

First Corinthians

VERSE-BY-VERSE

1st Corinthians

59 A.D.

Ephesus

Paul had written in another letter to this church of the dangers due to their corrupt surroundings in Corinth (1 Cor. 5:9). In this letter he is responding to a letter sent to him, and various reports that have come to him by visitors to Ephesus (where he is writing this letter; 1 Cor. 5:1; 11:18; 15:12), of the many problems going on in the church of Corinth: jealousy, pride, arrogance, sexual offenses, lawsuits among members. In our last session Paul made the statement, "All things are lawful, but not all things are expedient."

Verse 13–

Meats is the Greek word, *broma* and it just means, food (he might be quoting a well-known saying). He is saying **Food** is good, but fleeting. We eat one moment and then the next we are hungry again. In other words, his point, it is not the outward things we do, but the internal. Jesus made a similar statement in Matthew 15:17. Here he is probably putting their minds at ease regarding certain Jewish laws about food; don't worry about the legal requirements of food—since we are no longer under the law, those things don't matter.

Many physical things we do are fine and often they have nothing to do with our devotion to the Lord. Food, no problem: But **fornication** is different (see verse 18). Our bodies are to be pure before God. Sexual relationships belong only in a marriage between one man and one woman. If there is **fornication** in the church, then it affects the **body** of Christ. We cannot be dedicated to the Lord and be involved in **fornication** at the same time.

Verse 14–

Sometimes it seems like Paul inserts comments randomly, like this verse. How does the resurrection fit here? If we look at it closely it ties in directly with Paul's point on how we act in our body. In verse 14 we have the doctrine (teaching) of the resurrection taught by Paul as he does in many other passages. Jesus is eternal (death could not hold Him), and likewise, we are eternal and immortal. Our bodies will be raised incorruptible by His power. Therefore, since our bodies are eternal, we should take note of how we care for them, as seen in verse 13, and will be developed even more in verse 15. We should not only have a materialistic worldview but an eternal one!

Verse 15–

He again uses the phrase, **know ye not...bodies are members of Christ** (see 6:2,9,19), meaning he assumed they should have already known what he was going to say. Remember, when the word "ye" is used it is plural, Paul is addressing the entire church.

What should they have known? **That** their **bodies are members of Christ**. In 1 Corinthians 3:16, we discovered that the local church, when it meets, is the temple of God. Individuals are not the temple of God. In chapter 1:30, Paul had reminded the entire church that they are *in Christ Jesus*; Meaning they were also the body of Christ. The Body of Christ, the local church (just like a human body) is made up of various parts.

- Paul says **your bodies are members of Christ**. Does Paul mean individual people in the church when he says **bodies**? Or, does he have in mind various house churches that may have been meeting? We know there was a church meeting in the *house of Chloe*. Possibly there was a church meeting in a *certain man's house, named Justus*, and maybe even the *house of Crispus*? (See [Acts 18:7, 8](#)). I think in context he could very well mean various church bodies.

- There is sexual sin in the churches in Corinth!

As members of the body of Christ, what should they do with themselves? He tells them what they should not do, **Shall I take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot?** He answers his rhetorical question.

God forbid.

Verse 16-18–

In verses 16-18 he uses an illustration of what happens when a man commits fornication.

He (is in the singular) **who is joined to a harlot is one body with her**. This is a principle from Creation; when a man is joined to a woman sexually, **the two shall become one flesh** (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5; Ephesians 5:31). The word **joined** is passive, meaning the man is allowing this to happen.

The same principle applies to the man who turns from immorality. He **is joined to the Lord**, and realizes he is in Christ. In that case, he is **one spirit with Him** (the Lord).

Every sin that a man does is outside the body; stealing, lying, cursing, etc., comes from the body and is expressed outside of the body (the Greek word is *ektos*, out of). **Sexual** sins, however, go into the body (the Greek word is *eis*, into). While all sin is damaging, sexual sins seem to carry deeper inward personal damage.

Instead of **joining**, a man should always choose to **flee fornication** (NKJV, sexual immorality). Paul gives a solution to avoiding fornication in 7:2.

- Romans 6:12,13 (Don't let sin reign (to be king) in your body: reminds us of 6:12).
- Hebrews 13:4 (marriage, literally: wedding. Whoremongers, Greek = pornos)

Verse 19,20–

Paul gave an illustration of what happens when a man (singular) commits fornication. Now he goes back to speaking about the entire church body, **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?** If what we just read in the previous verses affect a man, can't we see that since our church body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, we too as a church will suffer if we allow sexual immorality to invade us? It is not about us individually, we are in this together. **We are not our own!** We must serve the Lord together as one body in Christ. **Ye are bought with a price...glorify God in your body.**