's will is not - \_\_\_\_\_. It is not to our \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of God for our life must take priority over our \_\_\_\_\_ and its \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Our bodies are an instrument that God uses to fulfill His \_\_\_\_\_.
9. If one day our bodies will be glorified in heaven by God, they should be used to \_\_\_\_\_ God on \_\_\_\_\_.
10. God lives within the believer through the person of the \_\_\_\_\_. Our \_\_\_\_\_ is God's \_\_\_\_\_ dwelling place.
11. The word "**bought**" speaks of the price of redeeming a \_\_\_\_\_. We were \_\_\_\_\_ to sin and Satan, but the Lord Jesus purchased our redemption through His own sacrifice on the cross.
12. Since the believer belongs to God, there is only one purpose that should mark his will: \_\_\_\_\_.
13. A child of God should magnify his new owner (his Creator, Saviour, and Lord), rather than gratify his selfish \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.