



11/6th, 11/13th, 11/20th, 11/27th[Tday Service], 12/4th[Advent], 12/11th[WNW], 12/18th[VarietyShow], 12/25th, 1/1st

Welcome

Worship w/Prayer Board

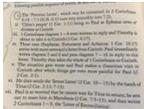
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Thank you, Pr. Robin!

Homework: Chapter 4 & 5 & 6 Cross References

Timeline:

We do not have access to the full story nor the full correspondence, so we study looking for clues and connections to fill in what is not said nor provided.



FIRST VISIT IS IN ACTS 18

Power Point: Slide #1

- i. The 'Previous Letter', which *may* be contained in 2 Corinthians 6:14 – 7:2 (N.B. 6:13 runs very smoothly into 7:2).
 - ii. 'Chloe's people' (1 Cor. 1:11_ bring Paul at Ephesus news of divisions at Corinth.
 - iii. 1 Corinthians chapters 1-4 were written in reply and Timothy is about to take it to Corinth (1 Cor. 4:17).
 - iv. Three men (Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus: 1 Cor. 16:17) arrive with more news and a letter from Corinth: Paul immediately writes chapters 5 and 6 and pens chapters 7-16 in reply to this letter. Timothy then takes the whole of 1 Corinthians to Corinth.
 - v. The situation gets worse and Paul makes a disastrous visit to Corinth after which things get even more painful for Paul (cf. 2 Cor. 2:1).
 - vi. He then sends the 'Severe Letter' (2 Cor. 10-13) by the hands of Titus (2 Cor. 2:13; 7:13).
 - vii. Paul is so worried that he cannot wait for Titus to return; he sets out to meet him in Macedonia (2 Cor. 7:5-13), and then writes 2 Corinthians 1-9, the 'Letter of Reconciliation'.
- (“Message of 1 Corinthians”, David Prior, pg. 18. The Bible Speaks Today, IVP 1985)

Begins to answer the letter that was written to him (Chloe):

Chpt 7 – Marriage

Chpt 8 – Idols (your freedom causing another to stumble)

Chpt 9 – Give Up your rights, run the race

Chpt 10 – ²³ You say, “I am allowed to do anything”^[d]—but not everything is good for you. You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is beneficial. ²⁴ Don't be concerned for your own good but for the good of others.

Chpt 11 – Public Worship/Lord's Supper

Chpt 12 – Spiritual Gifts

Chpt 13 – Love

Chpt 14 – Tongues, Prophecy, Worship

Chpt 15 – Resurrection of Christ, The Dead, The Body [Teach on Last Things?]

Chpt 16 – Final Greetings

1 Corinthians 6 [Tied in w/chpt5]. [READ Vs. 1-11 FOR FIRST PART]

Avoiding Lawsuits with Christians

6 When one of you has a dispute with another believer, how dare you file a lawsuit and ask a secular court to decide the matter instead of taking it to other believers! ² Don't you realize that someday we believers will judge the world? And since you are going to judge the world, can't you decide even these little things among yourselves? ³ Don't you realize that we will judge angels? **So you should surely be able to resolve ordinary disputes in this life.** ⁴ If you have legal disputes about such matters, why go to outside judges who are not respected by the church? ⁵ I am saying this to shame you. Isn't there anyone in all the church who is wise enough to decide these issues? ⁶ But instead, one believer^[b] sues another—right in front of unbelievers!

⁷ Even to have such lawsuits with one another is a defeat for you. Why not just accept the injustice and leave it at that? Why not let yourselves be cheated?⁸ Instead, you yourselves are the ones who do wrong and cheat even your fellow believers.

⁹ Don't you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God. ¹¹ Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Avoiding Sexual Sin

¹² You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is good for you. And even though "I am allowed to do anything," I must not become a slave to anything.¹³ You say, "Food was made for the stomach, and the stomach for food." (This is true, though someday God will do away with both of them.) But you can't say that our bodies were made for sexual immorality. **They were made for the Lord, and the Lord cares about our bodies.** ¹⁴ And God will raise us from the dead by his power, just as he raised our Lord from the dead.

¹⁵ Don't you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ? Should a man take his body, which is part of Christ, and join it to a prostitute?

Never! ¹⁶ And don't you realize that if a man joins himself to a prostitute, he becomes one body with her? For the Scriptures say, "The two are united into one."^[d] ¹⁷ But the person who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.

¹⁸ **Run from sexual sin!** No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. ¹⁹ **Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, ²⁰ for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.**

Lawsuits Against Believers

6 When one of you has a grievance against another, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous ^(A) instead of the saints? ² Or do you not know that ^(B) the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? ³ Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life! ⁴ So if you have such cases, ^(C) why do you lay them before those who have no standing in the church? ⁵ ^(D) I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers, ⁶ but brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers? ⁷ To have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. ^(E) Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded? ⁸ But you yourselves wrong and defraud—even ^(F) your own brothers!^[a]

⁹ Or do you not know that the unrighteous^[b] will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: ^(G) neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,^[c] ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ **And ^(H) such were some of you. But ^(I) you were washed, ^(J) you were sanctified, ^(K) you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**

Flee Sexual Immorality

¹² ^(L) "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be dominated by anything. ¹³ ^(M) "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"—and God will destroy both one ^(N) and the

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other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but ^(O)for the Lord, and ^(P)the Lord for the body. ¹⁴ And ^(Q)God raised the Lord and ^(R)will also raise us up ^(S)by his power. ¹⁵ Do you not know that ^(T)your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶ Or do you not know that he who is joined^[d] to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, ^(U)“The two will become one flesh.” ¹⁷ But he who is joined to the Lord ^(V)becomes one spirit with him. ¹⁸ ^(W)Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin^[e] a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person ^(X)sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or ^(Y)do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? ^(Z)You are not your own, ²⁰ ^(AA)for you were bought with a price. ^(AB)So glorify God in your body.

Footnotes:

- a. 1 Corinthians 6:8 Or *brothers and sisters*
- b. 1 Corinthians 6:9 Or *wrongdoers*
- c. 1 Corinthians 6:9 The two Greek terms translated by this phrase refer to the passive and active partners in consensual homosexual acts
- d. 1 Corinthians 6:16 Or *who holds fast* (compare Genesis 2:24 and Deuteronomy 10:20); also verse 17
- e. 1 Corinthians 6:18 Or *Every sin*

Cross references:

- A. 1 Corinthians 6:1 : [Matt. 18:17]
- B. 1 Corinthians 6:2 : Dan. 7:22; [Matt. 19:28; Rev. 20:4]
- C. 1 Corinthians 6:4 : [ch. 5:12]
- D. 1 Corinthians 6:5 : ch. 15:34; [ch. 4:14]
- E. 1 Corinthians 6:7 : [Matt. 5:39, 40]
- F. 1 Corinthians 6:8 : 1 Thess. 4:6
- G. 1 Corinthians 6:9 : ch. 15:50; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:9; Heb. 12:14; 13:4; Rev. 21:8; 22:15
- H. 1 Corinthians 6:11 : ch. 12:2; Eph. 2:2, 3; 4:22; 5:8; Col. 3:7; Titus 3:3
- I. 1 Corinthians 6:11 : Acts 22:16; Heb. 10:22; [Titus 3:5]
- J. 1 Corinthians 6:11 : See ch. 1:2
- K. 1 Corinthians 6:11 : Rom. 8:30
- L. 1 Corinthians 6:12 : ch. 10:23
- M. 1 Corinthians 6:13 : [Matt. 15:17]
- N. 1 Corinthians 6:13 : Col. 2:22
- O. 1 Corinthians 6:13 : ver. 15, 19
- P. 1 Corinthians 6:13 : [Eph. 5:23]
- Q. 1 Corinthians 6:14 : See Acts 2:24
- R. 1 Corinthians 6:14 : ch. 15:22, 23; [John 6:39, 40]
- S. 1 Corinthians 6:14 : Matt. 22:29; [Eph. 1:19, 20]
- T. 1 Corinthians 6:15 : ver. 13; Eph. 5:30; [ch. 12:27; Rom. 12:5]
- U. 1 Corinthians 6:16 : Matt. 19:5; Mark 10:8; Eph. 5:31; Cited from Gen. 2:24
- V. 1 Corinthians 6:17 : Eph. 4:4; [John 17:21-23]
- W. 1 Corinthians 6:18 : 2 Cor. 12:21; Eph. 5:3
- X. 1 Corinthians 6:18 : [Prov. 5:11]
- Y. 1 Corinthians 6:19 : [John 2:21]; See ch. 3:16
- Z. 1 Corinthians 6:19 : See Rom. 14:7
- AA. 1 Corinthians 6:20 : ch. 7:23; [Acts 20:28; Heb. 9:12, 14]; See 2 Pet. 2:1
- BB. 1 Corinthians 6:20 : [Phil. 1:20]

In order for Paul to comment on this litigious practice, it had to be a norm. Random acts of suing would have not gotten Paul’s ire up. **Was there a case regarding the incest from chpt 5?**

Demanding my rights and, then, passing judgments with ME as the Judge.

Vs 1-6

What are my rights in Jesus name?

The Corinthians rights ‘had virtually taken over from their redemption as the mainspring of their life together’. Don’t infringe on my rights! Do not inhibit my freedom! {is this a by produce of past slavery?}. We have been emancipated. [We’ve been emancipated and we can now DO ANYTHING WE WANT.]



RIGHTS VS. RESPONSIBILITIES

THEY WERE CHOOSING NOT TO UNDERSTAND LIVING AS THE BODY OF CHRIST HERE ON EARTH



1. We do not have a body, we are a body. Individually and Corporately.
2. WE DO NOT HOLD THE AUTHORITY NOR POWER TO DISMEMBER HIS BODY.
 What are signs we are trying to do that dismember thing?

- Once again, the Corinthian Church has handed away their power in Jesus Christ!
- Weren't they trying to walk in their new found power and freedom? NO.
- They just found new stuff to replace/justify their old behaviors. They were really struggling with being "born anew".

Stomach shows hunger so I eat.

Libido shows desire so I

- That was their argument: Body is separate from spirit so what I do with my body is my choice.
 In reality: BODY CONTROLS THEIR BEHAVIOR not their decisions [addiction]. Gnosticism.

1. I AM GOING TO PROVE YOU ARE WRONG AND I AM RIGHT - TANTRUM
 (Flaunting Failures (1).)

How dare you!?!?!?

- a) Greeks were lovers of law. Court was a pastime. Calling their society(civilization, culture) litigious was a compliment.

Their understanding of how the courts worked and how they could navigate that system (using their power and their ability to control) instead of trusting Christ and biblical principles that were untried.

Galatians 4:8-9

⁸ Formerly, when you ^(L)did not know God, you ^(K)were enslaved to those that by nature ^(L)are not gods. ⁹ But now that you have come to know God, or rather ^(M)to be known by God, ^(N)how can you turn back again to ^(O)the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?

- b) One example: The mindset is one of GREED

1 Cor 6:10

¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the **greedy**, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

6:10 covetous, pleonektes (pleh-on-ek-tace); Strong's #4123: Literally "to have more." This word regresses from good to bad. *Pleon* is the basic word for more in quantity, quality, and number. *Pleonazo* means to do more, make more, or increase. *Pleonekteo* means to overreach. *Pleonexia* is avarice. ***Pleonektes means a greedy covetousness so eager for gain that it will defraud others.*** A person consumed with *pleonektes* will violate laws for unlawful gain. He will cunningly forge ahead at others' expense. Eph. 5:3 tells us covetousness is idolatry. Idolatry is an aggravated form of self-love motivated by ego-drive. (Compare "pleonasm" or "pleonastic.")

2. IGNORING THEIR SPIRITUAL POWER TO THEIR OWN PERIL (2-8) – WILLFUL IGNORANCE
 (Forgetting their destiny (2-4) you will be resurrected to share with Christ.)

A sense of indignancy from Paul.

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² Don't you realize that someday we believers will judge the world? And since you are going to judge the world, can't you decide even these little things among yourselves? ³ Don't you realize that we will judge angels? **So you should surely be able to resolve ordinary disputes in this life.** ⁴ If you have legal disputes about such matters, why go to outside judges who are not respected by the church? ⁵ I am saying this to shame you. **Isn't there anyone in all the church who is wise enough to decide these issues?**[MOCKING] ⁶ But instead, one believer^(b) sues another—right in front of unbelievers. ⁷ Even to have such lawsuits with one another is a defeat for you. Why not just accept the injustice and leave it at that? Why not let yourselves be cheated?⁸ Instead, you yourselves are the ones who do wrong and cheat even your fellow believers.

Isaiah 5:21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!

Galatians 6:3 For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

- Accepting the standards of the world w/o much thought as to what has been given to them through Jesus Christ. Not believing their physical actions affect their spiritual life.
- We love the power behind control w/o realizing we are bypassing the omnipotent, eternal power of Christ. i.e. Resurrection (His and ours)

3. WHOSE ARE YOU? (Do not betray your calling) (Bypassing their resources (5-6))

A.) Do you not know you are MINE and now family?

⁹ Don't you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality,¹⁰ or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God. ¹¹ **Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**

- **You are Jesus Christ's HEIRS**

1 Cor 6:11 And ^(h)such **were** some of you. But ^(l)you were washed, ^(o)you were sanctified, ^(k)you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

SALVATION EQUATION: In this verse, Paul uses three terms to describe the conversion of the Corinthians. The tense of all three verbs indicates **an action in the past that is complete.**

Washed means spiritually cleansed by God.

Sanctified means set apart as God's people.

Justified means declared righteous by God because of Christ's work on the Cross.

[WE MAKE THE MISTAKE OF THINING OUR WINNING ARGUMENTS, MENTAL TRIUMPH, JUSTIFIES US.

WE SPEND OUR LIFE FIGHTING IN THE WRONG COURT OF APPROVAL]

Galatians 4:1-7

Sons and Heirs

¹ I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave,^(a) though he is the owner of everything, ² but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. ³ In the same way we also, when we were children, ^(A)were enslaved to the elementary principles^(b) of the world. ⁴ But ^(B)when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, ^(C)born ^(D)of woman, born ^(E)under the law, ⁵ ^(E)to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive ^(G)adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent ^(H)the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷ **So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then ^(I)an heir through God.**

Galatians 3:29 (ESV)

²⁹ And ^(A)if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, ^(B)heirs according to promise.

B.) Do you not know Sin's Power is Broken?

Romans 6:1-18 NLT

Sin's Power Is Broken

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6 Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? **2** Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it? **3** Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? **4** For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.

5 Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was. **6** **We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin.** **7** For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. **8** And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. **9** We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him. **10** When he died, he died once to break the power of sin. But now that he lives, he lives for the glory of God. **11** So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus.

12 Do not let sin control the way you live;^[a] do not give in to sinful desires. **13** Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God.¹⁴ Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace.

15 Well then, since God's grace has set us free from the law, does that mean we can go on sinning? Of course not! **16** Don't you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living. **17** Thank God! Once you were slaves of sin, but now you wholeheartedly obey this teaching we have given you. **18** Now you are free from your slavery to sin, and you have become slaves to righteous living.

Ok. Now HOW do we live it? **How does one 'rebirth' their thoughts/mind?**

Realize your present. (Thoughts change first, then actions. Don't pretend actions mean nothing.)

1 Cor. 6:12-20

Avoiding Sexual Sin

12 You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is good for you. And even though "I am allowed to do anything," I must not become a slave to anything.¹³ You say, "Food was made for the stomach, and the stomach for food." (This is true, though someday God will do away with both of them.) But you can't say that our bodies were made for sexual immorality. **They were made for the Lord**, and the Lord cares about our bodies. **14** And God will raise us from the dead by his power, just as he raised our Lord from the dead. **15** **Don't you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ? Should a man take his body, which is part of Christ, and join it to a prostitute? Never!** **16** And don't you realize that if a man joins himself to a prostitute, he becomes one body with her? For the Scriptures say, "The two are united into one."^[d] **17** But the person who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him. **18** **Run from sexual sin!** No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. **19** **Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself,** **20** for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.

C.) Do you not know THAT YOU ARE EITHER 'DOMINATED' BY CHRIST OR SOMETHING ELSE.

The question becomes WHAT are we dominated by? (mastered, become subject to, slave)

1 Cor 6:12

"All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be **dominated** by anything.

1 Cor 4:10 *We are fools for Christ's sake... Whose fool are you?*

1 Cor 6:18-20

18 ^(w)Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin^[e] a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person ^(x)sins against his own body. **19** Or ^(y)do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? ^(z)You are not your own, **20** ^(AA)for you were bought with a price. ^(AB)So glorify God in your body.

S/G

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WHAT ARE SIGNS OF DOMINATION?

How does one FLEE what is immoral?

Domination:

1. Where you spend your time. **Time = Domination**

What fills your thought life?

What fills your activity?

Sleep. Eating. People. Social Media. God's Word. Praying. Serving.

2. Calling out what is a lie. (Need to learn what is TRUTH first. Learn = Time)

Flee: If my body is meant for the LORD, what does that mean my body does?

1. Do not remain ignorant. If it is not good for you, it is not good for you.

2. Don't do it. Do something else, which requires learning/doing new things.

3. Find a friend. Good hang.

4. Get help/Support. Small group learning and support is a must.

5. You were bought with a price. Learn/Live to UNDERSTAND this.

4. Understand YOUR FUTURE: (It gives direction to our present)

a.) Your physical body will be resurrected to do THINGS.

Daniel 7; Revelation 20:4-6

b.) What we do WITH our bodies is an act of WORSHIP.

LIVE pure (FTND). <https://fightthenewdrug.org>

Eternity:

Daniel 7:9-27 (NLT)

⁹ I watched as thrones were put in place and the Ancient One^[a] sat down to judge.

His clothing was as white as snow, his hair like purest wool.

He sat on a fiery throne, with wheels of blazing fire,

¹⁰ and a river of fire was pouring out, flowing from his presence.

Millions of angels ministered to him; many millions stood to attend him.

Then the court began its session, and the books were opened.

¹¹ I continued to watch because I could hear the little horn's boastful speech. I kept watching until the fourth beast was killed and its body was destroyed by fire.¹² The other three beasts had their authority taken from them, but they were allowed to live a while longer.^[a]

¹³ As my vision continued that night, I saw someone like a son of man^[a] coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient One and was led into his presence. ¹⁴ He was given authority, honor, and sovereignty over all the nations of the world, so that people of every race and nation and language would obey him. His rule is eternal—it will never end. His kingdom will never be destroyed.

The Vision Is Explained

¹⁵ I, Daniel, was troubled by all I had seen, and my visions terrified me. ¹⁶ So I approached one of those standing beside the throne and asked him what it all meant. He explained it to me like this: ¹⁷ "These four huge beasts represent four kingdoms that will arise from the earth. ¹⁸ But in the end, the holy people of the Most High will be given the kingdom, and they will rule forever and ever."

¹⁹ Then I wanted to know the true meaning of the fourth beast, the one so different from the others and so terrifying. It had devoured and crushed its victims with iron teeth and bronze claws, trampling their remains beneath its feet. ²⁰ I also asked about the ten horns on the fourth beast's head and the little horn that came up afterward and destroyed three of the other horns. This horn had seemed greater than the others, and it had human eyes and a mouth that was boasting arrogantly. ²¹ As I watched, this horn was waging war against God's holy people and was defeating them, ²² until the Ancient One—the Most High—came and judged in favor of his holy people. Then the time arrived for the holy people to take over the kingdom.

²³ Then he said to me, "This fourth beast is the fourth world power that will rule the earth. It will be different from all the others. It will devour the whole world, trampling and crushing everything in its path. ²⁴ Its ten horns are ten kings who will rule that empire. Then another king will arise, different from the other ten, who will subdue three of them. ²⁵ He will defy the Most High and oppress the holy people of the Most High. He will try to change their sacred festivals and laws, and they will be placed under his control for a time, times, and half a time.

²⁶ "But then the court will pass judgment, and all his power will be taken away and completely destroyed. ²⁷ **Then the sovereignty, power, and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be given to the holy people of the Most High. His kingdom will last forever, and all rulers will serve and obey him.**"

Revelation 20:4-6 (NLT)

⁴ Then I saw thrones, and the people sitting on them had been given the authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony about Jesus and for proclaiming the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his statue, nor accepted his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They all came to life again, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

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⁵This is the first resurrection. (The rest of the dead did not come back to life until the thousand years had ended.) ⁶Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. For them the second death holds no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him a thousand years.

Hebrews 12:1-3 (ESV)

Jesus, Founder and Perfecter of Our Faith

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and ^(A)sin which clings so closely, and ^(B)let us run ^(C)with endurance the race that is ^(D)set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, ^(E)who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising ^(F)the shame, and ^(G)is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Do Not Grow Weary

³ ^(H)Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or ^(I)fainthearted.

Body is a Temple =

“temple”

(Gk. *naos*) (3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21; Rev. 21:22) Strong's #3485: This Greek word for *temple* refers more to the building itself than *hieron*, which was used to indicate the entire temple complex. Paul told the believers that each one of their bodies was a *naos*, a sanctuary for God (6:19). Paul also said that the church, as Christ's body, is a spiritual *temple* for God (3:16, 17; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21). What a special privilege it is to be God's spiritual dwelling place, both individually and corporately. The glory of God filled the tabernacle (Ex. 40:34) and the temple (1 Kin. 8:10, 11). Now the glory of God in the person of the Holy Spirit dwells within every believer (John 14:16, 17) and thus inhabits the entire church. In the New Jerusalem, there will be no need for a physical temple because God and the Lamb will be the eternal temple (Rev. 21:22).

- FTND Card in Paula's car
- Disconnect w/porn as bad (reaction at mtg).

x

NOTES:

6:1–11 In these verses, Paul instructs the Corinthians to stop taking their personal disputes into the pagan courts. The Corinthians had been carrying their conflicts to the Roman courts and thus were making a mockery of Christianity by feuding in public. Their inability to settle personal disputes illustrated the sharp divisions in the church (1:10–17). Paul wanted to bring home several important ideas to these Corinthians: Public litigation is a disgrace to a Christian congregation (v. 1). Personal disputes should be settled within the church (vv. 2–6). The presence of contentions indicates spiritual defeat (vv. 7, 8). All unrighteousness, such as the disputes, should have been vanquished when the Corinthians became believers (vv. 9–11).

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6:2 do you not know: Paul **uses this phrase six times** in this chapter (vv. 3, 9, 15, 16, 19) to introduce truths that the Corinthians should have known. **This phrase must have deflated the pride of a church infatuated by its own knowledge and wisdom.**

6:3 Believers will participate in judging fallen **angels** (Rev. 19:19, 20; 20:10). Paul suggested that if the Corinthians were going to be judging with Christ in His future kingdom (Matt. 19:28), then surely they had the means to settle their own personal differences.

6:4–6 Those who are least esteemed refers to judges in civil courts. The Corinthians, though they had the ability to judge the issues themselves, took their disputes to pagan court for the judges there to decide.

6:7, 8 cheated ... cheat: In all of their bickering, the Corinthians made frivolous and even dishonest charges against one another. Paul suggested that it was better to be *cheated* by one of these dishonest people than to dishonor one's Christian witness before pagans.

6:9, 10 The kingdom of God here seems to refer to a future time when God will rule the earth in righteousness (Matt. 6:10; Luke 11:2). **do not be deceived:** Tragically, Christians sometimes deceive themselves into thinking that God does not require them to live righteously. Paul emphasizes that the kinds of people listed in these verses will not **inherit** or possess the kingdom of God.

6:11 In this verse, Paul uses three terms to describe the conversion of the Corinthians. The tense of all three verbs indicates an action in the past that is complete. **Washed** means spiritually cleansed by God. **Sanctified** means set apart as God's people. **Justified** means declared righteous by God because of Christ's work on the Cross.

6:12–20 Paul moves from his discussion of the relationship of the Corinthians to the law courts to personal integrity in body and spirit. ~~Paul tackled the issue of Christian liberty by addressing three Corinthian slogans that reflected their attitudes toward sexual sins (vv. 12, 13, 18).~~ In the process he presented a greatly elevated concept of the human body as created by God the Father, redeemed at great price and service to Christ the Son, and made the temple of God by the indwelling Spirit. Thus, the triune God is involved in what we do with our bodies. We call the room where the church meets the "sanctuary." Actually, *we* are God's sanctuary—His temple. What a difference it would make if we lived with that realization. Our bodies are not garbage dumps. They are temples!

Freedom from the Tyranny of Things

As Christians we live under grace, not law. We enjoy a certain freedom of choice and commitment. But Paul reminds us that our choices and commitments, while freely made, do not always bring freedom (1 Cor. 6:12). Often they overpower us: we no longer possess our possessions—they possess us! We can be consumed by our jobs, our wealth, our houses, our hobbies, even our churches.

Are there any ways to manage this problem? Here are a few suggestions:

- (1) Determine your limits. What can you actually handle? What is realistic?
- (2) Let time go by before making decisions and commitments. Sooner or later you need to decide, but very few choices are better made sooner than later.
- (3) Pay attention to agreement or disagreement with your spouse and/or a close friend or associate. There is wisdom in mutual decision making.
- (4) To manage the commitment you are taking on, what are we willing to give up? Taking on new responsibilities means trading one set of problems for another. Are we prepared for that?
- (5) Commit to giving away as well as taking on. That declares your freedom from the tyranny of things and responsibilities.

6:12 All things are lawful for me was a slogan the Corinthians had coined to justify their immoral behavior. Paul reminded the Corinthians that freedom from the ceremonial laws of Moses did not give them license to sin or indulge their own selfishness. This would only enslave them in the sin from which Jesus had freed them. **under the power of any:** The only power that should control us is the Holy Spirit. Sin should never dominate our lives because the Spirit empowers us to fight temptation.

6:13, 14 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods was another phrase the Corinthians used to justify their sinful lifestyles (v. 12). Food was gratifying and essential for life. When the Corinthians became hungry, they ate. Following the same logic, whenever the Corinthians craved sex, they indulged themselves. In their opinion any physical activity should not affect one's spiritual life, just as digesting food did not affect one's spirituality. The Corinthians' reasoning had two faults: (1) The stomach and the digestive process are in a sense no more than earthly and without function in eternity. But the body, through the resurrection power of Christ, is eternal. It has been sanctified by God to bring Him glory (v. 20). (2) While the stomach's purpose is to digest food, it is not the purpose

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of the body to commit immorality. Furthermore, by design God put restrictions on both eating and sexual activity. Eating to the point of gluttony and having wanton sex outside of marriage violate God's intent and are therefore sinful.

6:15-17 Believers' lives are greatly altered when they are joined to Christ. The union affects both the believer and Christ. When a believer commits immorality, he or she is dragging the union with Christ into the illicit relationship. By quoting Gen. 2:24, that **the two ... shall become one flesh**, Paul illustrates the seriousness of sexual sin.

“temple”

(Gk. *naos*) (3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21; Rev. 21:22) Strong's #3485: This Greek word for *temple* refers more to the building itself than *hieron*, which was used to indicate the entire temple complex. Paul told the believers that each one of their bodies was a *naos*, a sanctuary for God (6:19). Paul also said that the church, as Christ's body, is a spiritual *temple* for God (3:16, 17; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21). What a special privilege it is to be God's spiritual dwelling place, both individually and corporately. The glory of God filled the tabernacle (Ex. 40:34) and the temple (1 Kin. 8:10, 11). Now the glory of God in the person of the Holy Spirit dwells within every believer (John 14:16, 17) and thus inhabits the entire church. In the New Jerusalem, there will be no need for a physical temple because God and the Lamb will be the eternal temple (Rev. 21:22).

6:18 Every sin that a man does is outside the body was another slogan used by the Corinthians to justify their immorality (vv. 12, 13). Paul pointed out that the opposite is true: sexual sin is done **against** the body, not outside of it. Paul exhorted the Corinthians to **flee** any temptation to indulge in sexual sin (Gen. 39:1-12).

6:19 The **temple** (3:16, 17) was the congregation of believers. The temple was recognized as the sacred dwelling place of God. The Shekinah glory of Yahweh filled the tabernacle (Ex. 40:34) and the temple (1 Kin. 8:10, 11). Now, the glory of God in the person of the Holy Spirit dwells within every believer (John 14:16, 17) and thus inhabits the entire church. The OT priests took great pains to maintain a pure sanctuary for God's presence. Every Christian ought also to care diligently for his body, the temple of the Holy Spirit, in order to honor God and the church.

6:20 **Bought at a price** alludes to someone purchasing a slave at a slave auction. With His death Jesus Christ paid the cost to redeem us from our slavery to sin (Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19). While it is true that this is applicable to all people, even those who deny the Lord (2 Pet. 2:1), it has a very unique and special significance for the believer (compare 1 Pet. 2:9; 1 Tim. 4:10). Paul concludes with the imperative **therefore, glorify God in your body**. In other words, use your bodies in order that other people may see that you belong to God.¹

6:1-8 **Two members of the church in Corinth** had taken a grievance before the civil magistrates at the judgment seat (Gk. *bema*), publicly located in the midst of the city marketplace. Paul was appalled that Spirit-filled believers should submit their disagreements to the judgment of non-believers, who were totally lacking in spiritual insight (vv. 5, 6). Pagan courts were not the proper arena for the administration of justice between Christians. The ethics of Christian behavior demanded that either the dispute be resolved within the church (v. 4), or that the wronged party choose the more excellent way and endure the injustice without seeking redress (vv. 7, 8).

6:9 **Sodomites** is a reference to men who engage in sexual acts with other men (see Lev. 18, Homosexuality).

FORNICATION: A SIN AGAINST THE BODY

Those who will inherit the kingdom of God are not merely those who are “saved from sin” but those who actively pursue and manifest a righteous, changed, sanctified life. They are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus. Those who continue in a lifestyle of fornication, theft, idolatry, adultery, or drunkenness cannot “inherit” or experience the blessings of the kingdom of God on this earth. Fornication (Gk. *porneia*) may include being unfaithful to the vows of marriage (Judg. 19:2; 1 Cor. 7:2; 1 Thess. 4:3), but the term covers any sinful sexual activity, whatever a person's marital status happens to be. Thus, it can describe harlotry and prostitution (Rev. 2:14, 20) and various other forms of unchastity (John 8:41; Acts 15:20; 1 Cor. 5:1).

Paul made special mention of sins related to the body. He clearly stated that the body of the believer belongs to the Lord (1 Cor. 6:19). It is His temple (1 Cor. 3:16). A believing woman is to use both her body and spirit to bring glory and praise to God (1 Cor. 6:20).

Fornication—engaging in sexual activity with a person outside the commitment of marriage—is a sin against your own body. Physically, this sin can reap diseases from which those who keep themselves sexually pure are protected. This sin also can reap emotional distress that those who practice purity do not experience. Spiritually, those who habitually practice this sin will miss the fullness of His blessings.

¹ Radmacher, E. D., Allen, R. B., & House, H. W. (1999). *Nelson's new illustrated Bible commentary* (pp. 1467-1469). Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers.

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See also Rom. 3:23, note; Gal. 5:19–21; Eph. 5:5; notes on Purity (1 John 3); Sexuality (Song 4); Sexual Immorality (Prov. 6); Sexual Purity (1 Cor. 7)

6:12 All things are lawful for me was the theological slogan the Corinthians had adopted to justify their behavior. Paul affirmed his own doctrine of Christian liberty. But the Corinthians needed to understand that the “lawfulness” of any given behavior was qualified by its “helpfulness.” Freedom to act as one pleases is not really freedom at all. It is the most insidious form of bondage. Paul provided guidelines for decision making (see 1 Cor. 8, Decision Making).

6:18, 19 Some within the Christian community had continued to visit prostitutes, arguing that they were unaffected by behavior that merely involved the body. Paul sternly pointed out that what Christians intimately do with their bodies affects the spiritual state of their souls. This is particularly the case with sexual sin. The “one flesh” union of marital sex reflects realities about God. Sexual activity outside of this context violates the image that He has stamped into our psyches and even into our bodies as male and female.

SEXUAL PURITY: PASSION HELD BY PRINCIPLE

The love life of a Christian is a crucial battleground. Each Christian woman must consider the authority of Christ over human passions, then set her heart on purity. Chastity means abstention from sexual activity outside of marriage and is a Christian obligation. For the Christian there is one rule and one rule only: total abstention from sexual activity prior to marriage and total faithfulness within marriage (1 Cor. 7:1–9).

Christians are to prize the sanctity of sex. This means learning the disciplines of longing, loneliness, uncertainty, hope, trust, and unconditional commitment to Christ—a commitment requiring that regardless of what passion we may feel, we must be pure.

Chastity presupposes not taking lightly any act or thought that is not appropriate to the kind of commitment you have to God. To equate any and every personal sexual desire as natural, healthy, and God-given is a powerful lie. God does not give desires that cannot be fulfilled according to His standards of holiness, wholeness, and purity. Sexual purity is one of the foremost means of safeguarding a marriage from that which pollutes, corrupts, infects, or destroys—physically, emotionally, or spiritually.

Purity means freedom from contamination, from anything that would spoil the taste or the pleasure, reduce the power, or in any way adulterate what a thing is meant to be. Within marriage, sexual union is natural, healthy, and pleasurable not only for the moment—but for all of life together. Sexual intimacy is natural, in the sense in which the original Designer created it to be. When virginity and purity are no longer protected and prized, there is dullness, monotony, and sheer boredom. By trying to grab fulfillment everywhere, you find it nowhere.

Purity before marriage consists of giving ourselves to and for each other in obedience to God. Passion must be held by principle. The principle is love—not merely erotic, sentimental, or sexual feeling. There is no other way to control passion and no other route to purity and joy. If you choose to avoid the sin of sexual immorality, that is God’s ideal; but if you have already given away your virginity, the message of the gospel proclaims New Birth, a new beginning, and a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17).

See also 1 Cor. 6:13–18; 1 Thess. 4:3–6; notes on Dating (1 Tim. 4); Marriage (Gen. 2; 2 Sam. 6; Prov. 5; Hos. 2; Amos 3; 2 Cor. 13; Heb. 12); Sexual Immorality (Prov. 6); Sexuality (Song 4)

2

6:1 The Corinthian Christians were suing each other in pagan courts, with the underlying motive of greed (v. 8). Paul denounces their shame of taking cases to heathen judges instead of settling disputes themselves (vv. 1-6), and exposes their lovelessness and unrighteousness in harboring grievances (vv. 7-11).

6:2 If Christians are destined to be future coadministrators of justice in the coming world (see Matt. 19:28; Rev. 20:4), they should be able to judge more petty matters now.

6:5 Paul uses irony. The Corinthians prided themselves on their wisdom, yet not a single person among them was wise enough to settle their disputes.

6:6 They were acting improperly in seeking justice at the hands of the unjust and putting their trust in those who have no faith.

² Thomas Nelson, I. (1995). *The Woman’s Study Bible* (1 Co 6:1–18). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

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6:7 Every believer should be free of a covetous adversary attitude even to the point of being personally cheated. A moral loss is greater than any material gain.

KINGDOM DYNAMICS

6:9 Integrity and Morality, CHARACTER AND THE KINGDOM. The privilege of becoming an authorized and empowered representative of God’s kingdom and of ministering Christ’s life and the Holy Spirit’s gifts to others is not the heritage of the unholy. Twice the text says certain people will not “inherit the kingdom of God,” and then designates broad categories of people who are excluded from enjoying the resources and rewards of righteousness. (See also Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:5.)

Although our righteousness before God is through Christ’s work alone, and while it remains timelessly true that we cannot earn any spiritual gift or right to function in the power of the Holy Spirit, integrity and morality of character are nonetheless essential to the “kingdom person.” Holiness of heart and life keeps the lines of communication with God unjumbled, by keeping any private or carnal agenda out of the way. They also insure the Holy Spirit free access for distributing His gifts and fulfilling the Father’s will in any situation.

6:9 The OT taught again and again that **the kingdom of God** is a righteous kingdom (see Ps. 45:6, 7), and Jesus affirmed it (see Matt. 6:33). Paul declares, therefore, that **the unrighteous**, of whom he proceeds to give examples, **will not inherit the kingdom of God**, thinking of its future consummation. Paul’s point is to warn the Corinthian believers (who were apparently deceived into thinking that life-style is relative for believers) that if they willfully and unrepentantly persist in the evils of the wicked, they face the same final danger as the wicked. As his point is to arrest their attention and stop their deception, he does not address the question as to when such practiced behavior causes saints to cross the line to being “disinherited” in God’s sight, nor does he draw conclusions regarding the issue of Christians yet caught in the struggle of these sinful habits but who sincerely desire freedom (see Rom. 7:7-25).

WORD WEALTH

6:10 covetous, *pleonektes* (pleh-on-ek-tace); Strong’s #4123: Literally “to have more.” This word regresses from good to bad. *Pleon* is the basic word for more in quantity, quality, and number. *Pleonazo* means to do more, make more, or increase. *Pleonekteo* means to overreach. *Pleonexia* is avarice. ***Pleonektes* means a greedy covetousness so eager for gain that it will defraud others.** A person consumed with *pleonektes* will violate laws for unlawful gain. He will cunningly forge ahead at others’ expense. Eph. 5:3 tells us covetousness is idolatry. Idolatry is an aggravated form of self-love motivated by ego-drive. (Compare “pleonasm” or “pleonastic.”)

6:11 Evildoers such as those mentioned by Paul can be fully cleansed from sin (**washed**), set apart for God (**sanctified**), and totally accepted in His holy sight (**justified**), because **some** of the Corinthian Christians had known such life-styles in their past. **But** their conversion was **in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God**. The saving work of Christ is the ground on which and the Holy Spirit is the agent through whom salvation is accomplished. He ends on a positive note, calling them to live according to who they are.

6:12 For first-century Greeks the body was of secondary importance; what really mattered was the soul.

With a libertine philosophy of sex, and surrounded by temple prostitutes, the subject of fornication was bound to arise. Paul had taught the truth of Christian liberty, particularly concerning the observance of certain days and the eating of certain foods. However, lest the Corinthians falsely misapply this fundamental freedom to include illicit sex (as the case in ch. 5 indicated), Paul presses this point. That society argued, as the stomach is designed for food, the genitals are created for sexual experience; and as when one is hungry one eats, so when one is sexually aroused, one gratifies sexual passion. Thus this emphasis was greatly needed. If any were inclined to satisfy sexual desire just as readily as they might satisfy the appetite for food, Paul corrects such a dangerous misconception. He shows how the analogy is false, because **your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit**, and therefore belongs to Christ. Immoral conduct demeans the price paid to redeem sinners, and diminishes the glory believers are to bring to Him who loved so purely and powerfully.

6:12 Things that are morally indifferent and not specifically forbidden by God’s law may not be advantageous to the one practicing them or to others. On the contrary, they may lead to evil habit.

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6:13 Because of the God-ordained purposes of the body, the digestive and the sexual functions of the body are not in the same category. Eating food is a secondary and temporal arrangement, but sexuality reaches into the eternal and metaphysical depths of one’s being.

6:14 Because of God’s resurrection designs for the body, an essential identity exists between the present physical body and the future glorified body.

6:15 Sexual intercourse is more than a biological experience; it involves a communion of life. Since Jesus is one with the believer’s spirit, it is unthinkable to involve Him in immorality.

6:18 Sexuality is a uniquely profound aspect of the personality, involving one’s whole being. Sexual immorality has far-reaching effects, with great spiritual significance and social complications.

6:19 Such immorality is not only a sin against the body; it is a sin against **the Holy Spirit**, who dwells in the body.

6:20 Because believers have been purchased by the blood of Christ, they should honor Him to whom they belong.³

ESSAY 2

Sex

Men and Women in the Human Family

1 CORINTHIANS 4:17–7:40

אֲנִי מְסַבֵּר לָכֵן אֵלַיְכֶם

בְּעִנְיַן הַבְּרִיית

הַגּוֹיִם וְהַבְּרִיית הַבְּרִיית

(6:19)

2.1

Immorality and the Church
1 CORINTHIANS 4:17–5:6A

PAUL IS NOW READY to begin his second essay, which focuses on sexual practice and its theological foundation. The essay comprises four sections and one extended aside. The outline of the overall essay is as follows:

- 2.1. Immorality and the Church (4:17–6:8)
- 2.2. (Three Road Blocks: Leaven, Immorality and the Law Courts [5:6b–6:8])
- 2.3. Theology of Sexual Practice: Kingdom Ethics (6:9–12)
- 2.4. Theology of Sexual Practice: Joining the Body (6:13–20)
- 2.5. Sexual Practice in Harmony with the Gospel (7:1–40)

In each of the five essays, **Paul opens with a call to remember the tradition**. This is followed (as always) with a presentation of the problem under consideration. The new topic is sexual immorality.

Reference to the tradition (4:17) requires careful scrutiny. The text reads:

1. ¹⁷ For this reason I sent to you Timothy, **THE TRADITION**

my beloved and faithful child in the Lord:

To remind you of my ways in Christ Jesus,

as I teach them everywhere in every church.

Many commentators have assumed that 4:17–21 is a conclusion to what precedes, and that Paul’s discussion of sexual practice begins in 5:1. It is also possible to read 4:17 (cameo 1) as the opening of the essay on the topic of sexual practice that follows. The phrase “For this reason I sent to you” (4:17) is thus best seen as looking *forward* rather than *backwards*. This question is significant and deserves careful attention. A number of points can be made.

³ Hayford, J. W. (Ed.). (1997). *Spirit filled life study Bible* (electronic ed., 1 Co 6:1–20). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

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A clear break in the text between 4:16 and 4:17 has been observed for more than a thousand years. Writing an Arabic language commentary on 1 Corinthians in Damascus in A.D. 867, Ibn al-Sari of the Syrian Orthodox church placed his first chapter division between verses 16 and 17. Key aspects of the text support Ibn al-Sari's view.

1. The two verses 16 and 17 (when read side by side) give the reader two occurrences in a row of the idea expressed by the English word *therefore*. Namely:

¹⁶ I urge you, *therefore* [oun], be imitators of me.

¹⁷ *Therefore* [dia touto], I sent to you Timothy, to remind you of my ways in Christ as I teach them everywhere in every church.

Both the RSV and the NRSV soften this problem by translating the first "therefore" (oun) as "then." But it is difficult to argue that Paul is summarizing his previous argument twice in a row with two similar phrases one after another. Rather, the first "therefore" is a word Paul often uses to summarize a previous discussion (cf. 10:31; 11:20; 14:23; 14:26; 15:11; 16:11; 16:18). This leaves the second phrase (*dia touto*) as an introduction to what follows.

2. The phrase "to remind you" (v. 17) clearly opens a new discussion in two of the following essays (1 Cor 11:2; 15:1), so why not here as well?

3. What Paul "teaches everywhere in every church" is the church tradition. Such a reference *begins each* of the five essays. This has been widely recognized in essays three, four and five. So why should a reference to these traditions be left here as a *conclusion* to the first essay?

4. To my knowledge, no ancient Middle Eastern paragraph system divided the text at 1 Corinthians 5:1. However, there is widespread early evidence for a break at the end of verse 4:15. Codex Vaticanus made such a break (adding the admonition "imitate me" of verse 16 to the new paragraph). The ancient paragraph divisions of the northern Coptic tradition and those of the classical Armenian tradition do the same. The ancient liturgy of St. James, followed by the Syrian Orthodox Church, and also the liturgy of the Greek Melkite Church of the Middle East break at the end of verse 16 and read 4:17–5:5 as a single passage. As noted, Ibn al-Sari placed a chapter division in the text at this point.

5. In 4:17–19 Paul discusses Timothy's impending visit and his own. This topic indirectly reappears in 5:3 in reference to the judgment of the immoral man. Paul seems to be saying, "Some think I am not coming [4:18] but I am *indeed* coming [4:19]; as a matter of fact, although I am absent in body consider me already present in spirit [5:3]."

The references to the visits of Paul and Timothy thus support the inclusion of 4:17–21 with what follows.

6. In 4:18 Paul refers to some who are "arrogant" (*ephusiothesan*). In 5:2, using the same word, he becomes more pointed with the remark, "and you are arrogant!" That is, 4:18 joins 5:2 on the subject of "arrogance."

7. In 4:20 Paul refers to "the kingdom of God." This phrase occurs only nine times in Paul. Six of the nine are specific references to people *not* entering the kingdom of God. Setting aside the verse under discussion, four out of these five negative references (6:9, 10; Gal 5:21; Eph 5:5) specifically mention sexual immorality as one of the reasons for exclusion from the kingdom. The overwhelming weight of evidence is that when Paul is talking about sin and the kingdom of God, he is thinking of lists of sins that include sexual immorality. Here Paul specifically makes that connection (6:9, 10).

8. An examination of Paul's use of *dia touto* (for this reason) leads to the conclusion that this phrase always looks forward *in some sense*. Often it introduces a new thought with little or no reference to what has come before (cf. Rom 15:9; 1 Cor 11:30; 2 Cor 4:1; 12:10; Eph 1:15; Col 1:9; 2 Thess 2:11). At other times the phrase builds on a previous discussion and moves on to introduce a new idea (cf. Rom 1:26; 4:16; 5:12; 13:6; 1 Cor 11:10; 2 Cor 4:1; 7:13; Eph 5:17; 6:13; 1 Thess 3:5, 7). In most of these cases modern editors (RSV and others) have *dia touto* introduce a new paragraph. Schultz argues that in 1 Corinthians 4:17 *dia touto* points forward. I suggest a translation of, "For this reason I sent to you Timothy ... to remind you of my ways in Christ Jesus as I teach them everywhere." The reason for Timothy's visit is to remind them of Paul's ways in Christ.

9. There is a shift in tone between 4:14–16 (in the previous essay) and 4:17–21 (in the current essay). In verses 14–16 Paul speaks very gently. He wants only to *admonish* his beloved children not to make them *ashamed*. But in verses 17–21 he is threatening the *arrogant* with a *rod*! C. K. Barrett has noted this dramatic shift of tone and writes,

At verse 14 Paul began to moderate his tone towards his readers; he did not wish to humiliate them, only to see that they were soundly instructed in Christian principles. When however he recalls the actual ... state of the Corinthian church he feels obliged to end his paragraph on a firmer note.

It is easy to see the threat of beating with a rod as related to the new discussion of incest rather than as part of the previous discussion on the cross that concluded with a "gentle admonition."

10. If 4:14–21 is indeed one paragraph, then what is there in these verses that triggers Paul's sudden anger? When verses 14–16 end the previous discussion and verses 17–21 are read as the opening volley of the new topic, the answer to this question is obvious. In the first text (vv. 14–16) Paul, the "father" of the Corinthian believers, wants to deal gently with his wayward children. In the second (vv. 17–21) he is angry about their gross immorality. But without that break in the text there is no apparent reason for Paul's intense flare-up of anger.

Why then, we naturally ask, have commentators and editors placed the break in subject matter at 5:1 for so long? There are at least three possible reasons as to why this has happened.

1. First is the visit. In 4:18–21 Paul *is* talking about his coming visit. Chapter 5 discusses incest. They seem unrelated. But this reference to the coming visit is indirectly mentioned in 5:3. Paul's visit is an introduction to his discussion of the case of incest. His point is, "I am coming, and you had better get this matter taken care of, or on my arrival I will have to use a rod (4:18–21)! Do not await my return, but consider me already present in spirit and proceed (5:3–5)."

2. The discussion of "I am coming!" moves naturally into the directive "Here is the problem (5:1–2), and you must deal with it before I arrive (5:2b–6)." But if this connection is not noted, it is easy to see 5:1 as a major division.

3. Finally, there is the matter of the tradition. When the translator does not observe that in the other four essays Paul refers to the tradition at the *opening* of a new essay, making a chapter division in 5:1 becomes an option.

In conclusion, there are numerous reasons for seeing 4:17–21 as an introduction to the topic of immorality and not as a dangling personal aside. Like each of the other four, the second essay opens with a reference to *the tradition*. As with other essays, this reference is attached to a call to *remember*.

After invoking the tradition Paul states the problem boldly and gives a firm directive to the Corinthian church regarding what they must do. Once again Paul composes an apostolic homily with seven cameos. The text is displayed in figure 2.1(1).

1. ^{4:17} For this reason I sent to you THE TRADITION
Timothy,

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- my beloved and faithful child in the Lord:
- to remind you of my ways in Christ Jesus,
- as I teach them everywhere in every church.
2. ¹⁸Some are arrogant, as if I were not coming to you. ARROGANCE
- ¹⁹But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, And Power
- and I will find out not the talk of these *arrogant* people but their power.
- ²⁰For the kingdom of God does not consist of talk but power.
3. ²¹What do you want?
- Shall I come to you with a rod, A ROD
- or with love in a spirit of gentleness? Or Gentleness?
4. ^{5:1}Everyone has reported that there is immorality among you,
- and of a kind that is not found even among the Gentiles; ARROGANCE
- for a man has [conjugal relations with] his father's wife. And Immorality
- ²And you are arrogant!
- Ought you not rather to mourn?
5. Let him be removed from among you,
- the one who has done this. HIM—REMOVE
- ³For I, absent in body My Body
- yet, present in spirit, My Spirit
- I have already judged, as present, Him—Judge
- the one who has done this.
6. ⁴In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. NAME OF JESUS
- When you are assembled, Your "body"
- and my spirit is present, My Spirit
- with the power of our Lord Jesus, Power of Jesus
7. ⁵surrender this to Satan HIM—REMOVE
- for the destruction of the flesh, His Flesh
- that his spirit may be saved His Spirit

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in the day of the Lord.

Day of the Lord

^{6a} Your boasting is not good.

Figure 2.1(1). The problem: Immorality, arrogance and what must be done (1 Cor 4:17–5:6a)

THE RHETORIC

The structure of this apostolic homily is similar to the homily that precedes it in 4:8–16. The one structural difference is that in the previous homily the stand-alone cameo is at the end. Here it is in the beginning. Otherwise the two homilies have the same structure.

Again there are seven cameos. The first affirms the tradition. The other six are divided into two sets of three cameos, each of which has an A-B-A format. The first set presents the problem: Incest! The second commands a response: Remove the offender! In 4:8–16 the concluding cameo looks *back over the entire essay* from 1:10–4:13. In this homily cameo 1 looks *forward over the entire second essay* that stretches from 4:18–7:40.

COMMENTARY

As noted Paul opens with an invocation of the tradition.

1.	^{4:17} For this reason I sent to you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord: To remind you of my ways in Christ Jesus, as I teach them everywhere in every church.	THE TRADITION
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At the beginning of the first essay Paul wrote about “the testimony of/to Christ” that “*was confirmed*” among the Corinthians (1:6). Here the tradition is referred to as “my ways in Christ Jesus as I teach them everywhere,” which were *not confirmed* (as he will quickly point out). What he has to say about sexual morality and its theological foundation is not something he is dreaming up for the occasion. His views on this new topic are known to all the churches. Previously he taught all of this to *them*. On his recent visit, Timothy repeated his views, and thus they cannot plead ignorance. Paul wants, once again, to set the record straight.

He then sets off a bomb [see fig. 2.1(2)].

After the invocation of the tradition, the pace quickens and the pitch rises. He begins by writing bluntly “some are arrogant.” In cameo 4 he becomes more pointed by saying, “you are arrogant!” He is very angry! The word *arrogant* is another key word that appears in the definition of love in 13:4–7.

It appears that some in Corinth assumed that Paul would not return. In cameo 2 he affirms that he intends to come soon—and they will therefore have to deal with him. He has not faded out of the picture.

2.	^{4:18} Some are <i>arrogant</i> , as if I were not coming to you. ¹⁹ But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their power. ²⁰ For the kingdom of God does not consist of talk but power.	ARROGANCE And Power
3.	²¹ What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?	I COME WITH A Rod? Or Gentleness?
4.	^{5:1} Everyone has reported that there is immorality among you, and of a kind that is not found even among the Gentiles; for a man has (is living with) his father’s wife. ² And you are <i>arrogant</i> ! Ought you not rather to mourn?	ARROGANCE And Immorality

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Figure 2.1(2). Cameos 2–4 (1 Cor 4:18–5:2)

He then raises the question of “talk” (the use of language) and the reality of “power.” The first essay discussed “talk” (beautiful language/the wisdom of this world) and “power” (the power of the cross and of the Spirit). The power of the cross overcomes the wisdom and power of the world. “The power of the Spirit” gives the ability to understand mysteries, to heal, to prophesy and to speak in tongues. On arrival Paul will want to discuss these things with them.

In 2 Corinthians 10:4–5 Paul offers an important clue to what he means by “power.” He writes, “For the weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.” Paul was able to “hold his own” while debating the philosophers in Athens, and he can certainly manage with the Corinthians who are proud of their sexual freedom to commit incest. The issues are not turf problems. Very serious matters are on the table and Paul is fully prepared to defend his views.

In cameo 3 he offers them a choice. He can come in “gentleness” or “with a rod,” and they must choose between the two. Their choice will be made by how they deal with the man sleeping with his father’s wife.

Paul begins his confrontation with the Corinthians over the case of incest with the key word *olos* that can be translated “actually it is reported” or “everyone has reported.” The RSV, NRSV and NIV have chosen “It is actually reported.” This carries the nuance of “I am sorry to have to say this, but *it is actually reported* that ...” The second translation option of “everyone has reported” means “I am hearing this from all my sources.” These English versions show that many in the Western world take the first view. But how have Middle Eastern Christians read this text?

Out of the twenty-three Semitic versions gathered for this study, both the Hebrew and eighteen of the Arabic versions read some form of “Everyone has reported” or “It is known for a fact.” Three of these translations have some form of “It is commonly known,” and one lists simply “It is known.”

The winner for more than a thousand years is “Everyone has reported.” This option fits Paul’s cultural context. The Corinthians had reported some things to him in writing (7:1), and he had heard about other things orally “from Chloe’s people” (1:11). No doubt Stephanas (16:17) and Sosthenes (1:1) had their own “grapevines.” But Paul does not reveal his sources. Such a disclosure would have given the Corinthians a chance to immediately shift the subject from the case of incest to the question, Who ratted on us? Paul protects his sources by saying, “The cat is out of the bag, *everyone has reported* ...” That is, “Don’t try to identify the person who gave me this information and then get angry at him or her. *I am getting this disgusting news from everyone!*”

The key word *immorality*, which appears in cameo 4, is a general term for all forms of unacceptable sexual behavior. The Mishnah legislates stoning for a man who has sexual relations with “his mother, his father’s wife, his daughter-in-law, a male, or a beast.” Roman law also forbade incest. One of the aspects of this particular case that appears to anger Paul the most is that some in the congregation are “boasting” about this matter. Apparently they understood “freedom in Christ” to mean “anything goes!” “No!” thunders Paul—you should be in mourning!

The first trilogy of cameos (1–3) focuses on the problem. The second trilogy (5–7) gives attention to what the Corinthians have to do about it [see fig. 2.1(3)].

5.	^{2b} Let him be removed from among you,	
	the one who has done this.	HIM—REMOVE
	³ For I, absent in body	My Body (absent)
	yet, present in spirit,	My Spirit (present)
	I have already judged, as present,	Him—Judge
	the one who has done this.	
6.	⁴ In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.	NAME OF JESUS
	When you are assembled,	Your “body”
	and my spirit is present,	My Spirit (present)
	with the power of our Lord Jesus,	Power of Jesus
7.	⁵ surrender this to Satan	HIM—REMOVE
	for the destruction of the flesh,	His Flesh
	that his spirit may be saved	His Spirit
	in the day of the Lord.	Day of the Lord
	⁶ Your boasting is not good.	

Figure 2.1(3). Cameos 5–7 (1 Cor 5:2–6)

These three cameos are also inverted. The *removal of the offender* is the subject of the two outer stanzas (5, 7). In the center (6) the *authority for this action* is discussed. They are to act in the name and with the power of *our Lord Jesus*. The center of each of the three cameos touches on the themes of “body and spirit.” The body and spirit of Paul appear in cameo 5 while the body and spirit of the offender are mentioned in cameo 7. The body of Christ (“when you are assembled”) is subtly introduced into the climax (6). In 6:13–20 Paul argues that sexuality for the Christian is related to the doctrine of the church. Here, he is already reflecting that theological stance.

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Paul is asking the congregation to take responsibility for its own life. He is also astutely avoiding a trap. Some in the congregation are at least contemplating (and perhaps urging) leaving this mess for Paul to sort out when he arrives. That way the congregation can avoid the painful and distasteful task of making a decision. Furthermore, whatever Paul decides, they can then blame *him*. “He said this,” “He failed to do that,” “If only he had ...” The discussion can last for months and the damage for years. Regardless of what he says or does, some will blame him. Paul is too intelligent to be caught in such a bind. In short he says,

You have to make a decision and carry it out. Don’t wait for me. You must take responsibility for this problem. You want my opinion? Fine—I will give it to you. Don’t stone him (a Jewish solution) and don’t report him to the authorities for trial and punishment (a Roman solution). Throw him out of the church! Furthermore, this action must be taken by you as a community. Do not delegate the decision to your leaders. You must assemble *as the church* and “surrender this ... to Satan.” The shock may lead him to repentance. It is your only hope for him and for yourselves.

On whose authority is this to be done? They are told to act “in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 4a) and in the “power of our Lord Jesus” (v. 4d). Yes, there will be suffering involved for all. But “to us who are being saved” the cross is “the power of God” (1:18). That same cross is also the wisdom of God. Out of that power and wisdom, demonstrated in a cross, they are to act. Literally, Paul writes “surrender *this ...* to Satan.” This is a Middle Eastern way of talking. In English we usually translate it “surrender this *man*,” but the word *man* is missing. When Paul writes, “surrender this ... to Satan,” the readers can add whatever adjective they want. It can be “this *idiot*” or “this *fool*” or something stronger. This same style of speech appears in the parable of the pounds in Luke 19:14. In that story a group of citizens who hate the nobleman send an emissary (presumably to Rome) to say, “We do not want *this ...* to rule over us.” Western translations again add the word *man* and offer, “We do not want this *man* to rule over us.” Abraham Lincoln’s enemies called him a “baboon,” a “hairy ape” and “a gorilla.” Both Jesus and Paul invite their listeners/readers to add the adjectives of their choices.

The meaning of *cameo 7* is elusive. Anthony Thiselton has a full discussion of the many questions and options. He writes, “there emerges a further strand to the issue which is relevant equally to Corinth and for today: *in certain cases law ministers to trust and to freedom*: it does not oppose freedom.” Gordon Fee’s discussion is also extensive and helpful.¹⁶ He comments on the fact that we live in a world where the church tolerates every kind of sin because (of course) we cannot be “judgmental.” Fee then offers four astute general comments. These are (1) the entire church was told to participate. The problem was affecting all of them. (2) Discipline was intended to be “remedial, not judgmental.” That is, the goal was the salvation of the sinner. (3) That discipline was important because the sin contaminated all of them. (4) In our day the man could simply have gone to another church that might too quickly accept him. Fee reflects on Paul’s day where “exclusion could be a genuinely redemptive action.”

Yet after nearly two thousand years of study and discussion this text remains partially elusive. Paul’s goal is trying to heal the church and save the man. To accomplish this purpose the church must “draw a line.” “Everything goes” and “whatever society accepts has to be acceptable to us” is not good enough.

At the very end of the homily he tells them bluntly, “Your boasting is not good.” As we will observe, boasting features in chapter 13 as a failure of love.

To summarize this first homily (in this essay), five points can be made

1. The church has a tradition; it is known and it is important.
2. Some are arrogantly affirming total freedom in sexual practice. Paul tells them to mourn.
3. They must come together in a public meeting and throw this man out of the church.
4. This action has the possibility of redeeming the sinner and restoring the church.
5. They are to act in the name and power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul then turns to three roadblocks needing removal before he can lay a theological foundation for sexual practice that is in harmony with the gospel. It is possible to see these three roadblocks as profoundly relevant to the topic. To them we now turn.

2.2

Three Roadblocks

Leaven, Immorality and the Law Courts

1 CORINTHIANS 5:6B–6:8

IN THE PREVIOUS SECTION of the essay (2.1) Paul cut the Gordian knot. He told the Corinthians to remove the offender from the fellowship of the church. Here he discusses head-on three aspects of this case of incest that must be dealt with. These are not “asides” in the sense of “irrelevant topics” that interrupt the flow of Paul’s argument. If Paul fails to discuss them, for the remainder of the essay the readers will mentally be saying “Yes, but ...” and dismiss his argument. In brief these three are as follows:

1. You must consider the health of the church at large.
2. I wrote to you about dealings with evil people in the church, not in the world.
3. Do not dump this problem on the courts.

The text of the first of these roadblocks is displayed in figure 2.2(1).

Do you not know,

1. ^{6b} “A little *leaven* ferments all the dough”?

⁷ Cleanse out the *old leaven* OLD LEAVEN

that you may be *new dough*, as you really are *unleavened*. New Dough

2. For *Christ*, our *paschal lamb*, CHRIST/LAMB

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	has been <i>sacrificed</i> .	Sacrificed
	⁸ Let us, therefore, <i>celebrate the feast</i> ,	Feast
3.	not with the <i>old leaven</i> ,	
	the leaven of <i>malice and evil</i> ,	OLD LEAVEN
	but with the <i>unleavened bread</i> of sincerity and truth.	Unleavened Bread

Figure 2.2(1). The first roadblock: “This is a private matter” (1 Cor 5:6b–8)

THE RHETORIC

The rhetorical style is simple and well known. There are three cameos. The first and the third are a pair. While the center contains the encased parable of the Passover lamb.

COMMENTARY

The first roadblock is the pervasive attitude that says, “This is a personal matter. We should not be involved.” This view has great staying power. Today it has been expressed with the statement, “God is not interested in what happens in the bedroom.” A similar tension between the sin of one person and its effect on the community is discussed in *Midrash Rabbah, Leviticus* that reads,

It is said, *Shall one man sin, and wilt Thou be wroth with all the congregation?* (Num. 16:22). R. Simeon b. Yohai taught: This may be compared to the case of men on a ship, one of whom took a borer and began boring beneath his own place. His fellow travelers said to him: “What are you doing?” Said he to them: “What does that matter to you, am I not boring under my own place?” Said they: “Because the water will come up and flood the ship for us all.”

The actions of an individual can profoundly affect the community, especially if that community is together in one ship! What was the reality of the situation in Corinth?

Many reconstructions of the case of incest in Paul’s day have been suggested. One likely option is that of a family in which the mother died. The father then married a younger women. There was an adult son living in the home who was probably closer in age to the new wife than the father. A physical relationship developed between the son and the young wife. Some in the congregation arrogantly asserted that this was no more than an expression of their new freedom in Christ. After all—were they not expected to “love one another”? Were they not living under grace rather than law? But Paul knew that if there were no boundaries for sexual behavior, any form of social bonding as a community would be impossible. If the man who was sleeping with his stepmother attended church, those present would be traumatized by his presence. Every man and woman in the congregation would wonder, *Who is next? What is he thinking about? If we sit behind him*, his presence will distract us from the worship. *If we sit in front of him*—is he looking at my wife?

Members will avoid meetings when they know he will be present. This is not a case of “negative attitudes should change.” If incest is accepted, what about polygamy with its inevitable demeaning of women? Pederasty and bestiality will no longer be unthinkable. Yes, they are “under grace” and no longer “under the law,” but what does that mean?

Paul chose the image of leaven in the dough (cameo 1). By means of that metaphor he was able to formulate one of the great New Testament parables for the atonement (cameo 2). Christ is “our Passover lamb.” Only here do we find this metaphor for the atonement. No doubt, Paul used it often, and it is worthy of much reflection.

The case of incest was not a private matter. The sexual conduct of each member added to or detracted from the ability of the congregation to gather around the Eucharistic table in “sincerity and truth” (cameo 3).

The second “roadblock” is displayed below:

1.	a	⁹ <i>I wrote you</i> in my letter	
	b.		<i>not to associate with immoral men;</i>
	c.	¹⁰ not meaning the <i>immoral of this world,</i>	I WROTE:
	d.	or the <i>greedy</i> or robbers or <i>idolaters,</i>	Not Meaning

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	e.		since then you would need to go out of this world.
2.	a.	¹¹ But now I am writing to you	
	b.	<i>not to associate with any one</i>	I WROTE:
	c.	who bears the name of <i>brother</i> who is <i>immoral</i>	Meaning
	d.	or <i>greedy</i> , or is an <i>idolater</i> , <i>reviler</i> , <i>drunkard</i> or <i>robber</i> —	
	e.	especiall ^y <i>not to eat</i> with such a person.	

Figure 2.2(2). The second roadblock: The church and the world (1 Cor 5:9–11)

THE RHETORIC

In this double cameo Paul uses step parallelism such as appears in Isaiah 28:14–18. The first four lines in 1 clearly match the first four lines in 2. The two final lines (1e, 2e) do not match in content but are parallel in that each is a conclusion.

COMMENTARY

Trying to sort out the timing and the content of Paul’s various letters to the Corinthians is beyond the scope of this study. But clearly there was a “previous letter” and the Corinthians seem to have misunderstood part of it. Paul knew that some were currently saying, “In his last letter Paul told us to separate ourselves from all gross sinners. If I follow Paul’s directive, I won’t be able to go to work!” Paul is trying to correct that misunderstanding.

Christians do not need to avoid contact with all “immoral people.” The list is instructive. In the world we will find immoral and greedy people along with robbers and idolaters. This is an open-ended list of sins. The word *immoral* covers a wide range of rejected sexual practices. The “greedy” are not just the people who eat too much but also those engaged in “conspicuous consumption.” For many in our day this has become a virtue and even a consuming passion. Robbers do not all come in the night. Some of them steal while seated at computers in office buildings. Idols are created, then and now, out of many things. Idol worshipers are alive and well in our day.

While living in the world, contact with such types is unavoidable. Important to this topic is the fact that the word translated “associate with” is a rare compound word (*sun-ana-mignumi*) that has to do with mixing up together, joining, fusing and blending. In the work-a-day secular/pagan world, then and now, such “mixing up together” is inevitable. Paul has no objection. When I mix with people in the office or shop who have no faith, the identity of my Christian community is not threatened. But “mixing up together” as the body of Christ, for Paul, was a very different matter. In a modern world that worships at the altar of inclusivity and sees all forms of inclusion as a “justice issue,” Paul’s admonition is deeply challenging.

The greedy and revilers are on the same list with idolaters and robbers. The admonition “not to eat” is best understood as referring to the celebration of the Eucharist, in that such celebrations were full meals. In short, Paul is saying that mixing with sinners in the pagan world is not the same as mixing with them in the body of Christ and at the Eucharist. The very identity of the church is at stake in the latter.

The third roadblock has to do with the courts [see fig. 2.2(3)].

THE RHETORIC

This last section is composed of seven cameos. The first six are inverted. An extra cameo (7) appears at the end as a conclusion. Twice Paul has shown flexibility in the composition of apostolic homilies with seven cameos. There is a point of turning in cameo 5 and the concluding cameo is internally partially inverted.

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1. ^{5:12}For what do I have to do with judging outsiders?

Is it not those *inside the church* whom you are to *judge*? YOU JUDGE

¹³ *God judges those outside.*

“Drive out the *wicked person* from among you.”

2. ^{6:1} Does he presume, one of you, when he has a complaint against a *brother*,

to go to law before the unrighteous instead of *to the saints*? NOT COURTS

3. ²Do you not know that *the saints* will judge the *world*? NOT KNOW?

And if the world is to be judged by you,

are you unworthy to try *trivialities*? Eternity

4. ³Do you not know that *we* are to *judge angels*? NOT KNOW?

How much more then *everyday cases*? Eternity

5. ⁴Therefore, if you have everyday cases, NOT COURTS

why do you lay them before those *despised by the church*?

6. ⁵ I say this to your *shame*.

Is there not among you anyone *wise* YOU JUDGE

who is able to decide between members of the *brotherhood*,

⁶but *brother* goes to *law* against brother, and this *before unbelievers*.

7. ⁷ Actually, it is utter defeat to you

that you have cases against one another.

Why not *rather suffer wrong*? SUFFER WRONG

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Why not rather *be defrauded?*

Don't Wrong Others

⁸ But *you wrong* and *defraud*,
even your own brothers.

Figure 2.2(3). Roadblock three: The courts can settle this (1 Cor 5:12–6:8)

COMMENTARY

It appears that someone in the community had gone to the courts regarding this case of incest, or at least was threatening to do so. It could have been the trapped girl, her angry brother or perhaps her humiliated husband. Perhaps members of the church had opted to raise a case. Paul begins this apostolic homily with a full head of steam. Once again we will look at each of the pairs of ideas in the six-stanza ring composition. The outer pair is displayed in figure 2.2(4).

1. ^{5:12} For what do I have to do with *judging outsiders?*

Is it not those *inside the church* whom YOU JUDGE
you are to *judge?*

¹³ *God judges* those *outside*.

“Drive out the *wicked person* from
among you.”

6. ^{6:5} I say this to your *shame*.

Is there not among you any *one wise* YOU JUDGE
who is able to decide between members
of the *brotherhood*,

⁶ but brother goes to *law* against
brother, and this *before unbelievers*.

Paul opens his discussion of the courts by telling his readers to forget those “outside.” God will take care of them. It is interesting that he does not say, “Leave them to the courts.” Human courts in any age can be a frail instrument, a broken reed. The final arbitrator of justice for Paul is God. The Corinthians are responsible for those “inside the church.” He then repeats his command to drive the wicked person out.

The matching stanza (6) is a polite way to say, “Shame on you!” In his gentle conclusion to the first essay (4:14) Paul specifically affirmed that he was not writing to make them ashamed. Now he is deliberately doing so. Dividing up into competing groups is one thing; condoning incest with arrogance is something else. Paul is direct and blunt as he in effect says, “You must come together, pass judgment and dismiss this person from your fellowship.”

In the matching cameo (6) Paul raises the question of “wisdom.” The Corinthians were proud of how “wise” they had become. In the opening of the letter he did not tell them they were “wise” but rather confirmed that they were “enriched in him with all speech and all knowledge.” Then in the hymn to the cross he located the wisdom of God in the cross and quoted God saying, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise” (1:19). At the end of the first essay his sarcasm was evident when he wrote, “We are fools for Christ’s sake, but you are wise in Christ” (4:10). Now Paul nails them to the wall by asking, “Is there not among you any one wise?” The unspoken words that he leaves out are, “By going to the courts you are demonstrating in public that all of you are fools and thereby obliged to go to the courts to find a wise man to judge between you!” Are the unbelievers wiser than the believers in regard to this matter?

As Paul shames his readers and accuses them of asking the courts to wash the church’s dirty laundry in public, he is surely recalling the court case in Corinth in which he was the accused. **The synagogue in Corinth tried to attack Paul by bringing a case against him before Gallio, the proconsul for the year (Acts 18:12).** Gallio threw out the case and the *Corinthian synagogue* was publicly humiliated. “Did you learn nothing?” Paul asks indirectly. The current case will be much worse! The Roman court will throw the book at the man and the whole town will despise the church in the process. Having watched the fiasco of the previous case where Paul was involved, is the *Corinthian church* going to make the same mistake made by the synagogue? Unbelievable!

Paul’s sense of public shame in a honor-shame culture would naturally have been very strong. If the context was a dispute over land registration, that would be one thing. But when they were dealing with a man sleeping with his father’s wife—a public trial would be too horrible to contemplate. “For heavens sake,” Paul seems to be shouting, “are you trying to bring *disgrace on the gospel itself?* Don’t flaunt this case of incest! Furthermore don’t ignore it and don’t hide it—deal with it!”

These two matching cameos are so carefully constructed that if the four cameos in the center were missing and the reader was left with only cameos 1 and 6, no one would notice the omissions. The four-cameo center is found in figure 2.2(5).

2. ¹ Does he presume, one of you, when he
has a complaint against a *brother*,

to go to law before the unrighteous NOT COURTS

instead of *to the saints*?

- | | | |
|----|--|----------------------------------|
| 3. | <p>²Do you not know that <i>the saints</i> will judge the <i>world</i>?</p> <p>And if the world is to be judged by you,</p> <p>are you incompetent to try small claims?</p> | <p>NOT KNOW?</p> <p>Eternity</p> |
| 4. | <p>³Do you not know that <i>we</i> are to <i>judge angels</i>?</p> <p>How much more then matters pertaining to this life!</p> | <p>NOT KNOW?</p> <p>Eternity</p> |
| 5. | <p>⁴Therefore, if you have such cases,</p> <p><i>why</i> do you lay them before those who have no standing in <i>the church</i>?</p> | <p>NOT COURTS</p> |

Figure 2.2(5). Cameos 2–5 (1 Cor 6:1–4)

THE RHETORIC

The rhetorical structure is clear and simple. The outer envelope asks the question, Why do you go to the courts rather than the church? Each of cameos 3 and 4 say, “You will ‘sit on the bench’ in the next world! Can’t you manage to do so in this world?” The connections between cameos 2 and 5 are so strong, and if 3 and 4 were missing, the reader would not observe any break in the flow of the passage.

COMMENTARY

Fee rightly points out that Paul is discussing cases where one Christian is going to court against another Christian. He is not arguing against the courts in general. With Thiselton I have opted to translate *elakhiston* as “small” cases, rather than the RSV “trivial” cases.⁶ When compared to “judging the world” they are indeed “small.”

We can be confident that Paul does not intend to imply hostility toward the Roman officials. The court in Corinth did well by him. They are simply not a part of the company of the saints and are thereby not qualified to judge cases that relate to the faith commitments of Christians.

Precisely what is behind Paul’s affirmation that “the saints will judge the world,” and its parallel “we are to judge angels” is debatable. Fee notes that this is “a common motif from Jewish apocalyptic eschatology.”⁸ What is clear is that Paul is again *holding up the mirror of eternity*. He did this already in his parable of the builder (3:10–17). In that text “the Day,” with its fire of judgment, was at the center of an apostolic homily. In regard to the question of using the local courts to settle this particular church dispute over incest, Paul is saying:

You think you can’t handle this very difficult problem of incest in the congregation. Look at yourselves and at this problem in the light of eternity. *On the Day*, you will participate with the Lord in his judgment of all things, including fallen angels. In the light of that perspective there is no question about your ability to deal with this case of incest. Take courage, be bold, you *can do* what must be done.

In 1:5 Paul (perhaps sarcastically) congratulates the Corinthians on their knowledge. In 4:10 (certainly sarcastically) he tells them, “You are wise in Christ.” They are now challenged with, “Is there not among you *any one wise*?”

The climax has to do with the matter of eternity in cameos 3 and 4, but the practical fallout appears in cameo 7 [see fig. 2.2(6)].

- | | |
|----|---|
| 7. | <p>^{6:7} Actually, it is utter defeat to you</p> |
|----|---|

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that you have cases against one another.

Why not *rather suffer wrong*? SUFFER WRONG

Why not *rather be defrauded*? Don't Wrong Others

⁸ But *you wrong* and *defraud*,
even your own brothers.

Figure 2.2(6). Cameo 7 (1 Cor 6:7–8)

Paul is pointing out that when they leave *such matters* to the courts they have already lost. Regardless of what the courts decide, they are the losers. Contentious court cases take on a life of their own. People are drawn into them and at times act against “the angels of their better natures.” Paul seems to know that at least some of them have track records of turning to the courts. He tells them, “you wrong and defraud, even your own brothers.” Dealing with the incestuous man through the courts will neither redeem him nor heal the church.

Paul has now cleared away the brush. In summary, he has told his readers:

1. This is not a private matter. It affects the entire community. A case of incest in your midst is like yeast in bread dough.
2. Christ is our Passover lamb. Your celebrations of the Eucharist must be characterized by sincerity and truth.
3. In the world, you rub shoulders with gross sinners. Life in the church is a different matter.
4. Don't dump this problem on the courts. You have quite enough wisdom to deal with this as a community. Take responsibility for yourselves; consider the perspective of eternity and act. Remember, you will assist the Lord on the day of judgment.

Paul is now ready to lay a theological foundation for sexual practice, which he does in the following sections of this essay.

2.3

Theology of Sexual Practice

*Kingdom Ethics***1 CORINTHIANS 6:9–12**

CHAPTER 6:9–20 HAS BEEN DESCRIBED as “somewhat disjointed and obscure.” Reason for this has been found in “the unfinished spontaneous nature of these passages.”

Yet it is possible to see this text as a finely constructed literary whole that includes two apostolic homilies. The first of these two homilies (6:9–12) has seven cameos [see fig. 2.3(1)].

RHETORIC

This homily showcases a combination of features that have already appeared in the epistle. There are seven cameos, composed in three sections. The first section comprises four cameos using a simple ring composition with an A-B-B-A structure. This is followed by a second section that employs two cameos linked by step parallelism. The final cameo stands alone and provides a summary/conclusion to the homily. The last homily in the first essay (4:8–16) also had seven cameos, divided into three sections, with a concluding cameo.

1. ^{6:9} Do you not know that the **THE UNRIGHTEOUS**
unrighteous

will not *inherit the* **Not Inherit the Kingdom**
kingdom of God?

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2. Do not be deceived;
- neither the immoral,
 nor idolaters,
 nor adulterers, FIVE SINS
 nor catamites, (sexual)
 nor sodomites,
3. ¹⁰ nor thieves,
 nor the greedy
 nor drunkards, FIVE SINS
 nor revilers, (nonsexual)
 nor robbers
4. will *inherit the kingdom of God.* Not Inherit the Kingdom
- ¹¹ And such were *some of you.* LIKE SOME OF YOU
5. ^{11b} But you were washed,
 but you were made holy [sanctified],
 but you were justified
6. in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ
 and in the Spirit
 of our God.
7. ¹² “All things are lawful for me,”

but all things are not helpful.

“All things are lawful for me,”

but I will not be enslaved by anything.

Figure 2.3(1). Kingdom ethics (1 Cor 6:9–12)

COMMENTARY

This homily opens with four cameos. Cameos 1 and 4 are clearly a pair. Examined together they read:

1.	a.	^{6:9} Do you not know that the <i>unrighteous</i>	THE UNRIGHTEOUS
	b.	will not <i>inherit</i> <i>the kingdom of</i> <i>God?</i>	Not Inherit the Kingdom
4.	b.	^{10b-11a} will (not) <i>inherit the</i> <i>kingdom of God.</i>	Not Inherit the Kingdom
	a.	And such were <i>some</i> <i>of you.</i>	LIKE SOME OF YOU

The double use of the phrase *inherit the kingdom* occurs just before and just after the list of ten sins. **Paul rarely mentions the kingdom of God. In all of his letters, only here does such a reference occur twice in a single text.**

The expressions “*inheriting* the kingdom” and “*inheriting* eternal life” are well known in the Gospels (Mt 19:29; 25:34; Mk 10:17; Lk 10:25; 18:18). The double use of the phrase “inherit the kingdom of God” binds (1a) “the unrighteous” to (4a) “such were some of you.” Corinth was a “tough town,” famous for its debauchery. Paul was a brilliant scholar. At the same time, he was able to “dumb down” his presentations of the gospel and could appeal to the uneducated, tough, immoral flotsam of Corinth. Working as a poorly dressed, itinerant tentmaker would have thrown him in with the tradespeople of the city. He gained a following—but his followers inevitably brought problems with them into their new life in Christ. The phrase “such *were* some of you” indicates that among Paul’s readers were those who had been healed from the sins on his list. The ten sins can be seen as two sets of five. This in itself can be traced elsewhere.

In Colossians 3:5, 8, Paul sets out two lists of sins with five sins in each. The first is directly, or indirectly connected to sexual sins and is as follows:

Paul’s List

Paul’s Categories

immorality	a catchall category for sexual sins
impurity	strong overtones of sexual misconduct
passion	sexual in nature (1 Cor 7:9)
evil desire	primarily related to “desires of the flesh” (Rom 1:24; 6:12; 13:14; Gal 5:6, 24; 1 Thess 4:5)

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covetousness faintly related to sexual sins. Coveting the neighbor's wife is proscribed in the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:17)

Paul's second list in Colossians 3:8 also contains five sins.

anger	nonsexual
wrath	nonsexual
malice	nonsexual
slander	nonsexual
foul talk	nonsexual

This same pattern appears here in 2 and 3. The sexual sins are

Paul's List***Paul's Categories***

immoral	all forms of sexual sins—particularly heterosexual sins
idolaters	sacred prostitution was a part of the Corinthian world
adulterers	heterosexual sins (married)
catamites	the passive partner in a homosexual relationship
sodomites	the active partner in a homosexual relationship

Both heterosexual and homosexual sins are condemned. There is no indication that one is considered more heinous than the other. Idolatrous worship in Corinth involved sacred prostitution with the priestesses of Aphrodite/Venus, and thus idolatry in Corinth involved fornication.⁴ This means that, like Colossians 3:5, 8, Paul begins his list of ten vices with five that relate to sexual misconduct.

These two similar Pauline lists of ten sins (five sexual and five nonsexual) are striking. Number ten is music playing in the background, and that number carries overtones of the Decalogue. Later in the epistle Paul will again use the number ten in a significant way (9:19–27). This is in harmony with the extensive use of seven, the perfect number. The word *catamites* is unique to this passage, and *sodomites* occurs only in one other text (1 Tim 1:10). In short, after affirming that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom, Paul gives a list of ten sins that relate to the problems he is discussing in this letter.

The reason for his special emphasis on sexual sins is obvious. In 5:1–5 Paul opened the case of incest that had erupted in the church. Then, in 5:6–8 he related this problem to the health of the Christian community as a whole and to the sacrifice of Christ. He issued a call to continue relations with such people *in the world* but not *in the church*, and told his readers that this issue should not be dumped on the public courts. Now, in 6:9 he starts to lay a theological foundation for sexual morality. Why then the second half of the list?

The second set of five sins is composed of:

- thieves

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- greedy
- drunkards
- revilers
- robbers

At first glance these five seem to be a traditional list without any unifying emphasis. But here also Paul appears to have created a special list out of concern for the moral lapses of the Corinthians. Two points of overlap are visible. The first is the fact that Paul has just accused his readers of “defrauding” one another in the courts. Defrauding is a form of stealing. Paul opens his list of nonsexual sins with “thieves” and ends the same list with “robbers.” The center of this short list includes “greedy, drunkards and revilers.” As we will see, in 11:17–34 Paul discusses irregularities that occur in the Corinthian celebrations of the Eucharist. Some are *greedy* and stuff themselves, leaving others hungry. They were already quarreling (1:11–12) and thus when they got *drunk* at the Eucharistic meals, they quite likely hurled a few *insults* at their enemies in opposing parties. Paul has already written, “When reviled, we bless” (4:12). It is thus possible to see the Corinthian communal meals as a wild scene where some were indeed “greedy, drunkards and revilers.”

Behind this list of ten sins lie aspects of three problems in the Corinthian church: stealing and their misuse of the courts, their sexual misconduct, and irregularities at their Eucharistic meals.

Paul then calmly reminds them that such behavior was part of their *past*. That is, among them were those who had been healed from these sins, both sexual and nonsexual. The healing power of the gospel had been at work and had already demonstrated its life-changing influence. He recalls for them the source of their new life in the present. The second part of this apostolic homily reads:

5. a. ¹¹ But [*alla*] you were *washed*,
 b. but [*alla*] you were *made holy* [sanctified],
 c. but [*alla*] you were *justified*
6. a. in the name of the Lord *Jesus Christ*
 b. and in the *Spirit*
 c. of our *God*

The first three lines in cameo 5 open with *alla* (but). The threefold repetition of *alla* (but) is striking. The six lines interrelate through the use of step parallelism. *Washing* (5a) refers to *baptism*, which for Paul (Rom 6:3) was “in the name of the Lord *Jesus Christ*” (6a). The phrase “you were *made holy*” (5b) matches “in the [*Holy*] *Spirit*” (6b). Finally, *justification* (5c) for Paul (Rom 8:33) is an act of *God* (6c). Orr and Walther define the two key terms succinctly when they write, “To be sanctified means to be consecrated in God’s service and enrolled in His family. To be justified means to be forgiven of sins and accepted as righteous.” The order of the verbs denies a theological schematizing of justification, then sanctification.

Yet one more overtone of a Trinitarian formula appears in the last three lines with the mention of the Lord *Jesus Christ*, the *Spirit* and *God*. Paul invoked the Trinity in his discussion of the secret mystery of God revealed to him (2:7–10a; 10b–16). Here the Trinity is at the heart of new life in Christ.

With this new status in the presence of God in mind, Paul turns to debate the reasons the Corinthians (it seems) were giving to justify their behavior.

7. ¹² “All things are lawful for me,”
 but all things are not helpful.

“All things are lawful for me,”
 but I will not be enslaved by anything.

Hering has already identified these four lines as a strophe constructed “somewhat according to the rules of Hebrew poetry.” He adds, “The parallelism of its members is clear.” It is generally accepted that Paul is quoting the Corinthian libertines. These same four lines reappear with slight changes in 10:23, and the lead phrase “all things are lawful to me” must surely be a quote from the mouths of the Corinthians. It has often been suggested that Paul endorses the phrase (with qualifications), and thus it may well be his own phrase originally used to oppose Jewish legalism. Out of context, some Greek Christians used it to justify their libertinism. How can Paul reply? Again Orr and Walther offer a suggestive analysis of the problem. They write,

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What is to be done when recipients of the gospel, upon realizing that they have been invited into God's home with full privileges, as it were, start wrecking the furniture, befouling the floors, and even tearing the building apart?

~~The problem is complicated by the fact that the Corinthians were not merely reflecting a carryover of their pre-Christian lifestyle, but as Conzelmann puts it, were "provided with an active/speculative justification" of their action with the cry, "all things are lawful for me."~~

What is Paul to do? One simple answer would have been to return them to a rigorous enforcement of the law with its punishments. But to do so would be to deny the gospel. Instead, Paul takes their point and then affirms that all things are not "helpful." Robertson and Plummer explain this as meaning, "Christian freedom must be limited by regard for others." The law is not a means of salvation, and it has been summarized as "the law of Christ." In this new form it is still in force to prevent "the collapse of society and the ruin of men's lives."¹² Paul is perhaps rephrasing his earlier statement, "All things are yours ... and you are Christ's" (3:21, 23). A similar discussion in 10:23 indicates that the community's health is an important concern. Orr and Walther succinctly observe, **"When one loves God, all things are permissible; but when one loves God, one loves what He loves. This means love for all others, for they are loved by God; and conduct will be regulated by this love."**

In the second response to "all things are lawful," Paul utilizes a play on words in Greek. The word *existin* (lawful) has *exousia* (authority) as its root. Paul then uses the verb *exousiazō* (to be enslaved) in his response. Robertson and Plummer catch this in English by aptly paraphrasing, **"I can make free with all things, but I will not let any thing make free with me."** Freedom cannot be allowed to cancel itself. Emancipation from enslavement is clearly implied, a subject to which Paul returns later in the essay.

To summarize, in this seven-stanza cameo Paul affirms:

1. Some of the Corinthians had previously engaged in sexual and nonsexual sins that were incompatible with the kingdom of God. From these sins they had been healed. These sins are listed.
2. The three persons of the Trinity are mentioned along with something of their function in the reformation of new believers.
3. All things are indeed lawful, but a Christian must avoid anything that does not build up the community and reject anything that enslaves.

The second half of Paul's theological foundation for sexual ethics is presented in 6:13–20.

2.4

Theology of Sexual Practice

Joining the Body

1 CORINTHIANS 6:13–20

THIS HOMILY PRESENTS the second half of Paul's theological foundation for sexual ethics (6:13–20). He offers his views in a marvelously structured apostolic homily with ten cameos. The text is displayed in figure 2.4(1).

THE RHETORIC

This profound apostolic homily is composed of ten cameos organized around the high jump format. The high jumper begins with a short sprint (1–2). This is followed by the jump (2–5); then comes the crossing of the bar (6), concluding with the descent on the far side (7–10).

As marked on figure 2.4(1), each of the four lines in cameo 1 is matched in cameo 2 following the step-parallelism pattern. Then comes a brilliantly executed example of ring composition. The center climax is an encased Scripture quotation. There is a clear turning point just past the center in cameo 7. Cameo 2 looks both ways. At the same time the discussion of the *resurrection* in cameo 2 balances the affirmation of the *cross* in cameo 10.

1.a ¹³"Food is meant for the FOOD for STOMACH
stomach,

b. and the *stomach for food*' God Will Destroy Food

c. and *God both this* God Will Destroy Stomach

d. and *that will destroy*.

	becomes <i>one</i> <i>spirit with him.</i>	With the Lord
8.	¹⁸ Flee from prostitution.	
	Every other <i>sin</i> which a man commits is <i>outside his body</i> ;	
	but the immoral man sins against <i>his own</i> <i>body</i> .	SIN AGAINST His Body
9.	¹⁹ <i>Do you not know</i> that <i>your body</i> is a <i>sanctuary</i> of the <i>Holy</i> <i>Spirit</i> within you, which you have <i>from God</i> ?	YOUR BODY Of Holy Spirit From God
10.	You are not your own; ²⁰ you were <i>bought with</i> a price. So <i>glorify God</i> in <i>your body</i> .	CROSS With Body Glorify God

Figure 2.4(1). Theology of sexual practice: Joining the body (1 Cor 6:13–20)

COMMENTARY

Here Paul builds a foundation for Christian sexual practice on the *cross*, the *resurrection*, the *trinity* and the doctrine of the *church*.

Similar cases of homilies that use the high jump format *with a Scripture quotation in the center* appear in 9:1–12a, 14:13–24 and 15:21–28. The first two cameos of this homily are in figure 2.4(2).

1.	a.	¹³ <i>Food</i> is meant for the <i>stomach</i>
	b.	and the stomach for food,
	c.	and God both this
	d.	and that will destroy.
2.	a.	But body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord,
	b.	and the Lord for the body;

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- c. ¹⁴ and God raised the Lord
- d. and will raise us by his power.

Figure 2.4(2). Cameos 1–2 (1 Cor 6:13–14)

The parallels between these two stanzas are strong, and critical for Paul’s argument. The parallels can be summarized and seen as follows:

Food	Sex
Food is for the stomach	The body is for the Lord
The stomach is for food	The Lord is for the body
God—destroys stomach	God—raised the Lord
God—destroys food	God—will raise us (our bodies)

~~Each line has its matching line. This step parallelism is as old as Isaiah 55:10–11. Apparently the Corinthians were arguing that food and sex were parallel. It is possible that the first two lines of stanza 1 are quoted from their argument. They say, “Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food,” meaning that both are destined for destruction. Sexual appetites, they seem to have argued, were in the same category because the body dies and the soul is immortal. The Gnostic/Stoic rejection of the body is clearly behind such thinking. Paul had another view.~~

~~Using carefully chosen words, Paul wrote: God raised the Lord (that is, his body) and he will raise us (that is, our bodies). There is a balancing of terms that makes us = our bodies. In explaining Paul, Rudolf Bultmann has written, “man does not have a soma [body]; he is a soma [body].”~~ The resurrection of the Lord assures the resurrection of the body for the believers, and the future resurrection of our bodies is determinative for how we behave sexually in this life.

James Moffat observes that Paul does not attack sexual immorality as a menace to public health or as a case of psychological unfairness to one of the partners, but as “a sin that strikes at the roots of the personality which is to flower into a risen life.” In short, if I take my body with me beyond death, then any permanent damage that I inflict on it in this life has eternal significance. Paul is objecting to the *dehumanizing* of sex that takes place when it is turned into a form of entertainment and made parallel to food. Paul is rejecting the view that says “I feel hungry—I eat. I feel sexual desire—I engage in sex.”

The alignment of Paul’s phrases is extremely precise. When the first lines of each stanza are put together this is evident. They read:

- 1a. Food is meant *for the stomach*
 2a. The body is not for prostitution, but *for the Lord*

Paul seems to be saying, the Christian must understand that if his or her body is *for* the Lord, it cannot be *for* prostitution at the same time. If this is part of Paul’s intention, we could conclude that marriage is also incompatible with a commitment of the body *for the Lord*. But in cameos 5–7 Paul clearly does not come to that conclusion. There he is careful to point out that he is *not* forbidding Christian marriage. More of this later.

Paul continues in 2b by writing, “and the Lord for the body.” This has the unmistakable ring of double meanings. The term *body* certainly means the individual body of the believer, but also carries overtones of the community body, the church. The Lord is *for the body*, and *the body* is both of these. In this text one meaning seems to shade into another.

The crucial comparisons are between *the stomach* that is to be destroyed and *the body* that is to be raised. The advice given is: Do not damage the body with immorality because the body goes with you beyond death—it will be raised. Foods and stomachs are impermanent while bodies are permanent. Human sexuality, he affirms, is part of the inner core of the whole person called *the body*, and that body will be raised. Furthermore, that whole person (the body) will be affected negatively by immorality.

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This raises a problem. In 15:43 Paul affirms that the Spirit-formulated body will be raised in “glory” and “in power.” We are encouraged to believe from this language that in the resurrection the broken physical body of a dying cancer patient will be replaced with a Spirit-formulated body that is whole. Is Paul contradicting himself? Or is he discussing mysteries that are beyond both him and us? One beam of biblical light on this issue is the fact that Jesus’ resurrection body was most certainly a new glorious body. Yet he had scars on his hands and in his side. Paul seems to be saying “Don’t scar up *your own body*—it goes with you!”

Cameo 2 is not only related thematically to cameo 1, it is also the leading cameo for a larger statement of five cameos that come to a climax in a classical biblical text. The argument then repeats backwards in a near-perfect example of ring composition. This can be seen in figure 2.4(1) above.

The various pairs of balanced cameos deserve careful scrutiny. Cameos 2 and 10 are the outer envelope in the ring composition. Seen together they appear in figure 2.4(3).

Cameo 2 (resurrection)**Cameo 10 (the cross)**

^{13b} The *body* is not for prostitution but for the Lord,

^{19b} You are not your own;

and the Lord for the body;

²⁰ *you were bought with a price.*

¹⁴ and God *raised the Lord*

So glorify God in your *body*.

and will *raise us up* by his power.

Figure 2.4(3). Cameos 2 and 10 (1 Cor 6:13b–14, 19b–20)

Cameo 2 tells of the body that will be raised and affirms the importance of that *resurrection* for sexual ethics. Sexual conduct has to do with *the body*, and it will be raised. Cameo 10 concludes the discussion by reference to the price paid on *the cross* and its significance for “your [pl.] body [sing.]” The “body” that “belongs to the Lord” is central to each cameo. In the first, the body is affirmed to be “for the Lord,” and in the second the reader is reminded that “You are not your own” (that is: You belong to the Lord). The theme of “cross and resurrection” form a complementary pair.

An option for a slave in the first century was for him/her to slowly build up funds in an account in a local temple until her own price in the slave market was accumulated. He would then be “bought with a price” from his master by the priests of the temple and would formally become that god’s slave. Actually, he would be a free man. Adolf Deissmann writes,

A Christian slave of Corinth going up the path to the Acrocorinthus, ... would see towards the north-west the snowy peak of Parnassus rising clearer and clearer before him, and everyone knew that within the circuit of that commanding summit lay the shrines at which Apollo or Serapis or Aschlepius the Healer *bought slaves with a price, for freedom*. Then in the evening assembly was read the letter lately received from Ephesus, and straightway the new Healer was present in spirit with His worshippers giving them freedom from another slavery, *redeeming with a price* the bondmen of sin and the law.

Büchsel feels that “the details of sacral manumission need hardly be applied.” Conzelmann argues that Deissmann over-pressed his findings into a full theory of redemption.⁶ But Paul identifies Jesus with the Passover lamb only once (5:7). In making that identification Paul was not creating “a full theory of redemption.” Instead, he was unveiling an important aspect of the mystery of the atonement. The same can be said for the image of the manumission of the slave. The Corinthian slave believer was not set free from bondage to sin and death by saving his copper coins one after another for thirty years. Rather, God in Christ died on a cross to set him free. Here and elsewhere (1 Cor 7:23; Gal 3:13; 4:5) the text affirms that God paid a price for the believer and redeemed him or her. That price was the cross.

Turning to the final phrase in cameo 10, there is another possible Old Testament echo. Apart from 5:1–10, the only other case of incest in the Bible is in Amos where the prophet reports, “A man and his father go in to the same maiden” (Amos 2:7). Each account describes the problem in the same way. It is not a case of “a man and his son do so-and-so,” but in both texts we are told that “a man and his father do so-and-so.” It seems clear that the Amos passage is in Paul’s mind. Starting with this assumption, Amos affirms a case of incest and then laments, “so that my holy

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name is profaned.” The sin was certainly against the woman and against the father, but on another level it was a sin against God, whose holy name was thereby profaned. Amos uses the Hebrew word הָלַל (to profane). Change the Hebrew hard ה to a soft ה with a slight change in pronunciation or the slightest erasure and you have the word הָלַל (to praise). Amos says, “**Your sexual practice has become a הָלַל (profaning) of the name of God.” He seems to infer, “It should have been a הָלַל (an offering of praise) to a holy God.”** Only those with a Jewish background would have caught this play on words. Yet it is possible that such a nuance was in Paul’s mind as he wrote.

There is an important double meaning to the word “body” that was known to all of Paul’s readers. The “body” meant the physical body and also referred to the “body/church.” The Corinthians are told to glorify God in your (pl.) body (sing.). The phrase “your [pl.] body [sing.]” has in cameo 9 just been defined as a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit. Their corporate body (the church) is the place where they are to glorify God. No doubt the individual body of the believer is a key aspect of Paul’s focus here in cameo 10, but the communal body of Christ is unmistakably also intended. Defile the human body through sexual immorality and you defile the sanctuary which is the body of Christ. Because “you [pl.] were bought with a price” such defilement was abhorrent in the extreme.

Finally, in each cameo God is active *for the sake of the body*. In cameo 2d he will raise us up,” and in cameo 10 God in Christ buys them “with a price.”

In summary, in Paul’s mind the resurrection and the cross provide the larger theological framework within which human sexual practice is to find its appropriate forms of expression. Because of the *resurrection* the believer knows that her or his body will be raised and her or his sexual practice involves that body. Because of the *cross*, he or she is bought with a price and expected to use the physical body in a way that glorifies God, which brings us to the next pair of stanzas.

Cameo 3

¹⁵ Do you not know

that *our* bodies

are members of Christ

Cameo 9

¹⁹ Do you not know

that *your* [pl.] body [sing.]

is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit within you which you have from God?

The familiar diatribe formula “Do you not know” is repeated twice. In the second line the words are identical except for the shift from “our” to “your.” This shift is consistent with cameos 2 and 10. **That is, Paul begins this rhetorical structure with a plural (cameo 2) “raise us up” and ends with a singular (cameo 10) “your body.” My individual physical body is related to *our body* the church.**

Returning to cameos 3 and 9, the third line can be seen to carry the theological weight of the two cameos. Here Paul uses complementary images. **In the first (3) he tells his readers that they are *members of Christ*. In the balancing cameo (9) he affirms that the “*Holy Spirit* within” them is “*from God*.” They are a *naos*, a *sanctuary of the Holy Spirit*.** These spatial images are diagrammed in figure 2.4(4). See figure 2.4(5) for the two images combined.

Figure 2.4(4). The spatial images of 1 Corinthians 6:15, 19**Figure 2.4(5). The combined spatial images of 1 Corinthians 6:15, 19**

As early as chapter 2.3 we noted the Trinity was at work in purification. Now the Trinity appears again. The believer is *in Christ* and at the same time is a sanctuary of the *Holy Spirit* from *God*.

In the first pair of cameos (2 and 10) the reader is asked to formulate an understanding of sexual ethics within the theological framework of the *cross* and the *resurrection*. Here a second theological frame appears. This time it is the *Trinity*. Within the body is the *Holy Spirit* (from *God*) and that same body is *in Christ*. **This is a pointed rejection of Epicurean and Stoic thought where the Spirit (of God) unites only with the soul while the body is part of the brutes.**

Again, the phrase “your [pl.] body” in cameo 9 carries the overtones of body/church. This double meaning attached to “the body” becomes a significant part of the second half of this homily. In cameo 3 there is reference to “bodies” and to “members” of Christ. The reference is to individual bodies (united in Christ). But in cameo 9 the

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language shifts to “your [pl.] body [sing.]” Paul is not merely interested in the personal/bodily health and destiny of the individual, but also in the health of the *whole body of Christ*. This point was already affirmed in 1 Corinthians 5, where Paul expressed anxiety over how libertinism was damaging the health of the corporate body of Christ. In the two outer envelopes **Paul sets sexual ethics into three great frames of reference. The first has to do with the cross and the resurrection. The second is the Trinity, and the third relates to the church.**

The eschatology of the passage is also worthy of note. Inheriting the kingdom is in the *future*. The unrighteous “*will not inherit the kingdom*,” and God “*will raise us up by his power*.” As regards the *present*, even now our bodies “*are members of Christ*.” The *past* is important because in that past “*God raised the Lord*” and in the *past* believers were “*bought with a price*.” So the believer is already united with the body of the risen Lord *in the present* even though “*inheritance of the kingdom*” and “*the resurrection*” are *in the future*.

In the center of the homily Paul turns from the great positives of the cross, the resurrection, the Trinity and the body of Christ to a strong set of negatives:

Cameo 4

^{15b} So taking away the members of Christ

Shall I make them members of a prostitute?

May it never be!

Cameo 8

¹⁸ Flee from prostitution!

Every other sin *is* ... outside his body

but the immoral man sins against his own body.

Each of these passionately stated cameos contains an emphatic negative imperative. The first (4) is the familiar *me genoito* (**may it never be**) common in Romans. This is Paul’s negative assertion against something that for him is blatantly impossible. The imperative of cameo 8 may well have an Old Testament image behind it. Paul may be calling on his readers to imitate Joseph. When faced with the temptation to sexual immorality with Potiphar’s wife, Joseph ran out of the house (Gen 39:7–12). Paul commands the Corinthians to *flee* from the sacred prostitutes who roam the city. At the very end of the hymn to love **Paul will tell them to “run after love” (14:1). They are to run away from the prostitutes, turn around, and run after the love of God.**

In cameo 4 Paul focuses on the individual. He may be using his language imprecisely, but in light of the remarkable precision of expression in the rest of the structure it is doubtful. He affirms, “So taking away the members [pl.] of Christ shall I [sing.] make them members [pl.] of a prostitute?” Paul is making a statement about the inherent nature of sexual relations that is in total harmony with the Old Testament Scripture he is about to quote. For Paul, in sexual intercourse the *whole body*, that is *the whole person* becomes one flesh with the sexual partner.

Furthermore, Paul describes a wrenching process. The verb he uses is *airo*, which ordinarily means “take up” but here means “take away” and can carry the overtones of “take away by force.” It was the cry of the high priests who before Pilate shouted, “Away with him” (Jn 19:15). The believer’s body/self is joined to the body of Christ (cameo 3). Now that same body/self cannot be joined to another body (the prostitute) unless it is first *wrenched*, torn, taken away by force from Christ. The horror that Paul feels at this prospect evokes the cry, “May it never be!”

Cameo 8 is problematic. Drunkenness, suicide and gluttony are also sins against one’s own body. This particular *crux* is handled by various commentators in various ways. Conzelmann remarks that this argument is “of course formulated *ad hoc*,” and that for the moment Paul is only discussing this single case of offenses against the body. Conzelmann then gently chides Paul for showing a lack of concern for the prostitute and for “taking his cue from a Jewish saying which describes fornication as the direst of sins (Prov 6:25ff).” Moule suggests that the troubling phrase “every sin which a man commits is outside his body” is a Corinthian libertine slogan which Paul contradicts.¹³ Barrett considers C. F. D. Moule’s view, finds it attractive, but prefers to see Paul as writing “rather loosely.” Barrett quotes John Calvin with approval where Calvin writes, “My explanation is that he does not completely deny that there are other sins, which also bring dishonor and disgrace upon our bodies, but that he is simply saying that these other sins do not leave anything like the same filthy stain on our bodies as fornication does.”¹⁵

By contrast Dean Alford starts with the idea of “*from without*” and argues that the language is very precise and that drunkenness and gluttony are introduced *from without*, unlike fornication which comes from desire *within*. A fourth alternative is yet possible. As Conzelmann affirms: “the ‘body’ differs from the ‘belly’ in that ‘the body’ is destined for resurrection.”¹⁷ Drunkenness, gluttony, suicide are against the physical part of a person that is to be destroyed by death. Fornication damages the self that is destined for resurrection. Fornication for Paul is thus unique among sins in that it is indeed “against *the body*.” Hering catches this when he writes, “Has he [Paul] forgotten

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gluttony, drunkenness, suicide? No doubt for reasons we have mentioned he attributes to ‘porneia,’ a destructive quality with metaphysical repercussions.”

Other sins do not necessarily take the believer by force away from the body of Christ and join him or her to a new body. In Paul’s view fornication does. As such it is singled out.

Paul’s remarkable discussion breaks new ground. On the one hand, Paul cannot merely read the seventh commandment to them. They could counter that this is strictly a commercial arrangement. Especially if the person involved was unmarried, no covenant with another person would be broken. That is, they would not (in such a case) be “committing adultery.” On the other hand, Paul cannot allow for the Gnostic view that the body is evil and doomed to pass away. Rather than speaking in general terms Paul’s language is again precise. The one sin that profoundly affects the *body* (now a part of Christ, destined to be resurrected) is the tearing of it away from the body of Christ and the joining of it to a prostitute. Within this pair of bold negatives (4, 8) he comes to the climax of his discussion [see fig. 2.4(6)].

5. ¹⁶Do you not know that the one joining a prostitute

becomes *one body with her*?

6. For it is written,

“The *two* shall become *one flesh*.”

7. ¹⁷But the one joining to the Lord

becomes *one spirit with him*.

Figure 2.4(6). Cameos 5–7 (1 Cor 6:16–17)

No doubt the libertines at Corinth argued that fornication with prostitutes did not constitute any significant union with the woman involved. There was no love, and no ongoing relationship. Paul affirms in cameos 5 and 6 that *any* act of sexual intercourse necessarily creates a new unity. D. S. Bailey commends Paul’s “profound and realistic treatment of coitus.” Bailey writes regarding this passage,

Here his [Paul’s] thought apparently owes nothing to any antecedent notions, and displays a psychological insight into human sexuality which is altogether exceptional by first-century standards. The Apostle denies that coitus is, as the Corinthians would have it, merely a detached and (as it were) peripheral function ... of the genital organs. On the contrary, he insists that it is an act which, by reason of its very nature, engages and expresses the whole personality in such a way as to constitute a unique mode of self-disclosure and self-commitment.

By comparing cameo 5 and cameo 7 Paul sees uniting with a prostitute as incompatible to joining with the Lord and becoming “one *spirit* with him.” In this latter phrase we expect Paul to say that we become “one *body* with him.” Paul’s carefully chosen phrases are remarkably crafted. If he had affirmed that the believer becomes “one *body*” with the Lord, then joining with *any* sexual partner and joining with the Lord would be completely parallel. In such a case there would be no room for Christian marriage. This would have pushed Paul over the edge into joining his ascetic (Gnostic) enemies by condemning all marriage as violating the unity of the believer with the body of Christ. Paul emphatically disagrees and thus, in chapter 7, he is able to affirm a place for sanctified marriage. As Conzelmann notes, “‘One spirit with him’ explains what is the nature of this one body.”

In ring composition there is often a turning point just past the center; such a device is used in this homily. The turning point is in stanza 7. With the word *but* the argument shifts dramatically, and the theme of becoming *one spirit* with the Lord is introduced.

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This same compatibility between marriage and the giving of the whole person to God is again affirmed when the connection between the center and the outside of this ring composition is noted.

The climax in ring composition is usually the center. In this case a Scripture quotation (Gen 2:24) appears in that climactic center. In addition, the theme of the “two becoming one” that appears in the quoted Scripture is repeated (with different nuances) three times (in cameos 5–7).

The summary of the beginning, the center and the end of the structure appears in figure 2.4(7).

2. ¹³ The body is ... for the Lord
and the Lord for the body.
6. ^{16b} For it is written.
“The two shall become one flesh.”
10. ^{19b} You are not your own ...
so glorify God in your body.

Figure 2.4(7). The beginning, the center and the end of 1 Corinthians 6:13–20

In Paul’s mind, affirming that the “body is ... for the Lord” (2) and the glorifying of “God in your body” (10) is fully compatible with a man and a woman becoming “one flesh” (6).

In summary, this remarkable passage can be seen as a carefully written piece of Pauline theological rhetoric that uses a variety of ancient prophetic styles. Words are selected with care and placed in parallel phrases following well-established Hebrew patterns.

The foundation of a new sexual ethic is not grounded in abstract philosophical principles. There is no discussion of social responsibility for the potential newborn child or the possibility of disease. Inheriting property and complications in family life are not mentioned. Libertinism is rejected in the light of the cross, the resurrection, the participation in the body of Christ and the Trinity. Sexual immorality is seen as a forcible separation from Christ and as a forming of new unions destructive to the body/church.

The discussion is tied to the end of all things. The believer *is* part of the body of Christ and he or she *shall* be raised. Flesh and blood will not inherit the kingdom of God, but believers are cleansed, justified and sanctified.

The law is not fashioned into a club and used to administer a beating, but the loyalties of a new relationship and a new identity are set forth. The passage is Paul’s foundation for Christian sexual ethics. When his style is observed the passage no longer appears “somewhat disjointed and obscure.” Rather it surfaces as a carefully ordered theological and ethical statement of Paul’s views.

Paul first exposed the problem (chap. 2.1), and then removed three roadblocks to finding a solution (chap. 2.2). Next came a theological foundation for human sexuality (chaps. 2.3–2.4). He is now ready to discuss patterns of sexual practice that are in harmony with those foundations (chap. 2.5).⁴

⁴ Bailey, K. E. (2011). *Paul through Mediterranean Eyes: Cultural Studies in 1 Corinthians* (pp. 153–195). Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.