



Sermon: You Were Bought at a Price! – Todd Goldschmidt

Sunday Service 10:15 am – January 15th, 2012 – At [Living Hope Lutheran Church](#)

Second Lesson/Sermon Text: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 – (NIV 1984)

Sexual Immorality

¹² “Everything is permissible for me”—but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible for me”—but I will not be mastered by anything. ¹³ “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food”—but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴ By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. ¹⁵ Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶ Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, “The two will become one flesh.”^[a] ¹⁷ But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.

¹⁸ Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.



“May God the Father, who created this body; may God the Son, who by his blood redeemed this body together with the soul; may God the Holy Spirit, who by Holy Baptism sanctified this body to be his temple, keep these remains to the day of the resurrection of all flesh.” So go the words that are spoken at the graveside committal service of a Christian. At that most somber moment, they proclaim these truths about the believer’s physical body: it was created by the Maker of heaven and earth; purchased with the blood of Christ; and hallowed by the washing of water with the Word of God. It’s not a leftover carcass to be tossed aside. On the contrary, it provides the raw material for a whole new resurrected body that will be glorified to go the distance through eternity. It’s a well-worn, perennially-patched, much-mildewed tent that’s rolled up and stored away for awhile. But one day—on the Last Day of this earth’s existence—it’ll be unpacked and remade into a perfect body. In view of all that God has done for our physical bodies, Paul reminds us:

YOU ARE NOT YOUR OWN—YOU WERE BOUGHT AT A PRICE

One of the things that I find so fascinating about human beings is the fact that we’re each so unique. Sure, we’re more similar than dissimilar, but I think it’s pretty cool that we look different, act differently and think differently. That variety adds spice to our lives! Yet despite the fact that we all have singular personalities, gifts and abilities, our bodies aren’t really our own. We didn’t create them; God did. And while modern medicine has made amazing strides to combat and overcome many of our worst maladies, we finally cannot transcend the reality that we mortals are destined to die unless Christ comes again first. That’s a sobering fact that few people want to face. Perpetually in denial, many give way to carnal pleasures, eating and drinking like there’s no tomorrow; indulging in debauchery and licentious exploits in order to satisfy their basest cravings; killing their conscience in wild living like the proverbial “Prodigal Son” who left his father, faith and family to seek meaning for his existence in all the wrong ways. He ended up morally, spiritually and materially bankrupt before he “came to his senses” in repentance.

Like Ponce de Leone, we humans are forever seeking the latest “fountain of youth” to preserve our physiques, keep our libidos revved up, and maintain the ever-elusive appearance of agelessness. But to what end? One of the clearest manifestations of mankind’s obsession with the physical is its relentless pursuit of sexual relations that are completely contrary to God’s will and intentions. God meant for sexual relations to take place within the confines of the life-long, fully-committed union of a man and a woman in the estate we call “holy matrimony.” In other words: a one-man, one-woman marriage. But ever since Adam and Eve—the first husband/wife team—fell into sin, we humans have walked down increasingly wicked paths of sexual depravity. “If it feels good, do it!” has become mankind’s mantra when it comes to indulging its sinful flesh in every arena of life.



Satan, our fallen flesh's evil ally, has seen to it that we can feed our lust on whatever sexual perversions our fallen heart desires: from internet porn to strip clubs, prostitutes to Penthouse, clandestine "hook-ups" with "friends with benefits" to "innocent flirtations" at the office and "sex-ting" immodest images to our middle-school or even grade-school classmates. There's nowhere we can turn in our society and not be exposed to sexual immorality at some level.

We Christians aren't immune to Satan's schemes. In fact, the Apostle Peter warns us in his first epistle: "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your [fellow Christians] throughout the world are under-going the same kind of sufferings" (1 Pet. 5:8-9).

If we're honest about it, we must admit that there have been many times when we've listened to Satan's siren call and fallen for his tempting bait hook, line and sinker. We've allowed ourselves to succumb to the sensual desires of our fallen flesh and broken the 6th commandment in ways we're ashamed to even think about. Sometimes those sins become obvious to others, but most often they're hidden from the eyes of everyone except God. He sees, He knows and He condemns us for our rebellion. Just before our text Paul wrote: "Don't be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders . . . will inherit the kingdom of God" (6:9-10). I'm pretty sure that that list includes you. I know it does me.

Now we turn our attention to Paul's original readers: the Christians in the Greek city of Corinth. Corinth was a port city on the Peloponnesian peninsula that served as a vital cargo link from East to West by means of it *Diolkos*—a paved track-way enabling boats to be transported overland across the Isthmus of Corinth (a shortcut that allowed these ancient vessels to avoid the dangerous circumnavigation of Greece's southern tip). Corinth was also a cesspool of immorality, catering to the sexual appetites of the merchant marines and soldiers who rented its seedy apartments, frequented its brothels and climbed up its "acro-cornith" to the temple of Aphrodite, Roman goddess of love and sex. There over 1,000 "sacred prostitutes" satisfied their every deviant fantasy.

The Corinthians were heavily influenced by their immoral culture much like we are. Plus, they'd lived their whole lives under a philosophical tenet that taught that normal every-day functions—such as eating, drinking and sexual relations—were incidental to spirituality, and had no real impact on their inner soul. This former belief tainted their new-found Christian faith, leading them to believe that an act as "bodily" as sexual intercourse wouldn't affect their life in the Spirit. For them, their freedom in the Spirit translated into a life unhampered by restrictions, boundaries, limitations and constraints. Within the congregation homosexual practices, prostitution and even incest were tolerated. They must've reasoned that the bounds of Christian liberty were wide, expansive and all-permissive since "food was meant for the stomach and the stomach for food." But food and sex differ. One is necessary for survival, the other is only meant to be enjoyed within marriage. Paul cleared up their misconception by saying: "The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body." How we Christians use our bodies does matter to God!

Sunday Worship Service: 10:15 A.M. (Sunday School/Adult Bible Class 9am)

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To that point, Paul adds, “By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, “The two will become one flesh.” But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.” It’s a matter of ownership. Either we belong to the Lord or we don’t. It’s that simple. We can’t take our bodies that belong to God—created by Him, bought with His Son’s precious blood and washed by His Spirit in Baptism—and join them to a prostitute (or anyone else for that matter) who isn’t our God-given spouse. Period! Christ not only redeemed our souls, He redeemed and sanctified our bodies as well by His bodily resurrection from the dead on the third day. “Touch me and see,” He invited His doubting disciples on Easter eve: “A ghost does not have flesh and blood as you see I have”

What’s the solution to the sexual immorality that surrounds us on all sides in our sordid society? Paul tells us: “Flee from sexual immorality.” Remember the example of Joseph. His Egyptian master, a powerful man named Potiphar, had put him in charge of his entire household. But Potiphar’s wife had other plans for this strapping young Hebrew servant: she wanted him, begged him in fact: “come to bed with me.” Over and over again she tried to seduce him.

It got to the point that Joseph wouldn’t even come near her when his master was away. Keeping in step with the Spirit of God who lived in him and governed his thoughts, deeds and motives, Joseph gave the most God-pleasing response to her forward advances: “My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?” (Gen. 39:9). Joseph wasn’t so much concerned about contracting a sexually transmitted disease, getting caught with his pants down or impregnating Potiphar’s wife. His chief concern was one thing and one thing only: his relationship with the God who loved him, protected him, and promised to save him. That’s really the bottom line for us, too, isn’t it?

Paul concludes our text for today by writing: “All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.” That’s what Joseph did. *Therefore*—because your body is not meant for you and your pleasure but for God and His glory, because it is a member of Christ, because it is made to be a holy temple by the indwelling of God’s Spirit, because it belongs to the Lord—*therefore* avoid desecrating your body by sexual immorality. Paul can give no more compelling reasons for sexual purity and honor than that! You and I are “not our own.” We are God’s sanctified sons and daughters! We were made by Him and for Him; and we were “bought at a price”—the price of His only Son’s life on the cross.



And so we kneel before our Maker and our Redeemer again today, confessing to Him that we've so often and so awfully used our bodies sexually in ways that demonstrate our selfish nature. And lest we judge others, we hear Jesus say to us what He said so long ago to that hypocritical mob that was about to stone to death a woman who'd been caught in adultery: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." One by one they dropped their projectiles and walked away. Jesus turned to the woman and asked, "Is no one left to condemn you?" "No one, sir," she replied. "Then neither do I condemn you. Go now, and leave your life of sin" (Mark 8). Jesus says the same to each one of us today: "Go, forgiven and restored, and leave your life of sin." Amen.
