



OKOTOKS EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

REFINED

IMPURITIES (1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11, 18-20; 1 JOHN 1:8-10)
NOVEMBER 18, 2018

SERMON OUTLINE

Refined: Impurities
Col 3:1-11

God's Plan:

God is Holy
God is One
Sexual intimacy is a oneness, set apart for marriage.

Sexual immorality, impurity and lust:
That which turns the mind, body or spirit away from God's plan.

The world is obsessed with identity

As a follower of Christ I....

The world is obsessed with orientation

As a follower of Christ I....

What do I need to do with what I have heard today?

MAIN POINT

Sexual sin, like all sin, is offensive to God. Even so, sexual sin has been redeemed through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

THINKING THINGS THROUGH

Connect the sermon to the study.

1. Sunday's sermon dealt with the issue of sexual sin, a topic the Bible speaks to a lot. What was something from Sunday's message that was noteworthy for you?

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

2. What have you learned about sexual purity from the church? How do you think the church shows confidence or unease when discussing the subject of sexual purity?

Leader: Churches can't afford to be quiet about sex, because no one else in society is quiet about it. Arguably, pop culture emphasizes everything about sex except for God's plan. Yet as Christians, we have been given the truth about these issues. Paul reminded us that every part of us has been redeemed by Jesus Christ—including our sexuality.

DIGGING DEEPER

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11.

3. We tend to classify sexual sin as an entirely different category of sin. Why do we do that? What from the passage gives insight into how God views sexual sin in relation to other types of sin?

Leader: It's easy for us to look at long lists of sins in the Bible and only focus on the sins that are not our own. But God is no respecter of persons—all sins are equally offensive before a holy God. All sin is worthy of God's judgment and condemnation; it's only through His grace that we have been given the ability to repent of our sins and trust in Christ.

4. Who were the “some of you” Paul mentioned in these verses? Why is that also an important statement for us today?

5. How does Paul’s statement in verse 11 give hope of a redeemed perspective for sexual purity?

Leader: Christ offers hope to all sinners without any conditions except for our faith and repentance. When we believe in Jesus through faith, by grace, we are washed of all our sins. This includes both the most self-righteous church person and the most unrighteous sexual sinner. We are all equals at the foot of the cross. Jesus has justified us and made us right, and sent His Spirit to sanctify (to set apart or make holy) us that we may live for Him. Those who are struggling with sexual sin live with the promise that Christ will give them the power and the ability to persevere in their struggle against their sins.

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 CORINTHIANS 6:18-20.

6. How does Paul's command to "flee" apply to sexual immorality? How do we flee sexual immorality in our day and age?

Leader: Paul's radical advice to flee rested on the uniqueness of sexual sin. In contrast with all other sins, sexual immorality is against one's own body. Many sins, such as substance abuse, gluttony, and suicide, have detrimental effects on the body. But sexual immorality violates our bodies by bringing it into a wrongful one-flesh union, disregarding our union with Christ. Sexual sin violates the most significant fact about believers' physical existence: their bodies belong to Christ.

7. God's grace changes everything in our lives. How is this truth confirmed in verses 18-20? What does it mean that our bodies are not our own?

Leader: Our bodies do not belong to us because they were bought by Christ. Our bodies and souls are a package deal—we cannot compartmentalize Christ's claim on one part of our existence but not on the other. The good news for all believers, regardless of the sins we have struggled with in the past or the ways our hearts have deceived us, is that in Christ we are made new. Our sins, and all the shame that accompanies them, have been washed away. In this, we see the great compassion of God. He is the One who defines us and changes our identity, and He desires that all people become the sons and daughters He has created them to be.

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 JOHN 1:8-10.

8. What is promised in these verses for those who are hidden in Christ and obedient to confess their sins before the Father?

Leader: When we confess our sins, we can be confident that God will forgive us. God's forgiveness is based solely on the work of Christ on our behalf. It's important that we acknowledge our sin before God; yet it's equally important that we don't imprison ourselves in guilt and shame. We can deny the temptation of guilt as we remember that, if we are hidden in Christ, we have been washed, sanctified, and justified (1 Corinthians 6:11).

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

DOING LIFE TOGETHER

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

9. Do you often feel a sense of condemnation regarding past sin of any kind? How does our study today help you combat that feeling?

10. How can we foster a community that doesn't promote shame, but instead is nurturing and encouraging for those who have struggled with sin's addiction and brokenness?

PRAYER

In a time of group prayer, thank the Father for the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. Thank the Father for making us pure through Him. Ask that we might pursue Jesus with all of our hearts, and that we might honor the Lord by pursuing Christ's holiness in faith.

MEMORIZE

¹¹ And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

— 1 Corinthians 6:11

SPOTLIGHT ON THE PASSAGE

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11

6:9-10. The Corinthians had forgotten a basic Christian doctrine: there is a big difference between believers and unbelievers. Wicked people are not destined to inherit the kingdom of God—they face a future of divine judgment. They will not receive the blessings of God when Christ returns in glory (Rom. 2:5-10; Heb. 10:26-27). By reminding the Corinthians of the judgment that awaits the wicked, Paul again emphasized that the Corinthians were behaving like the unbelieving wicked. In verse 8, he had used the verbal form of "wicked" to say "do wrong." Believers must not allow themselves to be deceived in these matters.

To make his point more clearly, Paul offered a list of lifestyles that were common outside the Christian community. He did not speak of people who occasionally fell into these sins, but of those who made these sins the patterns of their lives. Similar lists of sinful lifestyles appear elsewhere in Paul's writings and in the rest of Scripture. Here he first mentioned sexual sins: (1) the sexually immoral, those who are involved in any kind of premarital or extramarital sexual relations; (2) idolaters, mentioned here because of the close association between sexual immorality and many pagan religions; (3) adulterers, those who break the sanctity of marital sexual exclusivity; (4) male prostitutes, those who served in pagan religious sexual rituals, and (5) homosexual offenders, those who practice homosexual relations in general.

He then turned to other social sins: (1) thieves, those who steal as a way of life; (2) the greedy, those who have unquenchable desire to possess for themselves; (3) drunkards, those who

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

imbibe alcohol to excess; (4) slanderers, those who falsely accuse others; and (5) swindlers, those who take what is not theirs.

Except for the addition of thieves and the expansion of the sexually immoral into subclasses of adulterers, male prostitutes, and homosexual offenders, this list is identical to the list in 1 Corinthians 5:10-11. Paul hoped the Corinthians would remember that people who practice such things would not inherit the kingdom of God. He implied that professed believers in Corinth who lived such lifestyles should take care that they were truly in the faith, knowing that if they did not repent they would perish. He also pointed out the folly of taking lawsuits before these kinds of people, as if such wicked people could judge rightly between Christians.

6:11. Many of the believers in Corinth once lived in these patterns of life, but Christ had changed them so they became much more reliable as judges of disputes within the church. Since these patterns of life were in the past for those who truly believed, they could take confidence that they would inherit the kingdom of God. Those believers who still fell into these sins needed to remember that their new identities in Christ (what some of you were) protected them from judgment. At the same time, their new identities also required that they live no longer like the wicked, but like believers.

Believers are washed, cleansed from sin through faith in Christ as symbolized in baptism (Acts 9:17-18). They are sanctified, set apart from the world and brought into relationship with God (Acts 20:32; 26:18). They have been justified, declared innocent before God (Rom. 3:24; Gal. 2:16; Titus 3:7). This blessing comes to believers in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ as they call on Jesus' name and rely upon him for their salvation. They also come by the Spirit of our God as the Holy Spirit applies the work of Christ to believers (Rom. 15:16; Eph. 1:13-14; Titus 3:5). Followers of Christ differ fundamentally from the sinful world around them. Therefore, believers should not make it their practice to bring their lawsuits against one another before unbelievers.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:18-20

6:18. Paul began his conclusion to this section with an abrupt command: Flee . . . immorality. It is likely that the apostle had in mind Joseph's example of fleeing Potiphar's wife (Gen. 39:12). Paul instructed the young pastor Timothy in a similar way (2 Tim. 2:22). Rather than moderate resistance to immorality, Paul insisted on radical separation.

Paul's radical advice rested on the uniqueness of sexual sin. In contrast with all other sins, immorality is against one's own body. The meaning of these words is difficult to determine. Many sins, such as substance abuse, gluttony, and suicide, have detrimental effects on the body. Paul's words do not refer to disease and/or other damage caused by sin. Instead, his words are linked to the preceding discussion of 6:12-17. There Paul established that Christians' bodies are joined with Christ so that they become "members of Christ" (6:15) himself.

Sexual union with a prostitute violates one's body by bringing it into a wrongful "one flesh" union, and by flaunting the mystical union with Christ (6:15). It is in this sense that sexual immorality is a unique sin against the body. It violates the most significant fact about believers' physical existence: their bodies belong to Christ.

6:19. For this reason, the apostle appealed once again to a teaching which he had already given the Corinthians. The Christian's body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit takes up residence in believers, making their bodies a holy place for the dwelling of God's special presence. That the Holy Spirit resides in believers points to the new nature of believers' bodies. Believers' bodies are sanctified and holy, being in union with Christ. When a person in Christ engages in sexual immorality, that immorality runs contrary to the new nature and new identity of his body. The Christian has been redeemed for good works (Eph. 2:10), so he ought to use his body for good deeds and righteousness, not for sin.

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

Paul also reminded the Corinthians that they did not have rights to their own bodies. They were not free to use their bodies any way they wished. He insisted that Christ bought them at a price—his own blood. As a slave was bought in the ancient world, Christ bought his followers, body and soul, through the price of his own death. Because they belong to him, believers do not have the right to rebel against him by using their bodies in ways the Lord has prohibited.

Further, because this purchase results in redemption and salvation, it ought to inspire grateful obedience, not rebellion. In this reminder, Paul chastised the Corinthians and pleaded with them to obey Christ eagerly and thankfully.

6:20. In conclusion, Paul insisted, Honor God with your body. Having already given the negative warning to flee immorality, Paul gave positive guidance through the gospel. Rather than merely resist sin, believers must see themselves as temples of God purchased by Christ. Of course, this purchase refers to Christ's atonement. Because Christ died for and purchased believers, believers owe him obedience and honor. They should search for ways to bring glory to God by using their bodies in the ways that God has commanded, and by refraining from using their bodies in ways God has prohibited. They should remember that their bodies have been united to Christ, and they must honor Christ by not dragging his members into union with prostitutes.

1 JOHN 1:8-10

1:8 In both Scripture and church history, people have excused their wrongful deeds by claiming to be right with God. John diagnosed an ancient and recurrent human tendency.

1:9 Confessing our sins does not mean a shallow reciting of misdeeds. It means owning up to wrongdoing and bringing our lives into line with God's goodness and commands. God can forgive and cleanse us from terrible transgressions.

1:10 Since God is light and there is no darkness in Him (v. 5), to claim to be without sin is to claim to be on par with God, but God says there is no one like Him (Isa 45:18). If His word is not in us, the saving message of Christ has not taken root. There may be surface knowledge of Christian religion, but the heart has not been transformed.