

# YOU ARE NOT YOUR OWN, YOU WERE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE

A sermon for January 14, 2018, by the Rev. Dr. James Mutayoba

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

## Epistle: 1Corinthians 6:12-20 Sexual Immorality

<sup>12</sup>“*I have the right to do anything*”, you say - but not everything is beneficial. ‘*I have the right to do anything*’ - but I will not be mastered by anything. <sup>13</sup>You say, ‘Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both.’ The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. <sup>14</sup>By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. <sup>15</sup>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! <sup>16</sup>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.’ <sup>17</sup>But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit.”

<sup>18</sup>Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. <sup>19</sup>Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; <sup>20</sup>you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.”

My sermon is taken from the Epistle text.

Welcome to the problem of the human body. My emphasis is, “**We are not our own; We were bought with a price,” and moreover, we are created in the image of God. So, let us “glorify God with our body.”**

Today's Scripture addresses the issues of sexual immorality.

Some people consider satisfying their sexual appetites the same as satisfying one's need for food. But sexual misconduct is not food; sexual immorality enslaves a Christian believer.

Recently, the problem of the human sexuality exposed itself among some Senators and House Representatives who were forced to resign because of their sexual misconduct. The problem of the human body does not distinguish between conservatives and liberals - witness **Al Franken**, (D) Minnesota, **Conyers** (D) Michigan, **Trent Franks** (R) Arizona; **Blake Farenthold**, (R) Texas, **Jack Latvala** (R) Florida. And more have yet to be exposed.

People become **slaves to sexual immorality** because of lack of sexual control.

1. A slave in the Roman Empire was regarded as a talking tool - a tool that speaks. (*Instrumentum vocale*).
2. Another meaning of a slave is a person who is controlled by a HABIT or an INFLUENCE. Sin is a HABIT, an INFLUENCE, which may become man's master.

The popular notion that man is his own master and in control of his destiny is a delusion.

**In our economic system, man's worth is measured by what he/she owns.** You may not get a good loan unless you have a good credit to show. **Ownership brings with it titles.** You will hear adjectives or possessive pronouns: **mine, yours, hers, his, their, ours**, to describe what they own.

We even think that we own our bodies, don't we?

The reality is, we don't own our bodies. We are created by **God in his own image**. To him we belong. Moreover, Christ **bought us with a price!!**

When we misuse our body saying ***it is my body, I can use it any way I want***, that is like saying, "***all things are lawful to me***", or "***all things are permissible to me***." Such a claim is like **a license** to do whatever we want.

To justify what we do, some have used the phrase: "***Food is for the stomach and stomach is for food,***" the implication being, **the stomach is mine and I can feed it whatever I please**. But the original use of this slogan, "*food is for the stomach and stomach is for food*" had a **sexual connotation** -- it was used as a sexual metaphor. This implies that one has a license to use his or her sexual organs any way he or she wants, at any time, for self gratification.

But the Bible teaches that there is a difference between license and liberty. **License** implies that ***we can do anything we want***. **Liberty** means that ***we are free ... but that freedom carries with it the responsibility to do what is right and acceptable***.

Think of a person driving down the freeway. The driver of a vehicle is expected to drive within a speed limit and to pay tolls where needed. The driver is obliged to drive responsibly, to obey traffic regulations. This person is free to drive but is limited and controlled by traffic regulations. That means, liberty allows freedom, but within certain limitations, within the law.

I do not have a license to do what I want in society or in my Christian life. **My freedom is my obligation; freedom is my bondage**.

The Bible affirms that we own nothing -- God has the title. We ***are not our own; we were created by God and we have been bought with a price***. According to 1 Peter 1:18f., "**We were NOT bought with perishable things like silver and gold, ... but with the precious blood of Christ - the lamb without blemish or spot.**"

Therefore, our FREEDOM in Christ is not a license to do as we please. **Freedom in Christ is our bondage**. And so, we must glorify God with our bodies.

One might ask, "can we be free and yet in bondage?" Yes! We are free. Remember the example of the **driver who is free to drive but must follow the traffic regulations**.

In today's Epistle, the problem in the Corinthian church, as with many Christians, is **moral laxity of the body**. In Corinth there was a pagan temple of Aphrodite in which prostitutes, male and female, could practice sexual immorality as an act of worship.

There are many places in the U.S. today where the Corinthian slogan, "***Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food***" (which bears sexual connotations) is embraced and practiced just as casually as in the Greek temple of Aphrodite.

Prior to salvation, believers may have engaged in committing such sins boldly. But one who is in Christ has changed. And must, therefore, change his or her practices. Having **been purchased with the precious blood of Christ, as the lamb without blemish**

**or without spot," we have been sanctified ... been justified ... been washed. We have found liberty in Christ which gives us no license to sin.**

In Romans 6:1, Scripture says, "**Shall we continue sinning so that grace may abound?**"

The answer is, **God forbid!! or by NO MEANS!!!**

Even as we consider ourselves free because of Christ's work at Calvary, we now have the **responsibility resting squarely on our shoulders to obey our MASTER and LORD.** Jesus explicitly says, he gave "**His life as a ransom for many.**" (Matthew 20:28)

**RANSOM implies that the REDEMPTIVE PRICE for sin has been paid in full.** Jesus **GAVE His own life** in exchange for our sin!! The price of this **RANSOM** cannot be estimated in monetary value. It is "**the precious blood of the lamb without blemish and without spot.**" Our resulting **LIBERTY**, our **FREEDOM**, should be our **BONDAGE ... and our commitment to Christ must show.**

So, friends, **FLEE, RUN, sprint** from the sin of sexual immorality.

Why? Because sexual immorality **affects the believers' body in ways that most other sins do not.** **Sexual immorality is a sin committed within one's body AND against one's body.**

***The body is not for fornication, it is for the Lord; and the Lord for the body!***

Concerning freedom, when scripture says all things are not **expedient** it means that:

- **not all things are helpful,**
- **not all things are beneficial,**
- **not all things are advantageous,**
- **not all things are profitable.**
- **Not ALL THINGS are useful, or good.**

The body is the instrument wherein God is glorified.

You may ask, **how is this body an instrument whereby God is glorified?**

Well, the body is **the temple of the Holy Ghost** who is in us, who we have of God. When we were bought, we became the abiding place of the Holy Spirit. The body became both God's temple and, in view of God's mercy, **our sacrifice.** **The apostle Paul calls upon us to offer our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God. This is our reasonable service.**

So, friends, "**Do not conform to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is good and acceptable and the perfect will of God.**" (Romans 12:1-2).

Glorify God in your body which is the temple of the holy Spirit.

Amen.