

**Men and Sex**  
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**I Corinthians 6:12-20**  
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An especially vulgar yet descriptive four-letter word has crept into the language of a growing number of youth and even adults in our culture:

The word is **STUD** or now even more recently: **STALLION**

The dictionary defines it as animals, particularly horses, that are used for breeding purposes.

As it is popularly used, it refers to an attractive boy or man. It is as if it is flattering to be a "stud".

Only the most naive don't catch the meaning.

And only the crude find it flattering.

How dehumanizing to refer to a human being in this way.

While it is a vulgar term I also said it is unfortunately a descriptive one.

Author Gordon Dalby writes of a young man named Ralph who told him of a frightening experience that he had.

Ralph owned a large piece of property on the outskirts of town and decided to earn some extra income by boarding horses.

One evening as he went out to check the animals he discovered that a large stallion had broken out of his stall and was leaping about, trying to break into a nearby mare's stall.

Nostrils flared, mane whipping about, the stud was thrashing furiously at the wooden gate.

When the Stallion saw Ralph, he reared back and kicked out.

With a two-by-four to the nose of that animal Ralph was finally able to get him back into his own stall.

Dalby writes: "What more graphic, fearful image of unbridled male sexuality was there than that of a stallion kicking down the gate to a mare's stall?" (p 99 Healing the Masculine Soul)

Rare is the teen-age boy or man who has not known that stallion inside of himself.

Four years ago Christianity Today, a leading magazine among evangelicals, conducted a survey among 1000 of its readers, asking about sexual morality.

nearly 50 % of the men admitted to having done something that was sexually inappropriate. AND nearly 1/4 said they had engaged in extramarital intercourse.

These figures are shocking when you consider that Christianity Today readers

tend to be the church leaders, deacons, elders, Pastors and Sunday School teachers of our churches.

About a month ago the leaders of several Christian Men's organizations came together here in Denver at the invitation of Coach Bill McCartney.

After meeting here they met in Colorado Springs with Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family.

The question was asked: What is the most serious problem facing Christian men today?

The answer from all or nearly all of those leaders was  
PORNOGRAPHY!

Whether it is motel room videos, newsstand magazines, mail-order publications or illicit relationships many men, yes Christian men are struggling and losing the battle with their sexuality.

And maybe more serious is that they are excusing it:

- \* I deserve happiness, and if I can't find it at home, I'll find it where I must.
- \* It can't possibly be wrong, after all God is the one who made me with these drives.
- \* Maybe it's not the best but after all I'm not hurting anyone.
- \* We all have weaknesses, who are you to say that mine is worse than other weaknesses - who made you the judge?

The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Corinthians wrote to them out of compassion - a real love for them.

He wanted those men (and women) to have an accurate understanding of life - a valid perspective, the truth about their sexuality.

Those people like people today had had their minds filled with such lies about sex - such an incorrect perspective - that they didn't stand a chance.

Imagine entering a man into a mile race and telling him it is only 100 yards to the finish line. He doesn't stand a chance - he doesn't have the right perspective.

Imagine filling a young man's mind with an average of 50 R rated movies or videos a year, letting him feast his eyes on the Swimsuit issue of Sports Illustrated and Playboy and then expecting him to have a proper perspective on sex!

Look with me again, please at I Cor. 6:12-20

God, through Paul, is giving us very explicit instruction about our sexual conduct - He wants us to have the right perspective.

Bottom line is that sex is reserved for the marriage relationship and sex outside of marriage at any age is contrary to God's will and is dehumanizing.

Paul is writing to a group of Christians in a city that had made sex outside of marriage a

part of their religion.

They had temple prostitutes, male and female.

It was apparently common for even Christian men to continue in their old ways not realizing what shame they were bringing on God and themselves.

It is especially interesting to me that Paul does not simply quote the 7th Commandment - You shall not commit adultery - and be done with it.

Why doesn't he warn them of the diseases which they could get? It would have been proper for him to have done that?

Why doesn't he shame them with the relationship consequences that immorality produces in marriages and families? It certainly would have been valid to have done that because it is true and tragically painful.

Paul does not give those reasons, though he could have, INSTEAD he goes to the deepest reason believing that the Holy Spirit of God will convince those who are truly His own.

I want you to follow his rationale:

He begins verse 12 by quoting a saying, well known to all of them: "Everything is permissible for me."

That culture, like our own, was very libertarian.

If you are a free person then you are free to do whatever you wish.

Add to that cultural attitude the truth that Christianity taught that people become Christians not by keeping any laws but by Grace through faith, and it produced Christians who also loved to say, "Everything is permissible for me."

Paul comes along and says in essence, "you are right, everything is permissible as a general rule but that principle may be abused.

It is true that you are not saved by virtue of rule keeping but that does not mean that anything goes.

He quickly points out two limitations of the idea of everything is permissible:

1. not everything is beneficial - there may be consequences to doing some things that are not good for you. You are not saved by not jumping off of tall buildings but I don't recommend it. You are free to do it but it is not beneficial.
2. something's will enslave you and actually take away your liberty. It is true that you are not saved by not watching certain kinds of movies (being legalistic doesn't make anyone a Christian) but sexual immorality is enslaving.

Immediately in verse 13 Paul anticipates a common objection to any prohibition on sexual expression:

"Food is for the stomach and the stomach for food".

In other words, "Isn't the satisfying of my sexual appetites just like satisfying my hunger for food?" I mean why did God make me this way if I'm not supposed

indulge?

Paul says, Yes you're right the stomach is for food BUT (look at the end of verse 13): "The body is not meant for sexual immorality."

Satisfying the stomach's need for food is on a different level with satisfying the body's desire for sex.

Paul says don't equate them.

Yes the stomach is made for food but the body is made for the Lord.

Yes, your stomach may exist solely for the purpose of digesting food but you and your body weren't made just to have sex.

Look at verse 14: Paul introduces the issue of the resurrection of the body when Christ comes again.

God raised Jesus from the dead and by that same power he will raise us from the dead as well.

His point is, as he elaborates in chapter 15, that the resurrection will be of our bodies.

In the middle of verse 13 Paul said that God will destroy the stomach and food - Probably a better translation of the word destroy is "done away with" meaning that food and a stomach to digest it won't be essential in the resurrected body.

Jesus, after his resurrection could eat, as he proved at the Sea of Galilee, but his life is not dependent on eating food and digesting it - neither will your resurrected body be dependent on it.

Now while food and the stomach will no longer be essential in the resurrection - that is not true of your body.

It is true that when we die, our bodies are buried or cremated and our spirits go into the presence of God.

BUT that is only temporary.

God created us to be whole persons - body and spirit -integrated.

Eternity with Christ is not just a bunch of spirits with no bodies floating around in space.

NO, at the resurrection, God gives us our bodies.

Jesus died and rose again to save us - our bodies included.

God places eternal value on our bodies.

It is with a body, our bodies, that we relate to Christ for eternity.

Your body is essential in your eternal relationship to Christ.

In the body's relationship to sex, something much higher and more important is going on than in the stomach's relationship to food. Paul says, equating those two appetites doesn't work!

Now in verse 15 Paul goes on to tell us why sexuality is of a different category than

physical hunger.

Yes, God has given us sexual desires but those desires must be regulated by the higher purposes of our bodies.

"Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself?"

It is not just your spirit that is joined to Christ in conversion- your bodies have been joined to Him.

Now one will (God's will) rules both your life and Christ's.

Paul then continues the argument: "Can you take a member of Christ's body and join it to a prostitute?"

First of all let's make sure we understand the use of the word "prostitute" here.

AS I mentioned earlier, one of the primary sexual activities of the Corinthians was visiting temple prostitutes.

So Paul uses that specific illustration but the application is much broader.

As Paul said in both verses 13 and 18, the Christian is to have nothing to do with immorality, any sexual activity outside of marriage.

So Paul is clearly asking, "Can you take a member of Christ's body, for that is what you are if you are a Christian, and join it to someone else outside of marriage?"

In the permanence and love of a marriage the physical union of husband and wife reflects the permanence and love of Christ and his people - But outside of marriage such a physical union only desecrates that holy relationship of Christ and his church.

To engage in sexual activity outside of marriage is as spitting on the cross, or wiping your feet on a Bible -

it is a disregard and abuse of the holy symbolism that God built into the marriage relationship.

It is taking something holy (holy means set apart by God for special use) - yes, sex as God intended is holy -

taking something holy and profaning it.

Robert Maplethorp was one of the so called artists whose work was partially funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. There was a big brouhaha over the matter because one of Maplethorp's works was a cross in a glass of urine.

Is your reverence for God and the work of Christ at Calvary offended by such a picture?

Is your reverence for Christ's relationship to you and other believers offended when sex is defamed, desecrated, and treated in an illegitimate and unholy fashion on your television, in the movies you watch and the magazines you read?

In verse 18 Paul says that other sins are wrong and may even harm the body but this sin (sexual immorality) for reasons already mentioned strikes right at the heart of your being.

Paul's conclusion then is in the beginning of verse 18 and the end of verse 20:

Flee from sexual immorality AND  
Honor God with your body.

Do you know one thing I like about these verses?

There is no pessimism here!

Paul knows that these people can change.

Back in verse 9 of this same chapter Paul says the following: READ 9-11

Maybe that is how you have lived but no more.

And when Paul comes to his conclusion he doesn't say,  
"Now I want you to try to avoid immorality and try to honor God with your body."

He makes the assumption that by God's power working in them they can act differently if they will.

St Augustine writing only a few years after Christ speaks of the struggle he had with immorality.

He tells of how in his youth he had involved himself in every kind of sexual sin and spent his time with others who did the same.

When he was converted he wondered if he would be able to break out of those habits.

He took as his life-verse the passage in Romans where he is exhorted to put on the Lord Jesus Christ and leave no room for lusts and sexual immorality.

For many months after his conversion he did not even go near the places in the city where his former companions and he used to carry out their activities.

Then one day business led him into the area. While there a beautiful yet wicked companion of his past saw him and when she did she came running toward him with her arms outstretched, "Austin, where have you been for so long? We have missed you so."

At that Augustine gathered up his robes and ran in the opposite direction. It was not a very dignified site - a man running down the street with a godless girl running after him.

She called out to him: Austin, why do you run? It is only I."

To that Augustine called back, "I run because it is not I." (cited in Ironside, I Corinthians p 196)

Augustine belonged to another now, he was a new man.  
Or as Paul puts it in verse 19 His body was the temple of the Holy Spirit. He was not his own but was bought at a price - the blood of Christ.

There are many good reasons for not engaging in sexual immorality but the ultimate one is that your body belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. You have been joined to him.

So like Augustine, because you are a new person you will flee immorality.

What will you do men?

Like one man will you have the television removed from your hotel room when you are traveling alone?

Like another will you have a telephone accountability relationship with another man when you are traveling so that you reduce the possibility of allowing yourself to get into trouble?

Will you put a strict standard on the kind of movies or videos or television shows that you will watch?

Will you like many men avoid buying gasoline or making any purchases at stores or newsstands that display pornography?

Will you discipline your eyes to look women in the face?

Will you have the moral fortitude to walk away from a immoral story being told, to turn off a television program that is desecrating the holiness of sex, and no matter how respectable they may be, get rid of magazines that entice you to impure thoughts.

Will you take the action necessary to break that growing relationship with a woman at work?

You who are now having sex with a person who is not your wife, will you make the break?

Franklin James wrote, "What makes resisting temptation difficult for many people is they don't want to discourage it completely."

When we mean business about our sexual purity there are things we can do:

We can get into a true accountability relationship.

We can pray.

We can memorize the Scriptures so we have God's word to use in fighting temptation.

We can guard our eyes, the gates to our souls.

We can stand clear of all avenues into sexual temptation:

flirting, casual touching, being alone with a woman other than our wife.

Our society mocks the idea of "Just say No!".

Even sermons such as this one are deemed too moralistic and not realistic.

But on the authority of God's word, I have a great confidence in God's power to help God's men flee from immorality.

You have been joined to Christ - your calling is higher and holier than sexual immorality.

Robert Murray McChayne, many years ago, wrote to a young man studying in Europe.

"I know that you will apply yourself hard to your (studies) but do not forget (to cultivate) the inner man - I mean the heart. How diligently the cavalry officer keeps his saber clean and sharp; every stain he rubs off with the greatest care. Remember you are God's sword, His instrument, a chosen vessel unto Him to bear His name. In great measure, according to the purity and perfection of the instrument will be the success. It is not great talent God blesses so much as likeness to Jesus. A holy (man) is an (awesome) weapon in the hand of God."  
(Quoted in Point Man p 78)

Men, flee from sexual immorality, honor God with your body.