Grace Baptist Church/Crossroads/Crossroads Dr. Rick Griffith

11 Oct 1998/ 27 Jan 2008/ 11 Nov 2012 Message 8 of 24

NIV (Cyclical Deductive) 35 Minutes

**Why Be Pure?**

***1 Corinthians 6:12-20***

**Topic:** Immorality

**Subject:** Avoid sexual immorality

**Complement:** because it harms your relationship with God, others, and yourself

**Purpose:** The listeners—whether single or married—will commit to sexual purity for life.

# Introduction

### [Some people are ashamed of fidelity—adapted from J. Allan Peterson, *The Myth of the Greener Grass* cited in Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Sermons*, 33]

#### A dozen women regularly ate lunch together. They had been studying French together while their children were in nursery school. One brave woman asked the group, “How many of you have been faithful to your husbands throughout your marriage?” Only one woman at the table raised her hand.

Lunch

#### That evening, one of the women told her husband the story and added that she, herself, had not raised her hand.

#### “But I have been faithful,” she assured him.

#### “Then why didn’t you raise your hand?” he asked.

#### “I was ashamed.”

#### Ashamed of fidelity! In the past, the burden of shame fell on those who *broke* their vows, but that has all changed where most of us live. When was the last time you saw on TV or in a movie a *married* couple in bed? That’s considered passé! Only killjoys believe in fidelity.

### Today we need to talk about fidelity because God talks about it in His Word.

**Black**

#### After all, God created us male and female and He did it in a most creative way…

##### He had all the animals march in front of Adam two-by-two, and Adam named them: Mr. & Mrs. Elephant, Mr. & Mrs. Flamingo, Mr. & Mrs. Rhinoceros, Mr. & Mrs. Mouse, Mr. & Mrs. Tyrannosaurus, Mr. & Mrs. Flea…

##### Imagine naming hundreds of animals—all in a day’s work! Tiring work…

##### But then Adam noticed, “Hey, how come they all come in pairs, but there’s Adam and…no one! Mr. Adam… but where’s Mrs. Adam?”

##### Then God caused a divine sleep and a divine sideache, and wha-lah! Eve! The first bone marrow transplant! God’s perfect spare rib! Then he told them that the two should become one in marriage.

#### What was God’s first command to man? Sex! “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.” Asians have obeyed this command better than any other people!

**Cont’d**

#### So God isn’t against sex. Let there be no doubt about it. Howard Hendricks noted, “We should not be ashamed to discuss that which God was not ashamed to create.”

### Main Idea: But He prescribes intimacy only for marriage. Twice in today’s text God warns against sexual immorality, or intimacy outside of marriage. Notice in 1 Corinthians 6 the two times God limits sex within the marriage bond.

MI

#### Verse 13 says, “The body is not meant for sexual immorality.”

• 13 & 18

#### Verse 18 adds, “Flee from sexual immorality.”

pornea

#### But what is sexual immorality? This word is *pornea* from which we get the word “pornography.” Sexual immorality refers to involvement of two persons who are not united in heterosexual marriage—fornication (by one who’s single), adultery (by someone who’s married), homosexuality, etc.

• fornicate

• adultery

• homosexual

### Prove It: But what’s so bad about sex outside of marriage? Why limit this gift of God to only one person? What are the advantages of keeping it within marriage? (Bulletin)

Why?

#### That’s a question some of us are asking—and it’s a good one to ask. Some of you teenagers are asking what’s so bad about living together without marriage, and I’m glad. You deserve an answer. [Raise need]

#### Some adults here are asking it too. You know others at your work or club or elsewhere who break their marriage vows and seem to have a great time. You wonder, “Why am I being such a prude?” You deserve an answer too.

### Background: Ancient Corinth was a city of so-called “free sex.”

Acro

#### In fact, Corinth was so immoral that a slang term arose, “to Corinthianize,” which meant to commit sexual immorality! This would be like saying “to San Franciscoize” as a metaphor for homosexuality. These people also needed an answer to why they should limit intimacy to marriage.

SFO

#### Up to this point, Paul has already talked about incest warranting discipline (ch. 5) and lawsuits among believers (6:1-11). Now he returns to the subject of sex.

Chart

### Restatement/Preview: Here God through Paul gives three reasons to avoid sexual immorality in 1 Corinthians 6:12-20. And here’s the first reason…

3 reasons

MP

# I. Immorality harms your relationship with God (12-14, 17, 19-20)

 [We can’t walk with the Lord and live in the flesh at the same time—and why not? First…]

## Immorality enslaves you rather than frees you for God’s use (12).

•

### Why is “everything is permissible for me” in quotes? This was apparently a well-known saying in Corinth. Translated, it means “Just do it!” This is also known as the “if it feels good, do it” mentality. This thinking has destroyed countless homes!

Just Do It.

### Is Paul agreeing with this saying? No, he’s just quoting it. He’s just saying that while we are free in Christ, we still must only do that which is beneficial.

### What does Paul mean by “I will not be mastered by anything”? He means that we can become a *slave* to things that we are *free* to do!

### In other words, this gift is good, but we can become addicts even to *good* things—sex addicts, in this case.

(So immorality enslaves you. Why else is this gift only for marriage? Because…)

## Immorality misuses your body dedicated for God’s use (13).

•

### “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food” was another saying at Corinth. It means, “You got a stomach, so indulge it!” They thought fornication was as natural as eating. People still say today, “It’s a natural desire, so satisfy it!”

### The *NIV Study Bible*: “Paul quotes some Corinthians again who were claiming that as the physical acts of eating and digesting food have no bearing on one’s spiritual life, so the physical act of promiscuous sexual activity does not affect one’s spiritual life.”

### But “the body is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord.” Paul doesn’t associate the body with the belly but rather the body with the Lord. The concept that the body is unimportant is a pagan concept.

## Immorality involves a body destined for glory (14).

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### How does this reference to Christ’s resurrection fit the context? Well, the real emphasis is not Christ’s resurrection but ours. Since our bodies will be raised, they are important! God has a high regard for the body!

### In 1984 a law professor did a survey of 950 faculty members of religious departments in colleges throughout the USA. Sixty percent of these religion professors said premarital sex is OK! They neglect to see that God has great plans yet for our bodies.

Pie Chart

## Immorality destroys your unity with Christ (17).

•

### How does one unite himself with the Lord? It’s already happened, and since we are “with him in spirit” we should do what he would do.

### Christ was tempted in every way like us, the book of Hebrews tells us. Doesn’t that include sexual temptation? Yet He had victory in this area—and we need to maintain our spiritual unity with Him by being faithful to imitate Him in the sexual dimension.

•

## Immorality dishonors God’s temple since His Spirit lives in you (19-20).

### God’s glory first hovered over the waters of creation [Gen. 1:2], then descended on Mt. Sinai [Exod. 16:16-17], and filled the tabernacle [Exod. 40:34-35]. Under Solomon [ca. 959 BC] the *shekinah* glory rested on the ark in the Jerusalem temple [1 Kings 8:10-11] until just before it was destroyed [Ezek. 10]. But do you know where that *shekinah* glory is now? In us! The Holy Spirit is within you and me! Wow!

Indw

Pente

Basin

Taber

Glory

Pillar

Gen 1:2

### Years ago one of my evening school students stayed back to talk.

#### As we spoke he confessed a problem with lust, and I didn’t think this too unusual. But a few weeks later he confessed that he wanted to visit a prostitute. He went to an ATM to get the money to pay her, but the ATM was broken down. So he sought out another ATM, all the while ignoring God’s roadblocks to his sin. This ATM worked, he found his prostitute, and had his fill of sin.

**Black**

#### Then he came to me and asked how he could put his life back together so he could marry his girlfriend, who was also in the class. I told him, “You have just proven your willingness to go to bed with one not your wife, so how could you talk about faithfulness in marriage?” As I spoke with him I thought of verse 19—how his body housed the Holy Spirit but was used like it housed only his fleshly spirit.

MPI

(We’ve seen how immorality harms your relationship with God. But does it hurt anyone else? Yes.)

# II. Immorality harms your relationship with others (15-16).

MP

 [God’s people also are hurt by sexual sin. For one…]

## Immorality misuses your role in the church (15).

**Black**

### How is your body a member of Christ? Each one of us is a part of the church, or the body of Christ—a concept developed much more in chapter 12.

### *The* *Straits Times* says there are 300,000 to 400,000 prostitutes in Thailand and 500,000 in the Philippines. That’s far too many to be supported by their weaker economies. No doubt many traveling businessmen have visited them—perhaps even some in this room.

### You may not think that such an activity affects our church, but even *one* of us involved with them eats away at our body like gangrene eats away a part of our physical body—when one member is infected, the whole body is infected.

### I once counseled a man who’s wife taught Sunday School in our church, but she became involved in an adulterous relationship (not an affair—I hate that word!). Her sin ate away the life of that man—and the church.

(Speaking of how sexual sin hurts other people, notice how verse 16 says that…)

## Immorality gives away the oneness meant for marriage (16).

### Does involvement with a prostitute mean that the two are married? No, marriage is not just the result of a sexual union but also the result of *leaving* one’s father and mother—leave, then cleave (not like some want now—cleave, then leave!).

### Such intimacy means that the term “casual sex” is ridiculous! What in the world could be causal about it? If sex really *was* casual, few would be interested in it!

MPI

(But we can enjoy this freedom only in marriage just like you can drive freely around the country *as long as you stay left*. Sexual immorality is like driving on the right side of the road and saying, “I’m free to drive anywhere I please!” No, you’re not, because you’re on the wrong side of the road. Immorality harms your relationship with God and with others. But it also hurts one more person…)

MPII

# III. Immorality harms your relationship with yourself (18).

MP

 [Immorality is the only bodily sin with others which destroys your own body.]

## Do yourself a favor—remain sexually pure while single and married!

### I have never met a person who wished he or she had fooled around more before marriage, but I have known many who wished they had preserved this gift for the person they were making a lifetime commitment to.

**Black**

### Immorality is not illegal, but the cost of “free sex” is enormous!

#### The physical pain is costly. Extramarital involvement enslaves us to VD, AIDS, and other diseases—all on the rise. In 1984 there were 4 sexually transmitted diseases. By 1996 there were 23! Now one in five people will get a sexually transmitted disease by age 21.

Costs

#### The emotional pain is costly. "After interviews of 500 males and 500 females nationwide, ages 13 to 21, 73 percent of the girls said they would have sex but only because their boyfriends pressure them. Of the 67 percent of the girls who were sexually active, a whopping 81 percent said they were sorry they had 'done it.'" That’s a huge amount of emotional pain (http://www.josh.org/notes/file/Teen-Emotional\_Effects\_of\_Premarital\_Sex.pdf).

#### There are other costs. Between 1984-87 Singapore saw 8 teenage girls per day going for abortions. One government survey notes that 1 in 6 Singaporean teenagers lost their virginity before age 17. And that was in 1988 before the influx of the media that declares all virgins as weird.

### Yet not once on TV have I seen adultery or fornication incur such pain!

## What’s my point? While intimacy is a gift, it’s not a gift that even *married people* can have all the time. This calls for patience—and this starts when we are single. The one who is impatient sins not only against his future spouse, but also against himself or herself.

**Cont’d**

(So what’s the point of this entire chapter? Simply this…)

# Conclusion

### Avoid sexual immorality because it harms your relationship with God, others, and yourself (M.I.).

MI

### How can you avoid immorality? Let’s bow our heads now as we ponder what God would have us do. The first thing to so is to…

Flee

#### Flee (v. 18)!

##### Flee literally, like Joseph fled from Potiphar’s wife [Gen. 39:12] or like Proverbs 5:1-14 [read].

##### Refuse that potential lunch appointment with that one flirting with you.

##### Avoid that checkout counter or magazine stand or computer with pictures that are more explicit than you can handle. I cancelled the *Straits Times.*

#### Also, commit to honor God with your body (v. 20).

Commit

##### Singles, especially teenagers…

###### Remember that your virginity is a gift that you can give away only once.

###### Don’t open yourself to needless temptation!

###### Will you promise God to abstain until you are with your future spouse?

###### I can tell you one thing—not only does God want you to make this commitment, but your future spouse does as well. My wife and I never once have wished we had so-called “practice” before marriage.

##### Marrieds…

###### Hebrews 13:4, “Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.”

Heb. 13:4

###### You already vowed to remain true to your spouse on your wedding day. Are you holding to it in action—and in thought? Do you need to, in the silence of this moment, renew that commit to God?

### “Father, thanks for giving us one of your most wonderful gifts—intimacy in marriage. May we never come short of this. Some of us have already fallen short, but may we know your purifying touch to experience life to the fullest. For Christ’s sake, Amen.”Grace Baptist Church Dr. Rick Griffith

**Black**

11 October 1998 Message #8

NIV 40 Minutes

**A Subject No One Talks On**

***1 Corinthians 6:12-20***

**Topic:** Immorality

**Subject:** Avoid sexual immorality

**Complement:** because it harms your relationship with God, others, and yourself

**Purpose:** The listeners—whether single or married—will commit to sexual purity for life.

# Introduction

### [Everyone but Christians is talking about sex.]

#### Normally finding a title for my sermons is not too hard, but this time was different.

#### I had to submit a title a few weeks back before I had time to study today’s text in depth. Well, the subject is sex, and I don’t recall hearing a sermon on this topic since I came to Singapore nearly 8 years ago. So I gave the message the title, “The Subject No One Talks About.”

#### But then I began to realize that actually everyone is talking about it!

##### Sex (or at least overtones of sex) increasingly fills our radio airwaves, TV waves, and pagerwaves—yes, even pagerwaves, if there is such a thing—I think I’m going to lose it if I see that Hutchison paging bus ad one more time—with the naked tattooed lady on it. What does she have to do with pagers?

##### We’ve screened certain sex sites from internet access—which is great—but now government web pages publish the most lurid details of the affairs of political leaders. Talk of sex is everywhere—just look at the ladies’ magazines.

#### So is everyone *but Christians* talking about sex? Maybe so. But my wife gave me this to help me talk about it today [bag over head]. I can’t preach with this—Honey, do you want it? You might need it more than me!

### But today we will talk about sex because God talks about it in His word.

#### After all, God created us male and female and He did it in a most creative way…

##### He had all the animals march in front of Adam two-by-two, and Adam named them: Mr. & Mrs. Elephant, Mr. & Mrs. Flamingo, Mr. & Mrs. Rhinoceros, Mr. & Mrs. Mouse, Mr. & Mrs. Tyrannosaurus, Mr. & Mrs. Flea…

##### Imagine naming hundreds of animals—all in a day’s work! Tiring work…

##### But then Adam noticed, “Hey, how come they all come in pairs, but there’s Adam and…no one! Mr. Adam… but where’s Mrs. Adam?”

##### Then God caused a divine sleep and a divine sideache, and wha-lah! Eve! The first bone marrow transplant! Then he told them that the two should become one in marriage.

#### What was God’s first command to man? To have sex! “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.” Asians have obeyed this command better than any other people!

#### So God isn’t against sex. Let there be no doubt about it. Howard Hendricks noted, “We should not be ashamed to discuss that which God was not ashamed to create.”

### But He prescribes the sexual relationship only for marriage. That’s why twice in the today’s text God warns against sexual immorality, or sex outside of marriage. Notice in 1 Corinthians 6 the two times God limits sex within the marriage bond.

#### Verse 13 says, “The body is not meant for sexual immorality.”

#### Verse 18 adds, “Flee from sexual immorality.”

#### But what is sexual immorality? This word is *pornea* from which we get the word “pornography.” Sexual immorality is any sexual intercourse between two individuals who are not united in heterosexual marriage—fornication (sex with one who’s single), adultery (sex with someone who’s married), homosexuality, etc.

### Subject: But what’s so bad about sex outside of marriage? Why limit this gift of God to only one person? What are the advantages of sex only within marriage?

#### That’s a question some of us are asking—and it’s a good one to ask. Some of you teenagers are asking what’s so bad about sex outside of marriage, and I’m glad. You deserve an answer. [Raise need]

#### Some adults here are asking it too. You know others at your work or club or elsewhere who are sexually active outside of marriage and seem to have a great time. You wonder, “Why am I being such a prude?” You deserve an answer too.

### Background: Ancient Corinth was a city of so-called “free sex.”

#### In fact, Corinth was so immoral that a slang term arose, “to Corinthianize,” which meant to commit sexual immorality! This was be like saying “to San Franciscoize” someone as a metaphor for homosexuality. These people also deserved an answer to why they should limit sex to marriage.

#### Up to this point, Paul has already talked about incest warranting discipline (ch. 5) and lawsuits among believers (6:1-11). Now he returns to the subject of sex.

### Restatement: Now God through Paul gives several reasons to avoid sexual immorality in 1 Corinthians 6:12-20. And here’s the first reason…

# I. Immorality harms your relationship with God (12-14, 17, 19-20)

 [We can’t walk with the Lord and live in the flesh at the same time—and why not? First…]

## Immorality enslaves you rather than freeing you for God’s use (12).

### Why is “everything is permissible for me” in quotes? This was apparently a well-known saying in Corinth. Translated, it means “Just do it!” This is also known as the “if it feels good, do it” mentality.

### Is Paul agreeing with this saying? No, he’s just quoting it. This thinking has destroyed countless homes! He’s just saying that while we are free in Christ, we still must only do that which is beneficial.

### What does Paul mean by “I will not be mastered by anything”? He means that we can become a *slave* to things that we are *free* to do!

### In other words, sex itself is good, but we can become addicts to even *good* things—sex addicts, in this case. For example…

#### Sex outside of marriage is not illegal, but the cost of “free sex” is enormous!

##### The physical pain is costly. Extramarital sex enslaves us to VD, AIDS, and other diseases—all of which are on the rise here. In 1984 we knew of 4 sexually transmitted diseases. As of 1996 there were 23!

##### The emotional pain is costly. One Singaporean 14-year-old male prostitute from a rich family says, “So what? My parents never have time for me. Dad… is hardly home. Mum… is always punishing me for the littlest mistake. Nothing I do is ever good [enough] for her.” That’s emotional pain.

##### The financial pain is costly. Between 1984-87 in Singapore there were 8 teenage girls per day going for abortions. An SPPA Survey notes that 1 in 6 Singaporean teenagers had sex before age 17. And that was in 1988 before the influx of the media’s glorification of premarital sex.

#### Yet not once on TV have I seen someone in extramarital sex incur such pain!

(So immorality enslaves us. What other reasons should we wait? Because…)

## Immorality misuses your body dedicated to God’s use now since they’re not transitory like food (13).

### “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food” was another saying at Corinth. It means, “You have a stomach, so indulge it!” They thought fornication was as natural as eating. People still say today, “Sex is a natural desire, so satisfy it!”

### The *NIV Study Bible* says: “Paul quotes some Corinthians again who were claiming that as the physical acts of eating and digesting food have no bearing on one’s spiritual life, so the physical act of promiscuous sexual activity does not affect one’s spiritual life.”

### But now “the body is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord.” Paul doesn’t associate the body with the belly but rather the body with the Lord. It’s not the pagan concept that the body is unimportant.

## Immorality also misuses your body dedicated to God’s use later after resurrection (14).

### How does this reference to Christ’s resurrection fit the context? Well, the real emphasis is not Christ’s resurrection but ours.

### This shows that since our bodies will be raised, they are important! God has a high regard for the body!

### This message needs to be told even to theologians whom I presume believe that we will have bodies in heaven. In 1984 a law professor did a survey of 950 faculty members of religious departments in colleges throughout the USA. Sixty percent of them said premarital sex is OK! They neglect to see that God has great plans yet for our bodies.

## Immorality destroys your unity with Christ (17).

### How does one unite himself with the Lord? It’s already happened, and since we are “with him in spirit” we should do what he would do.

### Christ was tempted in every way as we are, the book of Hebrews tells us. Doesn’t that include sexual temptation? Yet He came out victorious in this area—and we need to maintain our spiritual unity with Him by being faithful to imitate Him in the sexual dimension.

## Immorality dishonours God’s dwelling since God’s Spirit lives in you (19-20).

### God’s glory first hovered over the waters of creation [Gen. 1:2], then descended on Mt. Sinai [Exod. 16:16-17], and filled the tabernacle [Exod. 40:34-35]. Under Solomon [ca. 959 BC] the *shekinah* glory rested on the ark in the Jerusalem temple [1 Kings 8:10-11] until just before it was destroyed [Ezek. 10]. But do you know where that *shekinah* glory is now? In us! The Holy Spirit is within you and me! Wow!

### Earlier this year one of my evening school students stayed back to talk.

#### As we spoke he confessed a problem with lust, but I didn’t think this all too unusual. But a few weeks later he confessed that he wanted to visit a prostitute. He went to an ATM to get the money to pay her, but the ATM was broken down. So he sought out another ATM, all the while ignoring God’s roadblocks to his sin. This ATM worked, he found his prostitute, and had his fill of sin.

#### Then he came to me and asked how he could put his life back together so he could marry his girlfriend, who was also in the class. I told him that he had just proven his willingness to go to bed with one who wasn’t his wife, so how could he talk about faithfulness in marriage? As I spoke with him I thought of verse 19—how his body housed the Holy Spirit but was used like it housed only his fleshly spirit.

(So we’ve seen how immorality harms your relationship with God. But does it hurt anyone else? Yes.)

# II. Immorality harms your relationship with others (15-16).

 [God’s people also are hurt by sexual sin. For one…]

## Immorality misuses your role in the church (15).

### How are our bodies members of Christ? Each one of us is a part of the church, or the body of Christ—a concept developed much more in chapter 12.

### Last month’s *Straits* Times reported that there are 300,000 to 400,000 prostitutes in Thailand and about 500,000 prostitutes in the Philippines. That’s far too many to be supported by their own, weaker economies. No doubt many traveling Singaporean businessmen have visited them—perhaps even some in this room.

### You may not think that such an activity affects our church, but even *one* of us involved with them eats away at our body like gangrene eats away a part of our physical body—when one member is infected, the whole body is infected.

### I once counseled a man who’s wife taught Sunday School in our church, but she became involved in an adulterous relationship (not an affair—I hate that word!). Her sin ate away the life of that man—and the church.

(Speaking of how sexual sin hurts other people, notice how verse 16 says that…)

## Immorality gives away the oneness meant for marriage (16).

### Does sex with a prostitute mean that the two are married? No, marriage is not just the result of a sexual union but also the result of *leaving* one’s father and mother—leave, then cleave (not like some want now—cleave, then leave!).

### In light of this, the term “casual sex” is ridiculous! As one scholar notes, “Because sex reflects the most *intimate* of interpersonal commitments, it should be reserved for the most *permanent* of interpersonal commitments.” (Blomberg, 128, emphasis mine).

### Proverbs 5:15-20 is a text which you may never have heard read before from the pulpit. But we need to read it today—it will give you God’s view of sex! [Read]

#### The wife is compared to a cistern or a well, both of which are places for holding water. Marital intimacy is then “drinking from your own well.”

#### If the husband is unfaithful, Proverbs 5:16 means that likely the wife will be as well—so that the sexual fulfillment meant for him ends up being shared with others.

#### If you still think God is against sex, just look at verse 19! An 82-year-old man was once asked by some students, “At what age do people stop enjoying sex?” He thought for a moment and said, “I don’t know—but it’s sometime after 82!”

#### But notice carefully that all this blessing is in the context of marriage.

(And we need to enjoy this freedom in marriage just like you can drive freely around the country as long as you stay left. Sexual immorality is like driving on the right side of the road and saying, “I’m free to drive anywhere I please!” No, you’re not, because immorality hurts your relationship with God and with others. But it also hurts one more person…)

# III. Immorality harms your relationship with yourself (18).

 [Immorality is the only bodily sin with others which destroys your own body.]

## But aren’t there other bodily sins besides sexual immorality—like gluttony, drunkenness, self-mutilation, suicide, etc.?

## Yes, but these bodily sins primarily affect ourselves. Barclay says, “No other sin engages one’s power of *bodily personal communication* in precisely so intimate a way.”

## Do yourself a favor—remain sexually pure while single and married!

### I have never met a person who wished he or she had fooled around more before marriage, but I have known of many who wished they had preserved this gift for the person they were making a lifetime commitment to.

### There are many times when intimacy is not possible even during marriage—times of separation, or when it is uncomfortable—especially for the wife, like during pregnancy.

#### It’s like this package I have here for the Electronic Insect Repeller, “which was developed by American scientists during the Vietnam War. They found that the only mosquito that bites humans is the pregnant female. One thing she can’t bear is the sound of the male mosquito! Repeller emits a sound identical to his!” So you wear this buzzing device and all those pregnant, biting female mosquitoes avoid you.

#### The same could be said of some *human* females—they only bite when pregnant! The last thing they need to hear is their husbands buzzing for sex!

### What’s my point? While sex is a gift, it’s not a gift that even *married people* can have all the time. This calls for patience—and this starts when we are single. The one who is impatient sins not only against his future spouse, but also against himself or herself.

(But what’s the point of this entire chapter? What is the Lord saying here in this part of 1 Corinthians to you and to me? Simply this…)

# Conclusion

### Avoid sexual immorality because it harms your relationship with God, others, and yourself (M.I.).

### How can you avoid immorality? Let’s bow our heads now as we ponder what God would have us do. The first thing to so is to…

#### Flee (v. 18)!

##### Flee literally, like Joseph fled from Potiphar’s wife [Gen. 39:12].

##### Refuse that potential lunch appointment with that one flirting with you.

##### Avoid that checkout counter or magazine stand with pictures that are more explicit than you can handle.

##### Mentally dwell only on that which passes the Philippians 4:8 test—that which is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent or praiseworthy.

#### Also, commit to honour God with your body (v. 20).

##### Singles, especially teenagers…

###### Remember that your virginity is a gift that you can give away only once.

###### One rather alarming trend here is singles taking cruises from Singapore.

###### Don’t open yourself to needless temptation!

###### Are you willing to commit to God that your first time will be with your future spouse?

###### I can tell you one thing—not only does God want you to make this commitment, but your future spouse does as well. My wife and I never once have wished we had so-called “practice” before marriage.

##### Marrieds…

###### Hebrews 13:4 says, “Marriage should ­be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.”

###### You already made a commitment to remain true to your spouse on your wedding day. Are you holding to it in action—and in thought? Do you need to, in the silence of this moment, renew that commit to God?

### “Father, you have given us one of your most wonderful gifts by inventing intimacy in marriage. May we never come short of this. Some of us may have already fallen short. I pray they would experience your purifying touch so they can experience life to the fullest. For Christ’s sake, Amen.”

**Preliminary Questions**

**Verses Questions**

Context What did the author record just prior to this passage? He’s talked about incest warranting discipline (ch. 5) and lawsuits among believers (6:1-11). Now he returns to the subject of sex but with a stronger but more general force.

Purpose Why is this passage in the Bible? Paul underscores the importance of limiting sex with one’s marital partner.

Background What historical context helps us understand this passage? Corinth was a city of so-called “free sex.” In fact, Corinth was so immoral that a slang term, “to Corinthianize,” was used for committing sexual immorality! This was be like saying “to San Francisco” someone as a metaphor for homosexuality.

12 Why is this phrase “everything is permissible for me” in quotes? Is this a quote from the OT? No, this was apparently a well-known saying in Corinth. Translated, it means “Just do it!” Others think this means that believers are free in Christ (Morris, 99).

 Is Paul agreeing with this saying? No, he’s just quoting it.

 What does Paul mean by “I will not be mastered by anything”? He means that we can become a slave to actions that we freely indulge in!

13 Is “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food” also another saying at Corinth? What does it mean? It means, “Since you have a stomach, you may as well indulge it!” They thought fornication is as natural as eating. People today often say, “Sex is a natural desire, so satisfy it!”

When will God destroy the stomach and food?

 What is meant by “the Lord is made for the body”? Paul doesn’t associate the body with the belly but rather the body with the Lord. It’s not the pagan concept that the body is unimportant.

14 How does this reference to Christ’s resurrection fit the context? The real emphasis is not Christ’s resurrection but ours—showing that since our bodies will be raised, they are important!

15 How are our bodies members of Christ? Each one of us is a part of the church, or body of Christ—a concept developed much more in chapter 12.

16 Does becoming one sexually with a prostitute mean that the two are married? No, marriage is not just the result of a sexual union but also the result of leaving one’s father and mother—leave, then cleave (not like some want now—cleave, then leave!).

17 How does one unite himself with the Lord? It’s already happened, and since we are “with him in spirit” we should do what he would do.

18 What is sexual immorality? What kinds of sex are included here? Any sexual intercourse between two individuals who are not united in heterosexual marriage is designated as sexual immorality—fornication (sex with someone who’s single), adultery (sex with someone who’s married), homosexuality, etc.

 Aren’t there other bodily sins besides sexual immorality (gluttony, drunkenness, self-mutilation, suicide, etc.)? Yes, but by using the term “body” (*soma*) Paul has in mind “the connotation of an individual in bodily, interpersonal communion” (Blomberg, 127). Barclay says, “No other sin engages one’s power of bodily personal communication in precisely so intimate a way” (pp. 56-57).

19 What’s the significance of our body being a temple of the Spirit? Why not simply the house of the Spirit?

20 With what price were we bought?

**Tentative Subject/Complement Statements**

Avoid sexual immorality because it harms your relationship with God, others, and yourself.

**Possible Illustrations**

### OPTIONAL: Prov 5:15-20 is a text that you may never have heard read before from the pulpit. But we need to read it today—it will give you God’s view of sex! [Read]

#### The wife is compared to a cistern or a well, both which hold water. Marital intimacy is then “drinking from your own well.”

#### If a husband is unfaithful, Proverbs 5:16 says that likely the wife will be as well—so that the sexual fulfillment meant for him ends up being shared with others.

**Cont’d**

#### If you still think God is against sex, just look at verse 19! An 82-year-old man was once asked by some students, “At what age do people stop enjoying sex?” He thought for a moment and said, “I don’t know—but it’s sometime after 82!”

The “If it feels good, do it” mentality has destroyed countless homes.

The cost of “free sex” is enormous!

Evening school student who visited a prostitute

Italian man who heard of wife’s adultery via cab radio

Stories from David Wong’s *Love’s Tough Journeys*

Prostitutes in Thailand

Mark and Amy who lived in Singapore’s Red Light district

Singles taking cruises from Singapore

The term “casual sex” is ridiculous! “Because sex reflects the most *intimate* of interpersonal commitments, it should be reserved for the most *permanent* of interpersonal commitments” (Blomberg, 128, emphasis mine).

AIDS is fast on the rise, as well as VD here in Singapore. Yet never on TV is someone depicted as having extramarital sex with such consequences!

Blomberg, 130, recommends “a limited use of masturbation” for sexual release of those unmarried!

**The Subject No One Talks About**

***1 Corinthians 6:12-20***

**Exegetical Outline**

***Exegetical Idea:* The reasons the Corinthian believers should avoid sexual immorality were because it harmed their relationship with God, others, and themselves.**

# I. Immorality harms your relationship with God (12-14, 17, 19-20)

## Immorality enslaves you rather than freeing you for God’s use (12).

## Immorality misuses your body dedicated to God’s use now since they’re not transitory like food (13).

## Immorality misuses your body dedicated to God’s use later after resurrection (14).

## Immorality destroys your unity with Christ (17).

## Immorality dishonours God’s dwelling since God’s Spirit lives in you (19-20).

# II. Immorality harms your relationship with others (15-16).

## Immorality misuses your role in the church (15).

## Immorality gives away the oneness meant for marriage (16).

# III. Immorality harms your relationship with yourself (18).

 [Immorality is the only bodily sin with others which destroys our body.]

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)

# Introduction

### [Everyone but Christians is talking about sex.]

### But today we will talk about sex because God talks about it in His word.

### Main Idea: But God prescribes the sexual relationship only for marriage. That’s why twice in the today’s text God warns against sex outside of marriage (vv. 13, 18).

### Prove It: But what’s so bad about sex outside of marriage? Why limit God’s gift of sex to only one person? What are the advantages of sex only within marriage?

### Background: Corinth was a city of so-called “free sex.”

### Restatement: That’s why God gives several reasons to avoid sexual immorality in 1 Corinthians 6:12-20. And here’s the first reason…

# I. Immorality harms your relationship with God (12-14, 17, 19-20)

## Immorality enslaves you rather than freeing you for God’s use (12).

## Immorality misuses your body dedicated to God’s use now since they’re not transitory like food (13).

## Immorality misuses your body dedicated to God’s use later after resurrection (14).

## Immorality destroys your unity with Christ (17).

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# II. Immorality harms your relationship with others (15-16).

## Immorality misuses your role in the church (15).

## Immorality gives away the oneness meant for marriage (16).

# III. Immorality harms your relationship with yourself (18).

 [Immorality is the only bodily sin with others which destroys our body.]

# Conclusion

### Avoid sexual immorality because it harms your relationship with God, others, and yourself (M.I.).

### How can you avoid immorality? Let’s bow our heads now as we ponder what God would have us do.

#### Flee (v. 18)!

#### Commit to honour God with your body (v. 20).

***Why Be Pure?***

***1 Corinthians 6:12-20***

*Rick Griffith*

*27 January 2008*

**Introduction**

1. God prescribes the sexual relationship only for marriage (vv. 13, 18).

2. Question: What’s so bad about sex outside of marriage? Why limit God’s gift to only one \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

person

**I. Immorality harms your relationship with** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **(12-14, 17, 19-20).** God

A. Immorality \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_you rather than frees you for God’s use (12). enslaves

B. Immorality \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_your body dedicated for God’s use (13). misuses

C. Immorality involves a body destined for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(14). glory

D. Immorality destroys your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_with Christ (17). unity

1. Immorality dishonors God’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_since His Spirit lives in you (19-20). temple

**II. Immorality harms your relationship with** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **(15-16).** others

A. Immorality misuses your role in the church (15).

B. Immorality gives away the oneness meant for marriage (16).

**III. Immorality harms your relationship with** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **(18).** yourself

**Conclusion**

1. Avoid sexual immorality because it harms your relationship with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(Main Idea). God, others, yourself

2. How can you avoid immorality?

a. Flee (v. 18)!

b. Commit to honor God with your body (v. 20).

**Introduction**

1. God prescribes the sexual relationship only for marriage (vv. 13, 18).

2. Subject: What’s so bad about sex outside of marriage? Why limit God’s gift of sex to only one person?

**I. Immorality harms your relationship with God (12-14, 17, 19-20)**

A. Immorality enslaves you rather than freeing you for God’s use (12).

B. Immorality misuses your body dedicated to God’s use now since they’re not transitory like food (13).

C. Immorality misuses your body dedicated to God’s use later after resurrection (14).

D. Immorality destroys your unity with Christ (17).

E. Immorality dishonors God’s dwelling since God’s Spirit lives in you (19-20).

**II. Immorality harms your relationship with others (15-16).**

A. Immorality misuses your role in the church (15).

B. Immorality gives away the oneness meant for marriage (16).

**III. Immorality harms your relationship with yourself (18).**

**Conclusion**

1. Avoid sexual immorality because it harms your relationship with God, others, and yourself (Main Idea).

2. How can you avoid immorality?

a. Flee (v. 18)!

b. Commit to honor God with your body (v. 20).

 **Rick Griffith**

 11 November 2012

 *Message 8 of 24 in “Becoming Who We Are” 1 Corinthians Series*

**Why Be Pure?**

***1 Corinthians 6:12-28***

**Introduction**

1. God prescribes the sexual relationship only for marriage (vv. 13, 18).
2. Question: What’s so bad about sex outside of marriage? Why limit God’s gift to only one \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

person

**I. Immorality harms your relationship with** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **(12-14, 17, 19-20).** God

A. Immorality \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_you rather than frees you for God’s use (12).

 enslaves

B. Immorality \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_your body dedicated for God’s use (13). misuses

C. Immorality involves a body destined for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(14). glory

D. Immorality destroys your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_with Christ (17). unity

E. Immorality dishonors God’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_since His Spirit lives in you (19-20). temple

**II. Immorality harms your relationship with** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **(15-16).** others

A. Immorality misuses your role in the church (15).

B. Immorality gives away the oneness meant for marriage (16).

**III. Immorality harms your relationship with** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **(18).** yourself

**Conclusion**

1. Avoid sexual immorality because it harms your relationship with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(Main Idea). God, others, yourself

2. How can you avoid immorality?

a. Flee (v. 18)!

b. Commit to honor God with your body (v. 20).

**Thought Questions:**

1. Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-28 aloud, then list as many reasons as you can to commit yourself to purity within marriage.
2. Could anyone ever legitimately define marriage as between people of the same sex? Why or why not?

Text

Text

1. What specifically is God telling you to do to maintain your own sexual purity? Bow in prayer and commit this to the Lord.

Text

Text