

You Are Not Your Own
This Cultural Moment, Pt. 3
1 Corinthians 6:12-20

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I. PRAYER

- i. I pray that where there is sin hiding in the darkness, you'll bring it into the light. Where there are people in the chains of sin, that you'll give them the courage to trust you to set them free.

II. INTRODUCTION

- a. If you've been with Grace Hill Church for a while, you know that every once in a while, we'll take a Sunday to do another installment in a sermon series called "This Cultural Moment."
 - i. We believe that if our culture is busy talking about something, and the Word of God addresses that topic, then we as the church need to talk about it and teach what the Bible says about it.
 - So, in our past two parts in this series, we have talked about our polarized politics and also race.
 1. I encourage you to go on to our website and listen to those sermons if you missed them.
 - ii. This morning, however, we are going to talk about a topic that is not just a big deal in our culture, but in every culture for all of time.
 - This morning, we are going to talk about the beautiful and right gift that God has given us in sex.



- iii. But see, when you look at the how our culture has evolved in the way that it talks about sex...you'll notice that our culture has this fundamental belief that your body belongs solely to you.
- And you have the right to do with your body whatever you want, so as long as everyone consents and no one gets hurt.
 - So when it comes to sex, sexuality, and marriage, why should there be any sort of limitation or boundary as long as no one gets hurt or is forced to do anything outside of their will?
 - The mantra of our culture is that your body is your own...who has the right to tell you what to do with it?
- b. Quick disclaimer: Historically, many in the church have addressed the topic of sex and sexual immorality by talking about how sexual desire is a bad, dirty thing.
- i. And that is completely misguided.
- The Scriptures talk about sexual desire as something that is good, that is right, and that is beautiful.
 - After all, God is the creator of sex, it was his idea, and he created us with that drive and desire.
- ii. So, this morning, I don't want to approach this topic by talking about how sexual desire is bad.
- I want to approach it by talking about how sexual desire is good.



- c. But here's the thing...the Bible has a way more comprehensive and beautiful view of sex than our culture does.
- i. See our culture merely sees sex as something that is physical.
 - And since you are the owner of your own body and as long as you don't hurt anyone else, why can't you do whatever you want physically with your body?
 - You have a stomach and you eat food.
 1. And no one tells you what you can or cannot eat.
 2. You eat what you what you want.
 3. Your body has a sexual function...why can't you use that how you want?
 - ii. But see the Bible does not view sex as merely physical.
 - If you've ever wondered why sex is such a powerful thing in every culture in all of time...it's because sex is more spiritual than it is physical.
 1. It has more to do with your soul than it does your body.
 - iii. And I want to show you this by studying 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 together this morning.

III. 1 CORINTHIANS 6:12-20

- a. Before we read the text, let me setup the context for you.
 - i. This is a letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church.



- In chapter five, Paul deals with something rather disturbing going on in this church.
 1. 1 Corinthians 5:1 – *“It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father’s wife.”*
 2. We believe that what Paul means here is that a member of the church in Corinth was involved sexually with his step-mother.
 3. And Paul calls this sexual immorality – it was an abuse of God’s good gift of sex.
- And Paul is furious about this because it seems that the church is indifferent.
 1. It doesn’t say they approved of it.
 2. But it also doesn’t say they disapproved of it.
- So, in chapter five, Paul instructs the church on how to deal with this situation.
 1. And here in chapter six, Paul is going to do some teaching on sexual immorality in general.

b. **Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20**

- c. Paul begins this section by interacting with some excuses that the Corinthians were giving Paul to justify their sexual immorality.
- i. If you notice in v.12-13, you’ll see two different phrases in quotations.
 - *“All things are lawful”* – which occurs twice.
 - *“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food.”*
 - ii. So, the first excuse that Paul wanted to interact with was this argument that because



of the Gospel of Jesus Christ – all things are now lawful, and we are free to do whatever we want!

- Jesus has come, he has fulfilled the law, he has paid for our sins on the cross, he has reconciled us to God...I can no longer sin now and I can live however I want because I am now under grace and no longer under the law.
 1. C'mon Paul! God is all about grace...he is not about the law.
- And Paul responds to this...not by disagreeing that we are no longer under the law...
 1. If you are a follower of Jesus, you are under grace, your sins have been forgiven, and you are reconciled to God.
 2. But Paul says...just because we are under grace...does not mean that sin cannot still bring destruction and domination in our lives.
 3. **Read v.12.**

iii. Then Paul moves to a similar argument that our culture finds compelling.

- Paul, why are you so concerned about sex?
 1. It's just a physical thing.
 2. We have sexual bodies, what's wrong with using them how we want?
 3. We have stomachs for food.
 4. We have sexual bodies for sex.
- **Read v.13.**
 1. See, normally in Paul's writings, when he refers to our flesh, our physical bodies, he normally uses the Greek word SARX.



2. But here in v.13 when he uses the word body, he uses the Greek word SOMA.
3. Which indicates that what Paul is referring to here is not just our physical body, but that along with our souls.
4. Our physical bodies will pass away.
5. It says here God will destroy them...but v.14 says here that just as Jesus was resurrected so our bodies, if you're a follower of Jesus, will also be resurrected.
6. Our souls that inhabit our current physical body are eternal.
7. So, when Paul says - "The body (SOMA) is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body." – what Paul is saying is that sexual immorality is not just something physical that we do...it is something spiritual...it does something to our souls.
8. Comparing sex to merely eating food is not an accurate comparison.

d. And in v.15-17, we are going to see what kind of impact sex has on our souls. – **Read v.15-17.**

- i. So, here is what Paul is talking about...God has created our bodies (referring to our souls) with the ability to be joined to another.
 - As we see in Genesis 2:18 at creation...God says that it is not good for man to be alone.
 1. God has created our souls to long for relational intimacy with another.



2. And so you may go – Yeah, that’s why we have marriage. Two people can be linked together in that kind of intimacy.
- But when we look at our text, here in v.15, Paul doesn’t first point to marriage, he points to the Christian’s union with Jesus.
 1. Read v.15a.
- ii. If you’re a Christian, your soul has been united to Christ through the gospel.
 - I think Paul explains this beautifully in my favorite verse - Galatians 2:20.
 1. *“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh (this body) I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”*
 2. When Jesus went to the cross...because I am united to Him...I went to the cross.
 3. When Jesus went into the grave...I went into the grave.
 4. And when Jesus defeated death...he defeated death for me.
 5. Because Jesus lives forever...I will live forever in God’s Kingdom.
 6. We are united and nothing will separate us.
 - So, this is why Paul says in v.19-20 (read v. 19b-20a)...
 1. Jesus came, he lived, he died on the cross, he was buried, and he defeated death so he could be in intimate relationship with you.
- iii. So then, Paul asks an interesting question in v.15.



- Read v.15b-17.
- What does sex have anything to do with our union with Jesus?
 1. What does sex have to do with the fact that we are united to Christ in the gospel?
- See, friends, this is where we learn that God’s design of sex is way deeper than just a physical act.
- Paul quotes Genesis 2:24 here, where we see the creation of marriage where a man and a woman are joined together (sexual intimacy being implied here) and this causes them to become one flesh...united together...their souls are linked together.
 1. This is a rich gift of soul level union and intimacy that we so deeply long for.
- iv. See, Paul explains to us in Ephesians 5 that the marriage relationship should be like the relationship between Christ and the church.
 - The union of marriage is to be a foreshadow, a taste, an illustration of the union that we will have with God in Christ for all of eternity.
 1. And so God designed sex to be something that is not just the joining of two physical bodies but the joining of two souls.
 2. Why do you think sex has always been and always will be an emotionally charged topic in the culture?
 3. Because it touches the soul.
- e. And so Paul says in v.18 – because of this reality...you must flee sexual immorality.



- i. Sexual Immorality is any type of sexual engagement other than with your spouse in the context of a covenant marriage.
 - Sex is a beautiful gift but it is so destructive when abused.
- ii. That word flee literally means to run.
 - You know fight of flight?
 1. This is flight.
 2. You see something that can bring harm to your soul...and you need to run away as fast as you can.
 3. You are not strong enough to fight it.
- iii. And the reason that Paul says you must run from this is because this sin is different.
 - Read v.18...sins against his own soul.
 1. Paul is not saying that this sin will you condemn you more than other sins.
 2. He simply says this one is different because you're doing something to your own soul.
- iv. Think of sex like a welder.
 - Welders are awesome because they can take two separate pieces of metal and melt them into one piece of metal.
 1. Welders make all sorts of engineering projects possible.
 2. And when they are used properly, they are of great use.
 3. But if a welder is used improperly, if you try to weld something to the wrong kind of material, it is incredibly destructive and dangerous!



- Sex is what welds our soul to our spouse and it is an incredible gift from God that is not just about procreation but about connection and pleasure.
- f. See, in the Scriptures, we see two ways that our souls are united to another.
- i. Our union with Christ and our union with our spouse.
 - ii. And both of these relationships, these unions, are initiated through a covenant.
 - When you get married, you make a vow.
 1. You promise your spouse that no matter if things are good or bad, you will not leave.
 2. You are making a promise that this union will not be torn apart.
 3. And this marriage vow is an illustration of our relationship with Jesus because...
 - When you come to faith in Christ.
 1. God makes a covenant with us that he will cover us in his grace, forgive us of our sin and adopt us into our family in and through Jesus Christ.
 2. We read in Romans 8 – *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁷...No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to*



separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- iii. Both of these relationships where our soul is united to another are to be protected by the bond of covenant love.
 - This is the beauty of sex.
 - 1. When a husband and wife enjoy the pleasures of sexual intimacy, they enjoy the union of their souls, in the context and the protection and the security of their unwavering commitment to one another.
- iv. And so, sexual immorality is so serious, not because it's a dirtier sin than all the others, but because you're taking the welder of your soul and trying to bond your soul with something else outside of the protection of covenant love.
 - When you have sex outside of marriage, your welding your soul to another without covenant.
 - When you fantasize about others or look at pornography, your seeking to weld your soul to something that is not compatible.
 - When one commits adultery, you weld your soul to another while destroying the covenant of your marriage.
 - There is no such thing as an inconsequential sexual encounter because sex touches the soul.
 - 1. Repeat.



- v. And when you seek to weld your soul in a way that it was not designed...it brings pain.
- It brings rejection. It brings disappointment. And it brings shame. The feeling that you are not the person you ought to be...because your soul is not finding the rest and the intimacy its looking for.
 - Sexual immorality literally wounds the soul.
 - And the more rejection and shame our soul experiences, the more we can look to sex to heal the wound.
 - And the cycle begins.
- vi. In fact, new studies are now showing that viewing pornography has the same effect on the brain as taking cocaine.
- Watching pornography spikes our dopamine levels in the same way cocaine use does.
 1. Dopamine is a neuro-transmitter that helps us feel pleasure.
 - But these kinds of artificial dopamine spikes also cause a depression in our dopamine levels.
 1. And to deal with the depression we look for another spike.
 2. The more you do this, the more depressed our dopamine levels become in response.
 3. Meaning we look for a stronger, more frequent spikes.
 4. And what happens?
 5. Full blown addiction.



- Studies now show that your brain can be just as addicted to pornography or sex as it is to a specific substance.
 1. Your brain craves it. Your soul craves it. And you'll go through withdrawal when you're without it.
- vii. So, when Paul commands us to flee sexual immorality...it's not because Paul is anti-sex.
 - It's because Paul knows the beauty of sex within marriage and the danger of its abuse.

IV. WE MUST FLEE

- a. And so, Grace Hill, we must take what Paul says seriously here...we must FLEE sexual immorality!
 - i. This is not something that we take lightly.
 - This is not a topic that we allow to be taboo and silently vow to not talk about.
 - This can't be something that we keep secret and pretend it is not a problem.
 - Because this is a sin that we must flee! We must run!
 - ii. 79% of men ages 18-30 view porn at least once per month ***and*** 76% of women ages 18-30 view porn at least once per month.¹
 - This is not just a men's issue. This is about everyone.
 1. If those statistics prove true in this room, that's basically 8-10.

¹ <https://fightthenewdrug.org/by-the-numbers-see-how-many-people-are-watching-porn-today/>



2. 8 in 10 people trying to weld their soul to something and its only bringing pain and shame.
- iii. A study done in 2008 found that 93% of boys and 62% of girls had been exposed to pornography in their early adolescent years.²
 - And the average age of a child's first exposure to porn is eleven.³
 - iv. And get this...in a study done in 2017 of the world's largest porn site...the most searched term on the site was step-mom.⁴
 - 1 Corinthians 5:1 is horrifyingly prophetic.
 - v. This has become a devastating, addicting, and enslaving problem in our culture and in the church.
 - And it's dangerous because it's done in secret.
 - Through smart phones and other devices, we have access whenever we want and the ability to cover the tracks.
 1. It's an addiction that doesn't cost any money and that can be hidden in the darkness for years.
 2. And the longer the secrecy goes, the deeper, the stronger, and the more painful the addiction gets.
 - vi. In my short eleven years of ministry...I have seen pornography do nothing but wreck havoc in people's lives.

² <http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/CV169.pdf>

³ <https://fightthenewdrug.org/real-average-age-of-first-exposure/>

⁴ <https://fightthenewdrug.org/by-the-numbers-see-how-many-people-are-watching-porn-today/>



- The shame of their sin keeps them in hiding.
 - The damage to their soul hurts their relationships.
 - And the addiction demoralizes them into thinking that they will never change.
 - Sexual immorality is so shameful that we become determined to defeat this sin while keeping it secret...and it never works.
- vii. And so Grace Hill, we must flee this sin together.
- We must have a culture here where we help people get out of this.
 1. We must help people fight the addiction.
 2. We must not shame each other.
 3. We must bring this into the light.
 4. We must do something about this.
 - We cannot be a faithful church and not be a place where people are willing to come and seek help on this.
- b. So here is what we're doing...because we have to do something about this.
- i. MEN – Starting on Saturday, September 8 at 8am in the morning, we are going to begin a 10-week class on sexual addiction and how to get free.
- This class will be done in a confidential location and the roster of those signed up will be kept confidential.
 - But listen, I am asking every single man in this church to sign-up for this class.



1. I know it's 10 Saturday mornings over the Fall and that might be a big sacrifice.
 2. But's its worth clearing your schedule for.
- If you struggle with any sort of sexual immorality...sign up for this class.
 1. We want to walk with you through this because you can't do this alone.
 - If you don't struggle with sexual immorality, sign up for the class!

1. If we want to have a culture at Grace Hill of helping people get out of slavery of sexual immorality, we must all be informed on how to help people break free.
 2. I need you to come to this class so you can be equipped to walk with other brothers towards freedom.
- If you struggle with this and you are determined to not let anybody know.
 1. Then sign-up for the class and just tell people you're here to help others.
 - The Bottom Line...Men, let's fight this together. Come to the class.
 1. Information in your bulletin.

- ii. **WOMEN** – Statistics show that this is a women's problem just as much as a men's problem.



- And the fact that this has been labeled just a men's problem has probably made this even more shameful for you.
 1. And due to this...there are more resources out there for men when it comes to breaking free of sexual addiction.
- So, if you are in a place where you need help, we are seeking to put together a women's support group.
 1. We have great curriculum for this.
 2. So, if you're interested in this, you can e-mail Kim, my wife, or Julie, Nick's wife which is listed in the bulletin.
 3. This will obviously be kept confidential but once we know how many women are interested in a support group, we will then put together the logistics to get it started this Fall.
- iii. But here is the bottom line...we must flee this sin together.

V. YOU ARE NOT YOUR OWN

- a. The culture is wrong.
 - i. You are not your own. And this is incredibly good news.
- b. See, Paul gives us the way that we flee sexual immorality at the end of our passage.
 - i. **Read v.19-20.**
 - ii. I know there are many people in this room who are carrying silent, dark shame.
 - Secrets that no one has ever heard.



- And sermons like this are horrifying.
 1. Because you're reminded of the problem.
 2. And your told that you must bring it into the light.
 - And the reason why we will never bring it into the light is because you fear the rejection of others and their disgust with you.
- iii. But see, the only way to bring rest and freedom to your soul from an addiction to sexual immorality is by experiencing the intimacy that your soul has with Christ.
- Christ has purchased you by giving of his own life.
 - He has paid for your sin...including all of the sexual immorality...on the cross.
 - He is not ashamed to call you brother or sister and God the Father is not ashamed to call you son or daughter.
 - Your relationship with Christ is guarded by His love for you.
 1. By His faithfulness, not yours.
 2. There is nothing that you have done, can do, or will do that will separate you from His love.
 3. You are united to him.
 4. You are not your own but you belong to Christ.
 - And it is when your soul can find its rest in being Christ's...
 1. When the fear of exposure is released.
 2. When you find the motivation to take the step forward towards freedom.



- iv. Grace Hill, Christ will resurrect these mortal bodies into His Kingdom where there is no more pain, slavery, shame, fear, sin, and bondage.
- But while we are still in these bodies, we must as the church come together and help each other flee sin and hold fast to our Savior who has united us to Himself.
 - This will not be a church where people are forced into silence out of fear of judgement and shame.
 1. Because nothing can separate you from the love of Christ...nothing can separate from the love of this church.
 - This will be a place where all people can find joy in Jesus.

VI. PRAY

