

GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY

Paul had to deal with two major problems reported to him (problems publicly known in Corinth). The first was pride in human wisdom that led to divisions over men (**1 Cor. 1-4**), and the second was pride to accept fornication in their midst (**1 Cor. 5-6**).

Paul rebuked them for this toleration of sin in **chapter 5** and told them to take action consistent with spiritual reality. They were to withdraw themselves from the one who has broken fellowship with God by persistent sin. This was a form of judging (**5:12-13**).

Fornication is still the subject in **chapter 6**. The **first eight verses** are a rebuke of a brother taking another brother to civil court instead of resolving the problem as an internal matter among brethren. The context of fornication indicates that was the reason one brother took the other to court. **1 Thessalonians 4:3-6** also ties fornication with defrauding a brother.

Immediately after this rebuke, Paul assures the wronged brethren that God will set things right (**v.9-10**). Sinning brethren aren't going to "get by with it." Beginning with fornication, Paul lists those who practice various sins that will not inherit the kingdom of God (go to Heaven).

Though many of the Corinthians had done those things, they stopped doing them when they became Christians (**v.11**). We must change our behavior when we change our hearts by faith and repentance.

Paul does not change subjects in **verses 12 and 13**. Paul quotes the Corinthians' who seek to justify their lusts by saying, "*All things are lawful for me,*" and then he counters that by saying **all things are not expedient** and that he will not be brought under the power of any (lack self-control). This principle is also important later concerning meats sacrificed to idols. The Corinthians also said, "*Foods for the stomach, and the stomach for foods,*" but responds by saying that both will be destroyed by God (**v.12**). The implication of the Corinthians' reasoning is that the body was made for sex and sex for the body, but Paul dispels that "reasoning" by saying the body was not made for **fornication**. The body was made to glorify God, and that does include sex in marriage (**1 Cor. 7, Hebrews 13:4**).

Paul also said, "*The Lord was for the body.*" (**v.13-14**) God cares for our physical well-being. We should fulfill His purpose in the use of our body which He gave us and continues to provide food, protection, and healing by His power. Our bodies will also be raised in the last day by His power.

An integral part of our living for God is what we do in the body and what we do with the body (**v.15-20**). If we commit fornication, there is a spiritual dimension (often denied by fornicators) that is affected. Since you are a member of Christ, and your body is a part of you, this means that your body is a member (or instrument) of Christ (**v.15**).

Paul's reasoning in **v.16-17** shows why fornication is even more wrong for a Christian than fornication in general. A member of Christ must not join himself to a harlot (not just a professional prostitute—any promiscuous woman). We join ourselves to the Lord as one spirit. We must be in agreement with the Lord's will about fornication and many other issues of life. The Lord says to flee fornication (**v.18**). That should settle the matter.

Fornication is a unique sin in that the body is the instrument of the sin (**v.19**). Therefore, it is a sin against the body. The Bible also contains numerous warnings about the physical effects and consequences of fornication (many STD's—**Proverbs 5, 6, and 7**).

Two more reasons for glorifying God in the body: the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit (**v.19**) and we have been bought with a price (**v.20**). Both soul and body belong to God, so we glorify God by using each the way God intends for us, and we avoid misusing the body in ways God forbids.