

Title: A YOUNG CHURCH MISUNDERSTANDS, 1 CORINTHIANS 6:12 – 20
(Chatham, NJ; 01/25/15, AM) [D – Exegetical]

Theme: Because Corinth doesn't understand the nuances involved in some of their proverbial statements, they don't fully grasp how important it is for them to glorify God by the proper use of their physical bodies.

Purpose: To examine their misuse of some statements and to enlighten us about the importance of our bodies.

Introduction:

1. Proverbs 1:2 indicates the importance of "understanding words of insight."
2. We have to maintain humble, helpful, and insightful discourse for that understanding to occur and grow.
3. In an age when we can pass on bits and pieces of information instantly, it becomes a challenge to convince people that learning to live right demands more than sound bites.
4. Corinth has slipped into the problem of jargon and sloganeering: from their identification of their group to several proverbial sayings, they have limited their understanding.
5. In this passage we gain insight into their way of thinking as well as a deeper understanding of an important theological matter.

I. The Proverbs and Their Implications

- A. "All things are lawful," "Food for the stomach, the stomach for food"
 1. These are statements circulating among the members
 2. The first is probably a quote relating their freedom in Christ
 3. Erroneously applied even to evil things, 5:1-2?
 4. The second may relate to their belief that they can eat anything.
 5. Both represent aspects of truth; they don't see the nuances.
 6. They have fallen into the jargon, sloganeering trap.
 7. Further explanation (discussion, discourse) is needed.
- B. Not everything is beneficial
 1. Paul changes the discussion from what is permissible to what is good, helpful
 2. Freedom in Christ has opened some doors
 3. But freedom has a higher purpose: don't use it to indulge the flesh, Gal. 5:13, serve one another
 4. They have made an absolute where one does not exist
 5. They seem to be justifying using their bodies any way they want
 6. Paul furthermore insists that license and autonomous freedom bring about slavery
- C. Food for the stomach . . .
 1. Their thinking seems to involve a justification for eating and drinking: God made them for this purpose, or so they reason
 2. Paul says, "God will destroy them both."
 3. He states in Romans 14:17 that the Kingdom is not about food and drink (they may have misunderstood this to mean license when it comes to those things)
 4. The good life does not consist in indulgence in those things
 5. Furthermore they seem to extend the freedom principle and use of the body to sexual immorality – why Paul brings this up in verse 13
 6. Jargon and sloganeering can end up with convoluted rationalizations: one woman justified leaving her husband and didn't expect God to command her otherwise because "The Father and I are into relationship."

II. Do you not know? (Does he expect them to know? Is this rhetorical?)

- A. First, your bodies are members of Christ, 15?
 - 1. Our bodies matter
 - 2. In 15:12-58 the theology of the resurrected body tells us this
- B. Second, we become one flesh even with prostitutes, 16?
 - 1. The physical union of a man and a woman carries significant meaning
 - 2. There is a sacred, spiritual dimension to it
- C. Third, your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, 19?
 - 1. God's spirit dwells within you
 - 2. This is both communal and personal
 - 3. Each member carries around the presence of the Holy Spirit
 - 4. You are one with God
 - 5. Your body is being prepared for immortality: the resurrection

III. Flee Sexual Immorality, 18 (for two reasons)

- A. It is a sin against one's own body
 - 1. Unlike other sins, 18
 - 2. We don't have time, nor can I fully explain, all the implications of this
 - 3. Suffice it to say that the physical is damaged along with the spiritual
- B. You are not your own
 - 1. Christ purchased you with his blood
 - 2. This addresses the limitation on their freedoms that they have tried to ignore by their proverbial statements
 - 3. Not all things really are lawful because you are never really free in the absolute sense of the word

Conclusions:

- 1. Stop using these slogans to justify immorality, 5:1-2.
- 2. Purity of the body goes together with purity of the spirit.
- 3. Flee sexual immorality
- 4. Glorify God in your body, 20.