

## Bible Study Series: Man & Woman and God

### 4. Flee sexual immorality

1. Is it possible for “freedom” to become a “master”? Is this possible with the modern desire for ‘sexual liberation’?

*Consider the pursuit of ‘freedom’ or the exercise of ‘my freedom’ that I can become enslaved to, afraid of anything that would make me feel that I’m not ‘free’. NB The ‘modern’ desire for sexual freedom is also pretty ancient!*

2. All sexual intimacy outside of a marriage between a husband and wife is sinful because it goes against God’s good will for humanity. Read through the following passages. What can you say about sexual immorality?

Matt 15:19

Gal 5:19-21

Eph 5:3

Col 3:5

1 Tim 1:9-10

Heb 13:4-5

Rev 21:8

*The frequent repetition of “sexual immorality” suggests that it is a constant temptation for Christians. But it is listed alongside other sins that are repeated, like greed and lying, as well as things often excused (jealousy) or hidden (evil thoughts). It is certainly sin, but not the **only** or **worst** sin.*

3. **Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-20.** Look again at vv12-13. It seems some in Corinth were pursuing a kind of ‘freedom’ based on the ‘freedom’ they have in Christ. What kind of freedom were they pursuing? What was the problem?

*Christ has freed us from sin and death (Rom 6:6-7, 18; Gal 5:1, 13) but we are now free **for** righteousness. Some of the Corinthians seemed to have thought they were “free” from consequences for anything now done in their bodies (including sexual immorality). But their bodies have a purpose...*

4. What do you think it means that, “the body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord”? Do you ever consider that your **body** has a purpose?

*Our worship of and obedience to Jesus is lived out **bodily**, in real, physical ways (remember James 2:14-26) including sexual purity.*

5. Sexual sin is no greater or lesser sin than any other. All sin is equally sinful, enough to have us condemned, enough to require nothing less than the death of Jesus to atone for. So what does Paul mean in vv 15-20?

*God’s purpose for humanity is to be united to his Son in perfect relationship. Human marriage (and sex within it) is a signpost to this ultimate purpose. So a sexual union between one who knows the Lord and is united to him, and one who is God’s enemy, exercised without the union of marriage, is an affront to God’s design – it is a sin “against” (or “in”) the body.*

6. “Flee from sexual immorality”. What might this look like in practice? (perhaps read also Matt 5:27-28; 1 Cor 5:9-11).

*Some eg’s: Not fleeing from the world, but getting rid of all behaviour that is sexually inappropriate; flirtation, sexual humour, immodest clothing, extended time alone with someone of the opposite sex with whom you are not married, and being realistic about our own thoughts – that often well before we act sinfully we have given much time to thinking / dreaming/ fantasising about it . There is also a place for withdrawing from one who calls themselves a Christian but is unrepentant in sexual sin.*

7. What incentives are given in 6:9-11 for avoiding sexual immorality and pursuing sexual purity?

• *God’s judgement will come on all who are unrepentant for sexual (and all other) sins;* • *Some of the Corinthians **were** sexually immoral but have been saved and forgiven,* • *Salvation means being washed and cleansed from all the past sins that separated us from God – how can we go back to them?,* • *we are now truly free from those things to live for righteousness.*

8. “You are not your own”. How would you describe the “freedom” that Christians have in Christ? How is it different to the way the world thinks of freedom?

*Freedom is for honouring the one who freed us, not for autonomous self-indulgence. And having been freed from the sinful nature, we are truly liberated to live in the way that we were made to – to honour the lord, which is the most satisfying life any human can live!*