

Even Better than Sex

1 Corinthians 6.12-20

1ST C SHOCKING Idea > **RESTRICT** Sexual FREEDOM and ENJOYMENT?!

Sexual Activities APPROVED by ALL RELIGIONS and CIVIC LEADERS

Let not pleasures always be forbidden...let desire and pleasure triumph

sometimes over reason.

Cicero - Secular Philosopher in 1st Century

Paul NOT a PRUDE but a PARENT – LOVES Them > God's BEST for Them

v. 12 "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be enslaved by anything.

1. The Gift of Sex

a. Wonderful – Paul SAD for Corinthians – Missing BEST GIFT

v. 13 "The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body."

Christians have not done the best job of handling the issue of sex, especially in the public square. They are known for condemnation and hate...when Christians act in this way, it's not because they are being faithful to their faith, but precisely because they're not. Sexual sin is sin, but it is not the unforgivable sin, and Christians need to stop treating it as if it were. On the other hand, we are not to let the failings of Christians stop us from hearing what the Bible has to say about sex.

Stephen Um

v. 13 "The body is...meant for...the Lord, and the Lord for the body."

Sex is indeed for the body - it's a good thing, and it's supposed to be enjoyed.

Paul BELONGS to God who CREATED ALL Good Things – ONE Holy GOD

Paul's God NOT Lonely Needed Friends – Not BORED and Need Project

ONE God lives Eternally in LOVING Self-Giving – F,S,HS - TRIUNE Unity

God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

Genesis 1.27

Gracious God created MEN & WOMEN to Love HIM and ONE ANOTHER
Mysterious UNITY of Man & Woman in GOD'S IMAGE

JOINED in FELLOWSHIP with TRIUNE GOD – Mysterious, Wonderful, Unity
Way to LIVE in Fellowship with God and Man > SELF-GIVING Love like God

In midst of WONDROUS CREATION, Man placed IN & OVER Perfect Garden
APEX of Creation was CREATION of WOMAN --- God, finally, got it RIGHT!

So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.
Genesis 2.21-25

SEX is NOT DIRTY or DEFILING... it is DELIGHTFUL

ONE FLESH much MORE than Physical Union – Soul, Personhood, Emotions

Sex Act is SELF-COMMITMENT giving WHOLE Person, SPIRIT, & BODY

Song of Solomon filled with explicit content I NEVER DARED to Preach It!

Sex is Wonderful, Made by God to be Enjoyed Freely in Lasting Commitment

Three things are too wonderful for me; four I do not understand: the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a serpent on a rock, the way of a ship on the high seas, and the way of a man with a virgin.
Proverbs 30.18,19

b. Optional

v. 13 "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"

Paul quoting a prevailing thought of the day, Food Intended for Stomach
Stomach for Food // So Sex is Intended for Body // And Body for Sex

Sex is Natural > What Human Bodies Made For > ARGUMENT Continues...

Sexual Desires shouldn't be Frustrated but should be Fulfilled

Strong MESSAGE of 1st C & 21st C > Sex COMPLETES and FULFILLS

v. 13 God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

Paul saying can live PERFECTLY FULFILED Live without having SEX

PEOPLE do not NEED Sex to be Complete or Fulfilled

Relation btwn LORD and your BODY will LAST FOREVER

FOOD will simply PASS THRU your Body – IMPACT is BRIEF

We will have RESURRECTION BODY – Fully Redeemed, Restored in Christ

Christian FREEDOM is Not being FREE to SIN – Free NOT to Sin

WORLD > MUST have Kids FOR your PROTECTION in the FUTURE

Xtian > We can HAVE KIDS because we TRUST GOD for THEIR Future

Xtian > We can CHOSE to NOT MARRY or Have Kids > God Holds FUTURE

Paul introduced RADICAL Ideas > VIRTUE & HONOR of Singleness, Virginity

SHOCKING and FUNNY to 1st C World – Even MORE to 21st C World

FREEDOM in Christ means FINDING Fullness of who YOU are IN HIM Alone

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”— these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit.
1 Corinthians 2.9,10

Nobody that BEHOLDS the GLORY of the Lord will Look back w/ REGRET

I wish FANCY CAR – HOUSE on BEACH – Had MORE SEX

We will HAVE the FULLNESS of JOY for the FULLNESS of TIME

As we LIVE this LIFE of GODward JOURNEY – We are DETERMINED

v. 12 "All things are lawful for me." >> "I'm free of inhibitions, of restraints!"

This is the Basic Mantra of our Sexually Progressive Day

Fill Out Forms Today > Question: SEX? > Answer YES! NOW!

v. 12 "I will not be dominated by anything."

But the widow who *lives only for pleasure* is spiritually dead even while she lives.
1 Timothy 5.6

TRUE of WIDOWS, MARRIED, and NEVER MARRIED > Dead in DESIRE

I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another. To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single, as I am.
1 Corinthians 7.7,8

Free people serve, free people help others, because free people need people less, and so they can love people more.
Paul Barnett

This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.
1 Corinthians 7.29-31

Obvious APPLICATION – Jesus & Paul --- Millions other Men & Women

Live LIVES of JOY in FAMILY and COMMUNITY of God's PEOPLE

NOT Good be ALONE – NOT Alone when Connected to X, Committed Church

2. The Grip of Sex

a. Power

There is more to sex than meets the eye – or excites the genitals. There is no such thing as casual sex, no matter how casual people are about it...No one can take sex out at night and put it away until he wants to play with it again, nobody can go to bed with someone and leave his soul parked outside. Lewis Smedes

After SEX 2 People Never Feel the Same Way Toward Each Other Again
They may Love Each Other as Never Before; they may Resent Each Other
Sex with Another Person is a LIFE-CHANGING Act – NO Going BACK
Christian Ethics NOT Anti-Sex > Anti SADDNESS, PAIN, and SORROW

v. 12 “I will not be dominated by anything.”

Paul's Major Point > Sex is NOT as Casual as People of Corinth THINK

All may be ALLOWED, but what is GETTING CONTROL of You??

No Talk: Co-Dependency, Dysfunctional Families, Abusive Parents, Bad Pasts

I WILL NOT BE MASTERED...CHOICE!! SIN is INSIDE JOB, MY CHOICE

Love Song “how can this be wrong, when it feels so right?”

SMITTEN --- You make me CRAZY, I have FALLEN HEAD OVER HEALS

Sex has the Potency Not Only to Please, but also to Control

“Why don't men treat women the way they used to? Well, quite frankly it's because they don't have to...they're in the driver's seat. And the sexual revolution has put them there. Back when modesty was more sexy, it was sort of a woman's blue chip of power. It commanded respect and dignity, it empowered and protected her from the sleaze of the earth. But "being [promiscuous] far from making women [free], put them at the mercy of men. Today we're taught that this 'every woman is a lady' idea was sexist, that it made [them] into property, but it seems as if abandoning it has made [them] all the more [so]. Maybe [modesty]

wasn't subordinating or oppressive to women after all. Maybe it was liberating [because] it made [them] powerful." Wendy Shalit, "Return to Modesty"

b. Permanent

v. 13 "'Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food' - God will destroy both one and the other."

Paul quoting another Popular Idea of his day > shaped by philosophy of Plato

Does NOT matter what DO with your Body, Only your Soul really Mattered

Today – What we DO Behind our CLOSED Doors is Nobody's Business

v. 18 Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.

He's not saying there's nothing else that involves your physical body

DRUGS, GLUTTONY, CUTTING, & Listening to your MUSIC TOO LOUD!

NOTHING Else INVOLVES your WHOLE PERSON like SEX

With Sex, We're All In >> We Give Ourselves - All of Ourselves - Away

SEX is MUCH MORE than JUST BODILY ACT

It is Act of SOUL, PERSONALITY, EMOTIONS, FEELINGS

Sex is RADICAL SELF-DONATION – Transforms and Completes a Person

Physical Oneness brings WHOLE LIFE Oneness > Physically VULNERABLE

NAKED in All Areas of Life, Financially, Socially, Spiritually

ONE FLESH – Know what WIFE would THINK or SAY about ISSUES

Not LOST who I AM – RADICALLY SUPPLEMENTED by Donation of Spouse

Physical Donation JOINED to SELF DONATION – All of YOU

Few Adult SINGLES in CORINTH >> Sex OUTSIDE Marriage Prostitute

Prostitution in Ancient World > Culturally Acceptable Sexual Practice

Temple frequently Host Dinners > Prostitutes would be Presented to Guests

Many MEN Ended a Hard Day's Work with a Visit to a Brothel

vs. 15,16 Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh."

MONSTROSITY – Person given SOUL to Prostitute AND to the SAVIOR

3. Grace for the Sexually Fallen

Young People's QUESTIONS --- How FAR can I GO?? Drink, Dates...

PERMISSIBLE might NOT be Edifying, Glorifying, Kingdom ADVANCING

God hopes our HEARTS Desire Not to FLIRT WITH OUR FREEDOMS

BUT to Fall into HIS ARMS as the LOVER of our SOULS

a. Picture

From ALL Eternity GOD Planned LOVER to Wrap his ARMS around US

v. 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?

v. 17 But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

DIGNITY OF THE BODY IN CHRIST > v. 13 and the Lord for the body.

INCARNATION - GOD became Man, Fullness of Deity Dwells in Body

CROSS - Died a Real Death, God in Human Flesh

RESURRECTION - Sown in Weakness, Raised Incorruptible

"God did not allow His holy one to see corruption"

ASCENSION - He rose bodily, there is a Man in Heaven now

CHURCH - the Church is the Body of Christ

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 1 Cor 12:27

EUCCHARIST - We Partake of the Body of Christ - as a Sacrament

RETURN OF CHRIST He will Come Again, in the Body, as He was Seen

RESURRECTION BODY OF BELIEVERS – We will be LIKE the Risen Christ
the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious
body
Philippians 3:20,21

God has ORDAINED that He would DRY Every Tear from EYES

Born of a VIRGIN – Come to REMAKE and RESTORE Perfect World

I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”
Revelation 21.2-4

WORLD thinks like WOMAN in SAMARIA – Fill HOLE in Hearts w/ SEX

John 4 Unless Jesus is ONE TRUE LOVE we will NEVER Know ANY LOVE

Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water”.... “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.” Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.” The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.” The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. John 4.10-19

Looking for Water of Life in Love --- Jesus must be ONE TRUE LOVE

Find Water of LIFE in Jesus > Only way to KNOW LOVE is Find JESUS

Goal of Life is to FALL INTO the Arms of the Lord on the FINAL DAY

He made me for Himself, and when I run, I feel His pleasure. Eric Liddell

b. Process Paul had been with Corinthians 18 Months – Gone for 3 or 4 Years

STILL Deep Problems in this AREA – 2nd Letter Paul has WRITTEN

He will WRITE at LEAST 2 More – Visit them at Least ONE More TIME

Apostle to GENTILES – Could have said “I am DONE with you Corinthians!”

2000 yrs Later – LETTER Amazingly, SADLY Relevant, Still STRUGGLING

Many of US have BLOWN it in Sexual Sin AGAIN & AGAIN

Lord would have EVERY Right to Say to ME “I am DONE with you Blair!”

But He NEVER WILL – Working IMAGE of Christ in ME – Cross Conformity

GLOBAL Church: "I believe in the resurrection of the body" Apostle's Creed

NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH / CREATION / RESURRECTION BODIES

1) Read > Paul gives SAME PLEA thru Chapter > Whole LETTER

v. 2 Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world?

v. 3 Do you not know that we are to judge angels?

v. 9 Or do you not know the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?

v. 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?

v. 16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her?

v. 19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit

HOW will you KNOW these IMPORTANT Truths? BIBLE Tells us SO!

Corinthians were RESPONSIBLE to Know TRUTH of God's WORD

Was Not on their PHONES – In over 1000 Languages – Filled w/ Study NOTES

We have ALL Tools, Toys, & Time – Do WE Know God's Word?

SALVATION is PROCESS - GRADUALLY THINK & ACT BIBLICALLY

SPECIFIC CONTEXT OF PASSAGE - Teaching on Need for Sexual Purity

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

Ephesians 5.25-27

Paul thinks MARRIAGE and SEX is WONDERFUL – BUT it is HARD

He wants you us to BALANCE our ROMANCE with Clear-Headed REALISM

Marriage is SIGNING Up for JOURNEY – Long, Hard, Purifying, PAINFUL

Wrong to MARRY Person because you THINK you will CHANGE Them

Also WRONG to think PERSON you MARRY will NEVER CHANGE

We Always MARRY the WRONG Person – Never know DEEP Sins, Struggles

You are NOT Marrying STATUE but BLOCK of MARBLE >> Work Begun

GOING to REFINE one another thru PROCESS of CHANGING

My wife has been married to at least five different men – all of them are me.

Lewis Smedes

2) Run v. 18 Flee from sexual immorality.

Corinthians GREW Up in Highly-Charged SEXUAL World >> LIKE US!

Having HARD TIME Putting OFF the OLD and Putting ON New > Like US!

v. 18 FLEE = Make it your HABIT TO RUN...JOSEPH & Potiphar's WIFE

FLEE - HABITUAL ACTION don't Reason w/ Evil Impulses, Resist Them
 RUN as if LEAVING A BURNING HOUSE - SAVE SOUL FROM BURNING

I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living
 sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God Romans 12.1,2

TODAY you Can Listen to AUDIO Bible w/ Headphones > Read while RUN!

c. Pardon So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. John 8:36

Biblical FREEDOM IS NOT TO BE FOR SELF, BUT FOR OTHERS

REAL QUESTION - NOT whether something is RIGHT - does it EDIFY?

PARADOX of GOSPEL - PERFECT FREEDOM is BEING SLAVE of CHRIST

vs. 19,20 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within
 you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with
 a price. So glorify God in your body.

Our Bodies have Tremendous Value > Place where God has Chosen to Live

God is not Tyrant making Arbitrary Rules to Kill Man's Joy

Lover wants be One with Love of his Life > Have All of Us, Not just our Soul

No other religion would ever dare say anything even remotely close to that. Gods
 live in temples, not in human bodies. Gods keep their distance; they don't wrap
 themselves up with people, especially their bodies. But this One does!

Stephen Um

1 Corinthians 6¹²“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything. ¹³“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. ¹⁵Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” ¹⁷But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. ¹⁸Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.