We Are Not Our Own

1 Corinthians 6:12-20 NLT

As a younger Bible student I was taught by some my mentors that when possible, and applicable, it is good to use scripture to illustrate scripture. As we continue in our study of 1 Corinthians I would like to start out by using John 8:1-12 as a Segway. Jesus as He lived His life in the flesh helped to bring liberation and redemption to various kinds of sinners. Sinners who we can relate with, people who were wounded, broken, and in need of healing.

In Corinth some believed that sexual license was the key to healing, some believed that sexual chastity was the way, and there were others still who believed that it didn’t matter either way. Our view and our practices with regard sexual morality matters for both our physical and our spiritual health. This is why God puts a little more emphasis on the effects of sexual sin.

It isn’t because we are supposed to condemn ourselves or other people when we or they have done something sexually immoral. It is because, if we care about our health and the health of others, we should make every effort to flee from and repent of sexual sin. I will repeat it is not about condemnation it is about health. God made us in His image, and sex is meant to show how awesome He is. When it is misused, it takes its toll on us. As I said earlier, condemnation is not Paul’s aim in 1 Corinthians 6, and it is not the Holy Spirit’s aim as He convicts us of sexual sin. God’s aim is our restoration and our health so that we can bring glory to Him in all that we do. To illustrate I will begin with John 8:1-12:

**8 Jesus returned to the Mount of Olives, 2 but early the next morning he was back again at the Temple. A crowd soon gathered, and he sat down and taught them. 3 As he was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd.**

**4 “Teacher,” they said to Jesus, “this woman was caught in the act of adultery. 5 The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?”**

**6 They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. 7 They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!” 8 Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust.**

**9 When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. 10 Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, “Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?”**

**11 “No, Lord,” she said.**

**And Jesus said, “Neither do I. Go and sin no more.”**

**John 8:1-12 NLT**

What is the crucial take away I would like you to consider in this text?

Let me lead you there by sharing a few things Jesus didn’t say and contrasting that with what He did say.

Notice that Jesus did not say things like, “How could you have done this?” or “What were you thinking?” or “I would never do something like what you have done.”

Instead, He said… “Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?”

And then He went on to say, “Neither do I (Condemn you). Go and sin no more.”

Jesus knew what it was like to be human, he knew temptation. Jesus knew what it felt like to have a woman clean His feet with her hair. The scriptures tell us He was tempted in every way.

Maybe this is why Jesus didn’t beat up the woman who was caught in adultery. Instead, He told her to move forward while changing her ways.

It is often hard to change your ways. Especially in areas that you have used for managing hurt in your life. As one pastor said…

**“Sexual bondage is not about sex, it’s about how you’ve learned to medicate the pain in your life. Once you start facing this, your pain level is actually going to go up. Because you’ve been medicating that pain for so long, you’ll have to put your big boy pants on and you’ll have to face the pain. This is going to challenge you…more than anything you have ever done in your life.”**

**Dr. Ted Roberts (Marine Fighter Pilot and Pastor)**

But remember it is not about condemnation. The wiser you are and the more self-reflection you have done, the more you will understand that. I believe that this is why the apostle John under the Spirit’s inspiration included the sentence:

“9 When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest,”

John 8:9 NLT

So let’s get into 1 Corinthians chapter 6, beginning with verse 12, understanding that Paul’s aim is the health of people in Corinth, not their condemnation.

**12 You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is good for you. And even though “I am allowed to do anything,” I must not become a slave to anything. 13 You say, “Food was made for the stomach, and the stomach for food.” (This is true, though someday God will do away with both of them.) But you can’t say that our bodies were made for sexual immorality. They were made for the Lord, and the Lord cares about our bodies. 14 And God will raise us from the dead by his power, just as he raised our Lord from the dead.**

**15 Don’t you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ? Should a man take his body, which is part of Christ, and join it to a prostitute? Never! 16 And don’t you realize that if a man joins himself to a prostitute, he becomes one body with her? For the Scriptures say, “The two are united into one.” 17 But the person who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.**

**18 Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. 19 Don’t you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, 20 for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.**

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

So here we have it. Paul addresses three main points:

1. The Lord cares about our physical bodies (The fact that He is going to raise us up supports that).
2. Things we do with our physical bodies have physical and spiritual ramifications.
3. In all areas we should remember that we are not our own and that we belong to God and were made for His purposes.

Let’s consider point number 1 first.

What evidence is there that God cares how we take care of our physical bodies?

First of all, the scriptures say that He created us in His own image and He said that is was very good.

Second, He made us very complex and it seems that physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual components can be distinguished between but they cannot be completely separated from each other. If my body doesn’t get enough sleep if affects me in every other component of my being.

Which brings us to the 2 point, which is the things we do with our physical bodies have physical and spiritual ramifications. Paul is trying to illustrate this when he wrote to them…

Spiritually speaking, saying that sexual sin is acceptable in the life of a Christian is about as far from that truth as saying that Jesus could be joined together with a prostitute.

As Christians there will be times that we are tempted to sin sexually either in thought or deed; there may even be times that we will give in to that temptation. But it is not the way it is supposed to be. And in fact, it is detrimental to our health. That is why Paul goes on to say:

**18 Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body.**

**1 Corinthians 6:18 NLT**

Continuing in sexual sins eat us up from the inside out. When Jesus told the woman caught in adultery to go away and sin no more, it wasn’t about condemnation. It wasn’t because **she** was a law-breaker, an **her accusers’** weren’t.

It was because He wanted her to turn from her sin and move in a healthy direction and He knew that condemnation would not bring about the change. Condemning her, would probably have lead her to look for ways to medicate her pain even more. As the unbelieving philosopher, Aldous Huxley once said…

**“Chronic remorse, as all the moralists are agreed, is a most undesirable sentiment. If you have behaved badly, repent, make what amends you can and address yourself to the task of behaving better next time. On no account brood over your wrongdoing. Rolling in the muck is not the best way of getting clean.”**

I’m not here to condemn you today. We are all on a journey of going away and sinning no more. I just want to confirm to you today that it matters. It matters for our health, it matters for the health of others we love, and it matters for living as one who is an image-bearer of Christ. This is why the apostle Paul finishes out this passage by saying…

**19 Don’t you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, 20 for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.**

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NLT**

If you agree with what I am saying today then you are going to be asking how to “go away and sin no more.” I found some helpful actions steps (I have added a few clarifying words), from an online article from whatchristianswanttoknow.com…

Step #1) Confess your sin to God (And maybe someone you trust)

Step #2) Admit your weakness in this area

Step #3) Pray for a mentor or accountability partner

Step #4) Get/Stay involved in a church

Step #5) Keep your mind and body actively engaged in other activities

Step #6) Guard your heart and thoughts

(Make note of whether you are thinking you are a loser, or feeling like no one loves you, or believing that you are undesirable.)

Step #7) Keep company with people who are living righteously

(Or at least those whose aim is to live according to God’s ways and who are quick to repent when they don’t.)

Step #8) Resist Websites, TV shows, movies, novels, video games, or music that lures you back into sinful thinking or lusting from prior experiences

(Everyone has triggers, not all people are affected by things the same way, know your own triggers and see them as warning signs.)

Step #9) Stay connected to God everyday in prayer and Bible study

(And recognize if you aren’t wanting to stay connected, it might be because your connections don’t go well with being connected to Christ.)

Step #10) Cut off any ties with the person or persons that you were sexually engaged with.

(You will probably never be able to forget your past, but I agree with the person who said… “What one has to learn is how to remember and yet be free of the past.)

**You cannot be free of the past if you keep going to the same old spots.**

Paul wanted for the physical and spiritual health of the people in Corinth. And like he told the Ephesian church…

5 Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. 2 Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.

3 Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God’s people.

Ephesians 5:1-3 NLT

This is what God wants for us as well. After all we are His. He created us in His image, so that we would be a picture of how awesome He is. And He paid for us with His life and His death on the cross.

So keep repenting forward, moving toward God’s design, with the aim of “going away and sinning no more.”

And…

“…whether you eat or drink or **whatever** you do, do it all for the glory of God.”

1 Corinthians 10:31 NLT