

estimate of fornication by a Christian is categorically opposed to that estimate by a non-Christian.

- b. God's possession. The body of the child of God, being indwelt by the Spirit, is no longer available for disposition at will. Being the possession of the Spirit of God, it is now subject to HIM. A specific right has been withdrawn.
- c. God's purchase. The proposition of the previous phrase is explained here. The blood of God's Son is the price paid. The actual price is not listed here for that is not the point; only that payment has been made is sufficient to make the argument complete. Peter tells the cost (1 Pet. 1:19, 20).
- d. God's praise. There is a small inferential Greek particle here for "therefore" which is untranslatable. It implies perfect evidence and consequently urges the fulfillment of the duty mentioned. "To glorify God" means to display positively through one's body the image of the Lord Himself. It speaks of reflecting HIM (cf. 2 Cor. 3:18).

Conclusion How do you decide the doubtful? Ask yourself two questions: a. Is this thing worthwhile and beneficial? b. Is this thing dominating me? Specifically, no one has the liberty to be involved with fornication, that is, no one who is a born again Christian! How do you decide the doubtfuls in your life? Make certain your decisions are Bible-based. Amen.

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

"Deciding the Doubtful"

1 Cor. 6:12 - 20

Introduction

1. Christian conduct is becoming an increasingly critical point of disagreement amongst believers. Many desire to liberalize even in the face of exacting statements in the Word of God.

2. The Bible does teach a high and provocative moral standard. Moderns tend to dilute this and lessen the demands of God for holy living.

3. Some matters are in the twilight zone and for these basic Bible principles must be applied. This study presents some principles and their application with respect to one dastardly sin. Study the following aids for Christian living:

1. Christian LIBERTY v. 12.

- a. Provided. This may have been a proverb (cf. 10:23). One of the church groups may have made it their watchword (cf. 1:10-17). Very likely it appeared in the Corinthians letter to Paul. Paul agrees with the general statement as evidenced by the phrase "to me." Only a stupid use of the dictum could justify evil (cf. 5:1-13; 6:1-11).
- b. Limited. The adversative "but" is used twice to mark the restrictions of the principle. There are obvious qualifications to be followed.
- c. Explained. The restrictions are marked:
 - 1) Beneficial. The verb used here for "expedient" means "to bring together." It speaks of "contributing good" and in this context to oneself. All things just are not worthwhile.
 - 2) Powerful. The pronoun "I" is emphatic and will not allow for Paul to alienate himself from his freedom. The reasonable use of freedom must not go the length of involving one's less of it. "Of any" is a regimen which is neuter and means "anything." Simple common sense is at the

root of Paul's firm argument here (cf. John 8:36).

2. Christian SANCTITY. vv. 13-18.

The whole trend of the text here is couched in one's view of the "body." It is tangible. Mark these items on the body:

a. Its intention. v. 13. The body is intended "for the Lord" (adoration) and "the Lord for the body" (protection). Both of these phrases are detives of personal interest. There are two competitors for the body:

1) That which is morally indifferent. The nutritive does not share a part of the permanent self. It is of the temporary apparatus. The belly and food are appropriately for each other, but neither of these has anything to do with the eternal order of things.

2) That which is morally indecent. "Fornication" is a term for all sorts of debased sexuality. It comes from a verb meaning to "prostitute the body for hire." With this evil contending for the body of Christians, those loyal to Him must renounce fornication; yielding to it, they renounce HIM. Note the title "Lord" which implies dominion and demands adoration.

b. Its resurrection. v. 14. If anyone ever had any doubts concerning the bodily resurrection of Christ, this verse should settle the argument for them. The "us" in the antithesis is for "our bodies." The resurrection of the body of Christ and those of believers is one of the supreme exhibitions of supernatural power (cf. Eph. 1:19 ff; Phil. 3:20 f.).

c. Its constitution vv. 15-17. Two dramatic and pointed questions are given here and introduced by the Pauline phrase "don't you know" (verb used here assumes innate knowledge.). The questions are:

1) Related to Christ. v. 15. Here is one of the most exalted expressions of the body per se. It is a limb of Christ. All the limbs

and the Head are "the Christ". The verb "take" is aorist active and refers to the idea of snatching or carrying off like the Latin rapie (rape). "Make" is future indicative and expresses the horror of deliberateness in this terrible act. The actual union with a harlot staggers Paul and should do the same for us. The idiom "God forbid" is used by Paul 14 times and only by Luke elsewhere (Luke 20:16) To express a negative wish.

2) Joined to Christ. vv. 16, 17. A spiritual union obtains between the believer and Christ (v.17). This is as real and close as bodily union in nature (v. 16). The latter is effected by coitus; the former by an act of faith (cf. 1:21; 12:3). God affirms that sexual union constitutes a permanent bond between the parties, whether lawful or unlawful, honorably true or shamefully so (cf. Gen.2:24). It is unthinkable that a believer should commit fornication!

d. Its exhortation v. 18. Some sins must be fought but this sin of fornication must be fled from! The present imperative advises the habit of fleeing without delay or parley. With the absence of connectives (asyndeton), there is vehement abruptness in this verse. So dreadful is the sin of fornication that it engages and debouches the whole person and utterly disregards the purpose of the human body (cf. v. 13). Both sexes are affected by in chastity.

3. Christian DIGNITY vv. 19, 20.

To offset any sort of niggardly view of things, Paul concludes with his forthright statements on the highest level concerning the body of the saints. Study these three:

a. God's presence. Here is the third "don't you know in this text. The body is indwelt by the Spirit of God. Indeed, it is His innermost shrine as the original term indicates. Fornication, therefore, invades the most sacred environs. It is a sin of deadlines and high treason. The