

# **life groups' study guide**



*Life Groups exist at Kingsway to provide authentic relationships for spiritual growth, caring for one another, and reaching out to others*

## **Margin: Morality**

### **It's God's Bod (not yours) – 1 Corinthians 6:9-20** Honoring God with Our Bodies

*"You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body." 1 Corinthians 6:19b-20*

Excerpt of a letter from senior demon, Screwtape, to his junior tempter nephew, Wormwood:  
*"The Enemy's demand on humans takes the form of a dilemma; either complete abstinence or unmitigated monogamy."* C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*.

Consider these questions as we begin our study:

Q. Do you really believe that your entire person – every bit of you -- belongs completely to God?

Q. Does God own even my sexuality and does He really have the right to tell me what I can and cannot do with it?

Q. Look again at the line from Screwtape's letter. Do you agree with his assessment of God's requirements for us? If not, why not?

### **Study**

#### **Background: The Corinthian Condition and Argument.**

The New Testament writers, especially Paul in this passage, emphasize the importance of holy living in the area of sexual relations. God's people are to be characterized by faithfulness and purity, and sexual relationships are restricted to marriage alone. This was very different from Greek/Roman culture and especially from the culture of Corinth. It was infamous for its

immorality, so much so that a word was coined as a result. *Korinthiazomai* – to act like a Corinthian – became a verb meaning to be sexually immoral.

The Corinthians, even some of the Christians, made two arguments to justify their desire for sexual freedom (which Paul quotes and then answers):

1. “I am allowed to do anything” (6:12). Sounds familiar doesn’t it? We hear the same things today: “It’s my body/life/decision/choice/you name it.”
2. “Food was made for the stomach, and the stomach for food.” (6:13). This was simply a saying used to justify the indulging of any and every bodily appetite. The Corinthians would say that, like eating, sex is a normal physical function, so why not use it as you please?

Q. What was the Corinthians’ rationale for sexual freedom? How does this rationalizing compare to modern-day attitudes toward sexuality?

### Paul’s Inspired Answer

He gives a couple preliminary reasons why the Corinthian attitude is impractical: “not everything is good for you,” and “I must not become a slave to anything.” (6:12). He also points out that the physical things of today will someday be done away with (6:13). But the real reasons that God demands holiness and purity go much deeper. In fact they are based on our very identity as Christians and on our relationship with each Person of the Trinity. Sexual immorality is an offense against Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

1. Immorality is a sin against God the Father – Our Creator (6:13-14). Paul points out that God created sex when He made the first man and woman, and so He has the right to tell us how to use it. He cares about our bodies, so much so that He has promised to raise us to a new and glorified body one day. So how can we use our bodies for evil?
2. Immorality is a sin against Jesus Christ – Our Redeemer (6:15-17). Consider the first question of verse 15: ***Don’t you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ?*** Wow! Do you really realize that, and do you ever think about it? So, there is no “little” sexual sin.
3. Immorality is a sin against the Holy Spirit – Our Comforter and Indweller (6:18-20). Here Paul gives his the only command of this passage: Run! Flee from sexual sin! The Greek tense means continuous action: Always run, keep on fleeing, make it your habit to avoid. God lives in the Christian in the Person of the Holy Spirit – we are actually His dwelling place. Sexual sin violates this sacred sanctuary.

Conclusion: We are not our own any longer. Christ has redeemed us!

Paul then sums up this way: ***“You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.” (6:19-20)***

The idea that we now belong to God again – that Christ has redeemed us back into the relationship that Adam and Eve had with God before the fall is throughout the New Testament.

1 Corinthians 7:23 – *“God paid a high price for you, so don’t be enslaved by the world.”*

Romans 14:8 – *“Whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.”*

2 Corinthians 5:15 – “[Christ] died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them.”

1 Peter 1:18-19 – “God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And the ransom he paid was not mere gold or silver. It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God.”

### **Application**

So, knowing that you are not your own, and to paraphrase Francis Schaeffer and Chuck Colson: How should we then live? Well, Paul only gives one command in this passage: Run!

Qs. How can you “run from sexual sin” in our sex-saturated society? Do you really believe this is possible? Are you still engaging in the fight or have you given in? Read Romans 13:14, 1 Peter 2:12, and 1 John 2:15-17. How are you doing in those areas? Are you accountable to any person(s)? Are you able to be completely truthful with any other fellow believer?

Q. What decision(s) can you make right now to obey God in running from immorality?

- in TV, movies, or other media?
- in internet use?
- in accountability?
- in the workplace?

Q. Have you seen the movie *Fireproof*? If so, do you remember the scene where he smashes his computer in order to keep himself from pornography? Is that too extreme? Why or why not? If it is, what would you do instead to “run from sexual sin”?

Q. What keeps us from fleeing sexual sin? What keeps us from seeking accountability? Well, whatever these barriers are, do everything you can to remove them. Eternity is at stake!

### **Hope for the Broken (hint: that’s almost all of us)**

Most of us have sinned sexually (if you think you haven’t, consider Christ’s standards in the Sermon on the Mount) – we’ve already “blown it.” (For the rest of you, try to be understanding!) So, where do we go from here? How do we either maintain or regain purity?

1. First of all, recognize the immenseness of both God’s grace and God’s power. He is able not only to forgive but to restore and to transform us into the image of His Son.
2. Confess your sexual sin to God – no excuses, no rationalizing, etc. Seek Godly counsel regarding confession to others.
3. Determine in your heart and by action to “go and sin no more.” What do you need to do? Take the first step, whatever it might be – end any improper relationship, get rid of cable

perhaps, find a way to eliminate private internet use ([www.xxxchurch.org](http://www.xxxchurch.org), covenanteyes, etc.), seek a Godly accountability partner, etc. It may be different for each person, but whatever it is, He commands us to run from sexual sin!

4. **Forgive others!** If you have been sinned against and don't think you can ever forgive or trust the other person, consider these words from Keith Krell (pastor in WA): "I have just one question for you: How much has God forgiven you? You may not think you can forgive, but the Lord can change your heart. Forgiveness is not just a feeling; it is a decision to do what God does for you every day!"

Here is the final Question: After this study, How do you view your body now? Do you think your view is Biblically accurate? If not, how do you need to revise it? Is your body the Lord's?