

session 3 study guide

can you commit?

message

First Corinthians 6 is the first of two letters written by Paul to the church in Corinth. The readers of these letters were Christians, but they weren't acting like Christians. The Bible says that our salvation does not depend on our actions, but that because of our faith in Jesus, our actions should reflect our faith. Paul wrote to the Corinthians to remind them of the importance of their actions; and in the second half of chapter 6 of the first Corinthian letter, Paul addressed the sexual activities the Corinthians were participating in.

Read the following passage from 1 Corinthians 6:12-20. As you read these verses, consider these questions: (1) How does God view our bodies and what we do with our bodies? (2) How is sexual sin different from other sins?

“Everything is permissible for me”—but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible for me”—but I will not be mastered by anything. “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food”—but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, “The two will become one flesh.” But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.

Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

dig

1. Verse 12 says, “‘Everything is permissible for me’—but not everything is beneficial.” What does this mean?

2. How does this relate to our sexuality?

3. How does this passage describe our bodies?

verse 13

verse 15

verse 19

4. Paul says that our bodies are a part of Christ (see verse 15) and have the Holy Spirit inside them (see verse 19). How should this knowledge impact our interactions with our boyfriend or girlfriend?

5. Even though all sin is literally “missing the mark” and “falling short of God’s glory” (see Romans 3:23), Paul points out in 1 Corinthians that sexual sin is different from other sins. In what way is sexual sin different from other sins?

6. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Write these verses in your own words.

7. How do these verses relate to your relationship with the opposite sex?

8. What does “you [and your body] are not your own” mean?

9. According to verse 20, what’s our response to be to Christ’s love for us?

apply

As Christians, we are to approach dating and relating to the opposite sex in a manner different from the world’s. Why? Because we have the Holy Spirit of God dwelling inside of us. Imagine this conversation:

Tyler, you are not just dating Jill, who is beautiful, with a wonderful smile and a great personality; you are dating Jill who has the very Spirit of God dwelling inside of her. Honor her as you would any sister in Christ. Jill, you aren’t just dating Tyler, this hunk of a guy with dreamy good looks and a great personality; you are also dating Tyler who has the Holy Spirit of God living inside of him. The Bible says to “outdo one another in showing honor” (Romans 12:10, RSV). You are called to radically respect each other.

1. What does “radically respect each other” mean?

2. Showing you love someone by *not* having sex with him or her is counter to what the world tells us. What are some reasons for following God’s recipe for love and not the world’s?

3. Sex is one of many ways that married couples demonstrate their love for each other. But God is explicit that sex is to be saved for marriage. In spite of this, there are lots of other ways that unmarried couples can express their love for, appreciation of and commitment to each other. Brainstorm a few other ways that two people in a relationship can demonstrate their love in a way that is pleasing to God.

4. It is important to remember that sex is not bad. God created it for a husband and wife to enjoy each other. It is the temptation to have sex outside of God's intentions that is unhealthy. Just as food itself is not bad for you, but over-indulging in food can be bad for you, sex itself is a God-given gift, but sexual immorality (premarital sex, adultery, pornography and so forth) is not healthy. The challenge to you is to commit your sexuality to God and refrain from sexual intercourse until marriage. Why would this be a proper response to your commitment to God?

5. Many young people indicate their commitment to God to stay sexually pure by taking what is called "the Sexual Purity Pledge." This pledge is as follows:

Believing that God's best for my life is to keep my life sexually pure and refrain from sexual intercourse until the day I enter marriage, I commit my body to God and my future mate.

How does this pledge honor God?

6. How does this pledge honor your current boyfriend or girlfriend?

7. How does it honor your future spouse?

8. How does it honor your own body?

Are you ready to make a commitment to be sexually pure? If so, sign and date the pledge below.

the purity code pledge

In honor of God, my family and my future spouse, I commit my life to sexual purity.

This involves:

- Honoring God with my body.
- Renewing my mind for the good.
- Turning my eyes from worthless things.
- Guarding my heart above all else.¹

signature

date

9. Congratulations! You just made a promise that will have life-long benefits for you, your faith, your body and your future spouse. But making any pledge—whether it is to raise your grades, to exercise more or to stay sexually pure—takes more than just lip service. It takes *action*. What actions will you take in order to stay true to your pledge?

10. A pledge is also strengthened when we have accountability. In the space below, write the name of two people who you will share your commitment with and who you will ask to hold you accountable.

11. The Bible acknowledges that we will be tested in our lives—this includes our goal for sexual purity. But God does not leave us alone in these challenges. Write in your own words the promises that the following verses hold:

Romans 8:26-27

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

James 1:2-6

James 1:12

reflect

1. What helps people to refrain from sexual intercourse until marriage?

2. Is it realistic in today's culture to remain a virgin until marriage? Why or why not?

3. What one question about sex would you like to ask God?

4. Why did you decide to take or not take the Purity Code Pledge?

5. What will be the hardest part about keeping this pledge?

6. God is not going to strike you with a lightning bolt if you fail to live up to your pledge, but there will be consequences. What are some of these consequences?

meditation



Don't let anyone look down on you because you
are young, but set an example for the believers in speech,
in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

1 TIMOTHY 4:12

Note

1. Jim Burns, *The Purity Code* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 2008).