

Flee Fornication

by

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1 Cor. 6:18)

The Christians at Corinth faced great challenges in living holy lives.

The city was known for its immorality. The temple of Venus hosted 1000 priestesses dedicated to prostitution in the name of religion.

Some Christians had been quite immoral prior to their conversion. 1 Cor. 6:9-11, *“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”*

And so Paul warned them to “Flee fornication”. 1 Cor. 6:18, *“Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.”*

The admonition is needed just as much today. Fornication (sexual immorality) is rampant in our culture. Morality is being loosely defined (and redefined), causing many to engage in dangerous behavior.

Those who follow Christ must have a clear understanding of what is wrong. And so today people need to be warned, “Flee fornication!”

Because many are redefining morality today, we do well to first notice the Biblical definition of that conduct which we are to flee.

Definition of fornication.

General term.

The Greek word translated fornication (KJV), sexual immorality (NKJV) is *porneia*.

“Used generally to refer to any sexual sin” - The Complete WordStudy Dictionary.

Thus it includes any form of “illicit sexual activity: Adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, intercourse with animals, etc.” — Thayer.

Specific terms.

Adultery (moichao) - to have unlawful intercourse with another's spouse - Thayer

Homosexuality (arsenokoites) - one who lies with a male as with a female, sodomite, homosexual.

- 1 Cor. 6:9, *“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,”*
- 1 Tim. 1:10, *“For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine,”*

Bestiality - lie carnally with an animal. Lev. 18:23, *“Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion.”*

Lewdness (aselgia) - Lasciviousness, license, debauchery, sexual excess, absence of restraint, insatiable desire for pleasure, - Complete WordStudy Dictionary. Rom. 13:13, *“Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.”* This word would include oral sex, which many have sought to redefine as not sex, which has become a major problem among many youths (with terrifying consequences).

Fornication is a general term for sexual immorality. Adultery is fornication; but fornication is a broader term that encompasses other sexual sins, as well.

Prohibitions against fornication can be appreciated when we understand...

Devastation of fornication.

Destroys the body.

Various bacterial diseases are often brought on by fornication. Viral diseases brought on by fornication are incurable. Many people have learned the hard way, what Solomon warned his son. Prov. 5:11-12, *“And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof,”*

Destroys the home.

Marriages intended for life are broken, often beyond repair. Matt. 19:4-6, *“And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”*

Children are devastated, with emotional effects lasting into adulthood. Mal. 2:16, *“For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.”*

Potential for future marriages is lessened (who desires “damaged goods” due to diseases?).

Destroys the soul.

It will be hard to forgive oneself, there will be self-blame. Prov. 5:12-13, *“And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!”*

Your soul will be deprived of good friends, whose trust you violated. Prov. 6:30-35, *“Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house. But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away. For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance. He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.”*

If unrepented and unforgiven, there is no hope.

- 1 Cor. 6:9-10, *“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.”*
- Gal. 5:19-21, *“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such*

like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

- Heb. 13:4, “*Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*”

We see why Paul would write “*Flee fornication*”. It is not to be taken lightly! That we might succeed in fleeing fornication, here are some thoughts on the...

Deterrence of fornication.

Learn from Joseph.

He was successful in fleeing fornication with Potiphar’s wife. Gen. 39:7-12, “*And it came to pass after these things, that his master’s wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master’s wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.*”

Most importantly, he valued his relationship with God. Gen. 39:9, “*There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*”

So flee youthful lusts, pursuing godliness instead. 2 Tim. 2:22, “*Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*”

Learn from Solomon.

Who warned his son of the price of fornication.

- Prov. 5:1-6, “*My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding: That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down*

to death; her steps take hold on hell. Lest thou shouldst ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them.”

- Prov. 5:9-14, *“Lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel: Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth; and thy labours be in the house of a stranger; And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me! I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.”*
- Prov. 5:20-23, *“And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings. His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins. He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.”*

Who counseled his children to avoid the immoral person.

- Prov. 5:7-8, *“Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth. Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house.”*
- Prov. 7:24-27, *“Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.”*

Who encouraged his son to love the wife of his youth.

- Prov. 5:20, *“And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?”*
- Prov. 5:18, *“Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.”*
- Eccl. 9:9, *“Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.”*

Learn from David.

Who made a terrible mistake with Bathsheba. 2 Sam. 11:3-5, *“And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house. And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child.”*

Which led to the murder of Uriah, and the death of the child.

- 2 Sam 2:6-17, *“And now the LORD shew kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them. But Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul’s host, took Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim; And made him king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel. Ishbosheth Saul’s son was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David. And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months. And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met together by the pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool. And Abner said to Joab, Let the young men now arise, and play before us. And Joab said, Let them arise. Then there arose and went over by number twelve of Benjamin, which pertained to Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow’s side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called Helkathhazzurim, which is in Gibeon. And there was a very sore battle that day; and Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David.”*
- 2 Sam. 12:9-19, *“Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy*

wife. Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die. And Nathan departed unto his house. And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead."

But David confessed his sin, and repented.

- 2 Sam 12:13, "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die."
- Psalms 51:1-4, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest."

Conclusion.

To flee fornication and its devastating effects...

- We need to have the fortitude of Joseph, and apply the wisdom of Solomon.
- When necessary, we need the penitence of David.

Fornication is too serious to take lightly.

It can destroy your body, home, and soul. Forgiveness is possible, but physical consequences of sin often remain (diseases).

1 Cor. 6:11, *“And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”*

So flee fornication, and abstain from sexual immorality, which is God’s will for you. 1 Thess. 4:1-8, *“Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.”*

