

The Three R's of Sexual Purity

1 Cor 6:18-20

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Wilson and several other students in this congregation and this community started kindergarten a few weeks ago.

1. Kindergarten is much different than when I went years ago; I basically learned how to stay in my seat, ride the bus, not cry for my Mommy, and the like.
 2. Now, however, kindergarten emphasizes the three R's—reading, writing, and arithmetic.
 - a. Wil has been able to write his first name legibly for some time, but now he's learning how to write that four letter, hard-to-pronounce surname.
 - b. He brought home a book on Tuesday evening that he read to his mother and me. Yeah, he memorized it, but it's boosting his confidence in reading.
 - c. He brings home work almost daily which is preparation for more detailed arithmetic.
 3. You know the importance of the three R's—they are the fundamentals which are a foundation for a productive life.
 - a. It would be impossible for me to stand here and preach this morning if I could not read and write; that is something I do every single day in my life. I'm not that good at arithmetic, and fortunately when I went to International Bible College, they did not require math for a BA; I would have been in trouble otherwise.
 - b. There are some of you that in your work you are as dependent on arithmetic as you are reading and writing. Many of you could not do what you do were it not for strong math skills.
- B. This morning, we want to talk about fundamentals for another part of our lives, our sexual lives.
1. Paul has been discussing in the last couple of chapters sexual immorality. The Corinthians boasted about an adulterous relationship and in the last paragraph Paul dealt with the Corinthians' rationale for immorality.
 2. In this paragraph, although it is rather short, Paul provides the fundamentals, the three R's, for keeping ourselves from immorality. Those three R's? RUN, RESIDENCE, & REDEMPTION.

II. RUN, v. 18.

A. "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body."

B. Paul tells these Christians to flee from sexual immorality.

1. In Greek, the idea of fleeing is a continual action.
 - a. The idea is not just fleeing when we find ourselves in a compromising position—as Joseph did with Potiphar's wife—but of guarding ourselves against temptation.
 - b. You know that there is good reason to guard ourselves against sexual temptation.
 - In warning his son against adultery, Solomon wrote, "Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned? Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched?" (Prov 6:26-27).
 - ¢ In context, the words about being burned do not have to do with sexual temptation but actually committing adultery. Solomon is saying to his son, "Look, if you go commit

adultery with another man's wife, you're going to suffer.”

- ϕ But, do those words not also have much to say about temptation? Can we not guard ourselves and just allow temptation to be all around us and not end up being burned?
 - ϕ A wealthy couple desired to employ a chauffeur.
 - ϕ The lady of the house advertised, the applicants were screened, and four suitable candidates were brought before her for the final selection.
 - ϕ Then she asked the men, “How close do you think you could come to that wall without scratching my car?”
 - ϕ The first man felt that he could drive within a foot of the wall without damaging the car.
 - ϕ The second felt sure that he could come within six inches.
 - ϕ The third believe that he could get within three inches.
 - ϕ The fourth candidate said, “I do not know how close I could come to the wall without damaging your car. Instead, I would try to stay as far away from that wall as I could.”
 - ϕ Is that not precisely the attitude we need when it comes to sexual immorality—staying as far away from it as possible?
2. How well are we doing in guarding ourselves against sexual immorality?
- a. Do we watch television programs where we bring immorality into our homes? Do we visit Internet sites where we bring immorality into our homes?
 - b. Do we have relationships where boundaries aren't as tight as they need to be and we could easily become entangled in immorality?
 - c. If you're unmarried, what type of boundaries do you have with your boyfriend or girlfriend?
- C. Paul says that every sin a person commits is outside the body, but sexual immorality is a sin against the body.
1. If you're reading from the NIV, you'll notice that Paul, according to that translation, writes: “All *other* sins a man commits are outside his body.” However, if you have the KJV, you notice that Paul writes: “Every sin that a man does is outside the body.” The KJV gets it right; the Greek does not have the word “other”—Paul is saying that every sin a man commits is outside the body.”
 2. Why on earth would Paul say that every sin a man commits is outside the body?
 - a. If I swear, do I not use my body to do that? If I use my eyes to lust after a woman, I use my body that, don't I?
 - b. I don't believe for a moment that Paul believed what he wrote here, but I think he's doing the same thing he did in the previous paragraph, using slogans prevalent in Corinth and then rebutting them.
 - I think Paul is declaring, “People say, ‘Every sin that a man commits is outside the body,’ but let me tell you what the truth is.”
 - There have been a variety of Christians through the centuries who claimed that what they did in the body did not affect who they were spiritually.
 - ϕ There was a group contemporary with Paul who claimed that they were so spiritual that they could do whatever they wanted and never sin; their reasoning was that what the body did had not affect on their divine relationship.
 - ϕ The Apostle John also seems to have dealt with such people: “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us” (1 Jn 1:8).

3. Paul declares that's not the case, for "he who sins sexually sins against his own body."
 - a. Sexual immorality is unique among sin, for it does wrong against one's own body.
 - b. Sexual immorality sins against one's body, for it involves a union with another body in a way that other sins simply do not.
 - c. Let us keep ourselves from sexual immorality.

II. RESIDENCE, v. 19.

- A. "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?"
- B. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit.
 1. The Corinthians were quite familiar with the idea of a temple, for the city was full of pagan temples.
 2. In the ancient world, a temple did not so much serve as a place for adherents to come to worship as it functions as the dwelling place of the deity. We also find that idea in Scripture.
 - a. The true and living God dwelt in Solomon's temple in a special way: 1 Ki 8:10-13.
 - b. Paul understood that God dwells in temples; he said at the Areopagus, "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands" (Acts 17:24).
 - You might be thinking, "Wait a minute, Justin. That text says that God does not live in temples.
 - That text says nothing of the sort! The text says that God does not live in temples *built by hands*; it does not say that God does not dwell in temples period. I submit that our bodies are not built by hands; therefore what Paul told the philosophers at the Areopagus does not apply in that case.
 3. We know that the Spirit of God dwells within each of us in a very special way.
 - a. We receive the Holy Spirit in a special way when we are baptized: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).
 - b. If we do not have the Holy Spirit within us, we simply are not Christians: Rm 8:9-11.
 4. Because our bodies hosts the Holy Spirit, we cannot do whatever we please sexually.
 - a. We can't misuse these bodies sexually, for the Holy Spirit lives within us. Our bodies do not only house our spirits, but the Holy Spirit of God!
 - b. Are you honoring your body as a temple of the Holy Spirit?

III. REDEMPTION, vv. 19b-20.

- A. "You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."
- B. We are not our own, for we were bought at a price.
 1. One of the most glorious doctrines of the NT is that we have been redeemed from sin with the blood of Jesus himself.
 - a. "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mt 20:28).
 - A ransom, of course, is given as the price of someone being held captive.
 - For Jesus to give his life as a ransom implies that many have been held captive; in fact, everyone who has ever sinned is held captive: Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin" (Jn 8:34).

- b. "There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Jesus Christ" (Rm 3:22b-24).
- c. We have not been redeemed with a great amount of money, which sometimes occurs in kidnaping or hostage situations, but with Jesus' own blood.
- "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).
 - "You know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect" (1 Pt 1:18-19).
- d. In an old country village a cottage, which was home to a family of four, caught fire.
- The cottage with its thatched roof was engulfed in flames, and the people of the village stood watching helplessly as the flames ravaged this home. There was no fire department in this community.
 - Finally, a young man asked, "Can't we do something?" No one answered him.
 1. Exasperated, the young man ran into the fire to see if he could rescue anyone.
 2. A few moments later, he came out with two small children under his coat; seconds later, the roof collapsed, killing the children's parents, if they weren't already dead.
 3. The man was severely burned, and an old lady in the village helped nurse him back to health.
 - A few weeks later, the village held a council to determine what they should do with the two orphans.
 1. Two men offered to raise them.
 1. One was a rich man who had money, position, and a ready home.
 2. The other was the young man who had rescued the children from the fire.
 2. When the village elders asked the young man what right he had to raise these children, he simply pulled out his hands scarred in the fire; the elders had no choice but to award him custody of the children.
- e. So it is with us: Jesus stepped forward and gave his blood to redeem us from sin. How on earth can I use my body for immorality when he died to redeem my body?
2. Because Jesus gave his blood for me, I need to honor him in my body. My brethren, let us be ever so careful how we use our bodies, for Jesus died to redeem us from sin! How are you using your body this morning?