

Our Body, God's Body

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[0 : 00] Okay. How you guys doing? You know, I asked that for a reason, but it's not to get a great response, but it's to get an average response.

So how you guys doing? Okay? Yeah, that's good. That's good. That's much better. Hey, so, you know, what was I thinking, right? What was I thinking? You read the passage today, right? And you're looking at things, and you're realizing that if you're studying a book and you're reading it, of course, chapter 6 comes after chapter 5.

If you skip to chapter 10, people will be going, what the heck? What's going on? What's happening? And so we're at chapter 6 today, and I realize even as we do this, we're on this journey. And I shared with you last week just that I'm not always the greatest communicator, and I realize that.

My wife lets me know that often when we have arguments or discussions or trying to talk to the kids. And so I realized that sometimes I need to come back and clarify.

And I love being in this church, this international church. You know, if I were back in Texas or Montana or someplace in the States, everybody would understand exactly what I say, but now they don't understand what I say.

[1 : 12] And so I need to clarify sometimes, right? So I want to clarify just something I said in the last sermon. So I have a little slide for you here. So this is a clarification of Texas language. So on the left is a buoy.

So it's something that floats in the water and protects the shipping lanes and all that. In the center is a buoy. So it's a buoy and a buoy. And on the far right, there's a buoy on a buoy.

It's not a buoy on a buoy. That's what today's passage is about. But it's about a buoy on a buoy. Okay, I had to go there. I don't know. Maybe I should have gone there. So I just wanted to clarify that, okay?

So buoy, buoy, buoy on buoy. Okay, that's good. So I'm sure that I'll have to clarify some of the words that I use today just as I looked at this passage and some of the things came to my mind.

But seriously, you know, we're in this journey as a church, and we're talking about a church that I think is very similar to what Watermark is like, and it's the Church of Corinth. And the Church of Corinth was struggling with some massive issues in their lives.

[2 : 12] One of the biggest things they struggled with was just this idea of what the church is. It is a church of community. And I think we struggle with it also, if we're honest. What is the church? Is the church just a club that you come to on Sundays and then you leave?

And, you know, you're not really responsible for the people here. And they struggled with those things, and we struggle with those things. And we talked about how the church is this body of people, God's people, saints, holy, called out, set apart, light in darkness, city on a hill, salt in the midst of no taste in the world, different.

And they're in a boat together. We're in this boat together. We're on this journey together as Christians. And so often we have this journey of our Christian life as we're in these little rowboats.

And we're just by ourselves, and we hook our rowboats up to everybody else's rowboat, and that's a church. But that's not what Paul says, and that's not what Jesus said. The church is something greater than that. It's a community. And because we've lost this idea of community with the church, we've lost this idea of sin and how sin affects the church and how sin affects our lives.

I had some great discussions last week after this talk in Chapter 5, and some people came up to me, and they said, you know, I realize now that I see in business when you have somebody who's not acting right how that affects the business.

[3 : 33] And I know in my family when you have somebody who's not acting right because we have people in my family who are alcoholics, and alcoholics change the dynamic of everything, and it affects everything. But I never thought about what happens when people in the church don't act right and how it affects everybody.

And that's what the Corinthian church is learning, that all of us affect everybody, that you're beside people that you need. God put you here so that you could rub on those people, talk to them. They could encourage you.

They could pray for you. They could know your story. And you're by people who need you. They need your spiritual gifts and your talents and all the things that God has placed in you. And because we've lost this idea, we forget what sin is like.

And so I've given a kind of definition for today as we talk about it, and it's up here again on the slide. So I said that sin is this desire, this power, this impulse. It's a longing within us that rejects loving and obeying God.

And if we follow this action, if we give in to this impulse, then it leads to actions and inactions and words and thoughts that come from following it. That we act and we do things and we don't do things that we should do.

[4 : 40] And what we've been learning throughout all Scripture is that this sin, it comes into our life and it disorders our worship. I mean, it disorders our worship. It breaks, I've used these words before, like it fractures, it fragments.

But sin comes in and it disorders our worship. Instead of worshiping God, we worship creatures and created things and all these other things. And sin comes into our life and it disorders our beliefs. It changes our beliefs.

It changes our thinking. We don't ever say now, well, what does God's word say about that? Or what should we do? But we say things like, well, is it legal? And is it permissible? And what does the culture say about it?

And if I say this, well, I get in trouble. So sin comes in and it disorders our beliefs. It disorders our thinkings. Sin also comes in and it disorders our desires. It changes our desires.

God gave us these desires to walk with him and to seek his face and to be in community and to serve others. And instead, sin comes in and it makes us selfish and self-centered.

[5 : 37] And it just disorders everything. And then sin disorders our behavior. So when your desires are disordered, then your behavior is going to be disordered. And so you just start acting differently than what you're supposed to be.

And so that's what happens in our lives. And so I want to continue to look at this church at Corinth. And we're going to talk about a topic today. And just pray for me. It's like one of these big hot potatoes.

It's like one of the nuclear bombs of the church today, I think. And I think it's killing us as Christians. Because it killed the church in Corinth. It was tearing them apart.

And we're going to look at this idea of sex. So if you have a kiddo with you, just be aware of that. It's not going to get graphic. But it's going to be a great opportunity for you to talk to them about it.

Because no one ever wants to talk to their kids about sex. But now you're going to have to because you're going to say, Pastor Tobin talked about it. So we need to talk about it. So hopefully this has given you a chance to talk to your kids afterwards. And remember, Corinth was this massive city on this peninsula of two harbors.

[6 : 41] And it was just the sailor city. And most historians, when you read these guys, the Romans and the Greeks and Josephus, they say that it was probably the most immoral city in the world.

It was just out of control in the ancient world. To be called a Corinthian meant that you were worldly wise. It wasn't a good thing to be called a Corinthian. It was a slam. It meant that you were kind of like a prostitute.

A Corinthian girl was a word for a prostitute. And so if you're standing by the water cooler today or the Diet Coke machine in your office and you hear somebody say, well, they're quite the Corinthian, you know what they mean.

It means that they were just, they're sexually immoral. And this passage today, whenever you see the word immorality, in Greek it means sexual immorality.

In Greek the word actually is pornea. It means like we get pornography from it. And so pornea is this catch-all term in Greek language and in Bible theology.

[7 : 41] And it basically means sex, any kind of sex with somebody who's not married to you is pornea. So anytime you have sex with somebody who's not married to you, and the Bible defines this type of sex in four different ways.

There's four different types of sex with people not married to you. We're not going to go into those. But it was a huge thing in the church of Corinth, and it was destroying them, and they were just dying. So I want to talk about this idea of sex, and I want to look at it today.

I want to talk about kind of what God's design is for sex. I kind of want to talk about the problem the church had in Corinth and we have today with sex. And then I want to look at our response, how we should respond to the world around us and the people around us.

And again, this is going to be only 30 minutes, guys, so it's going to be this foundation. So hopefully we'll just keep building on it. And if I say something that makes you angry, come up here and tell me that you're angry. And let's talk about these things because that's what a family does.

We don't just walk away angry. We talk and we engage people. And I realize there's probably no topic that carries so much pain in it as sex does in people's lives.

[8 : 50] And I have the incredible privilege of counseling people as a pastor and hearing their stories and going into the world. And I just see scars. And I see pain. And I see heartache.

And I see brokenness. And I see emptiness. And it's intense as I talk to people. And I realize that sex is this thing that has this incredible capacity to lift us up.

It has this incredible capacity to just destroy us and devastate us for generations. And, guys, let's be honest, you know. I'm 52 years old. And my parents still have not had the sex talk with me.

I mean, I guess they figured that I figured it out because I got four kids. But my parents never talked to me about sex. They threatened us as kids about sex. We had this little book called The Puppy Book.

And when they wanted to threaten you about being bad, they go, okay, we're going to open up the puppy book. And we're going to talk about sex. And I had to go through the puppy book one time. It didn't really talk a lot about sex. It just talked about two puppies. And there's a boy puppy and a girl puppy.

[9 : 51] And they're in love. And they go into another room. And they come out of the room. And they have puppies. So I'm always wondering what the heck's going on in the other room, right? Because somehow more puppies are being made.

But that's it. So my hope is that we can start this conversation as a church and talk about this thing, about sex. Because, you know, the Bible has a ton of things to talk about sex. I mean, most people that you're going to run into in your office place and your work and your family, they're going to think that God is down on sex.

He hates sex. But it's just the opposite. The Bible elevates sex to this huge level. I mean, it talks about sex. The very first commandment God gave the woman and the man in the garden was be fruitful and multiply.

Did you know that? Now, I know in Hong Kong, when you hear that, what you think it means is buy a lot of apartments. But be fruitful and multiply in the Bible doesn't mean buy a lot of apartments.

It means be fruitful and multiply. Okay. So I want to talk about this today. And I have this burden on my heart because as I talk to people in Hong Kong and the rest of the world who are not in the family of God, and mostly when I talk to singles, and I talk to them about Christianity, and I talk to them about coming to Christ, almost without exception, a lot of them will tell me that they don't want to do it because they're worried that Christianity will hinder their sex life.

[11 : 23] They said they don't want to have anything to do with Christianity because it will not allow them to have sex with the people that they want to have sex with. And, you know, just this last Friday, I had a conversation with a guy, and he basically said the exact same thing to me.

And he's come to church occasionally, and he's kind of checking things out. But what's holding him back is he just wants to fornicate with whoever he wants to fornicate with. And he doesn't want to get married.

And so it struggles with him. And another thing that's really interesting to me, guys, is that my gay friends and my heterosexual friends, they both answer the same way.

They both say they don't want to come to Christ because they don't want to give up their sexuality because that's who they are. However, sometimes if I'm daring or if I'm upset or if I'm just frustrated with them, I might ask them a question.

I might just say, well, tell me, how is it going for you? How is sex outside of marriage working for you? Is it simpler or more complicated? And more often than not, they look at me and go, wow, it's just really complicated.

[12 : 31] And I say, yeah, it is. And the church of Corinth today, they're just going to say it's just sex. It's just like eating. But I think that most of us in here probably know that it's not that simple.

That there's a potential to be devastated and to destroy us and to hurt us. In Genesis chapter 2, I don't have it printed in your bulletin.

I have my Bible here. In Genesis chapter 2, God creates this thing called passion. 2.22, he says, Now, he's not really creative there, but he's trying.

He says, And so when you read the scripture there, you realize that God created sex.

He created love. He created passion. He brings all these things together. And when he talks about these things, he says that the man and the woman are to start a new family, and they are to become united.

[13 : 46] One flesh. Now, in Hebrew, it doesn't just mean massive sex. United doesn't just mean sex, but it means that when a man and a woman come together, they create a new relationship.

That they create this loyalty. That they, and the Hebrew word actually means that they're glued together, that they're united. The word flesh actually means this is total commitment.

It's not just physical, but it's emotional and social and economic. It's your whole life. So in the Bible, when it talks about you getting married, it means that your whole life comes together with another person's whole life, and you just merge in there, and that's what happens.

And sex comes in, and the church today, and the church in Corinth treated sex just like a transaction. But the Bible says, no, it's not just a transaction. But when something happens in there, there's a spiritual bonding, and there's this level of your being that's coming together.

And basically what it says in Hebrew is that when you get married and you come together with anybody, when you have sex with anybody, what you're doing is you're giving up your independence. You're giving up your rights.

[14 : 52] You're making a commitment to that person. You're merging with that person. The Bible even says that it's changing your soul, that when you have sex with a person, it impacts you so greatly that it changes your soul.

And some of the words that the early theologians and historians would say is that sex was kind of like communion. Sex was kind of like communion. And communion is, you know, we've talked about that.

It's basically this idea that it's an outward symbol of something inwardly that's happened into you. And so when Genesis says they were naked and not ashamed, it doesn't mean they were just buck naked. Now, I know I'm going to have to explain what buck naked is next week, but it doesn't mean that they're just no clothes on, but it means that they are real with each other.

It means that they're authentic with each other. It means that they are honest with each other. It means that they're vulnerable to each other. It means that they're dependent upon each other.

It means, in Hebrew, it's a sacrament. It means holy. Now, I don't know how you feel if you're married and you're listening to this, but hopefully you're thinking, is that what my marriage is like?

[16 : 05] Am I connecting with that person like God has called me to do? And if you're single in here, you're thinking, wow, I need to think about what kind of person I want to connect to because this is pretty serious.

And what we're told in the passage is that the church was in the middle of this culture that was sex crazy. It was just totally disordered, and people were struggling, and people didn't know what to do.

And when you read the passage, it's really strange because you don't know if they just forgot what Paul taught them or if they just don't want to know what Paul taught them. But he says over and over, at least four times, don't you know?

Don't you know? Don't you know? And what he's saying is I've already talked to you about these things. These are the things we've already talked about. These aren't anything new. Don't you remember? And so the church was struggling inside, and verse 12 begins that struggle.

It says they had this saying, and they would say, you know, all things are lawful for me. And what it means is I can do anything. I'm a Christian now. The Mosaic law doesn't apply anymore.

[17 : 06] I'm justified by Christ. I'm justified by grace. I have total freedom. I'm free to sin. Sexually, the culture is saying anything goes. I mean, Corinth was a city where if you said, well, what's the legal thing to do?

They would have said, you can do anything you want. And so the church is in there, and everything is going, and everything is free, and everything is free game. And so the church is struggling with, well, what do we do when everything is permissible, and everything is right in our culture?

How do we handle that? And they were just getting crushed because they assumed that just because something was legal means that it's moral. Did you hear what I said?

They assumed that just because something was legal means that it was moral. And many of us do that in the workplace. And many of us do that in our lives. But that Bible says that that's not true.

And so Paul comes in after each one of these sentences, and he says, but. He says, yeah, yeah, yeah, you're free, but your behavior isn't good still. Your behavior is going to be self-indulgent. It's going to be self-serving.

[18 : 06] And ultimately, your behavior is going to destroy you. He's saying, you and I, we have tons of amount of freedom. As Christians, we can do a lot of things, but we need to ask ourselves, is what we're doing wise?

Are we doing the wisest thing with our time? Are we doing the wisest thing with our money? Are we doing the wisest thing with our eyes that we're focusing on? Are we doing the wisest thing when our mind dwells on something?

That we can dwell on a lot of these things, but is it really profitable to me? Or will it hurt me? Will it destroy me?

Paul is saying, maybe we should be asking the question, whatever I'm doing in my freedom, is it really profitable to the people around me? I mean, maybe I'm just being very personal, right?

So you can leave because your pastor is a sinner, right? But I am. But just growing up, you know, I'm watching these movies, and they're not bad movies, but they're permissible movies, and they're affecting me, and they're changing me.

[19 : 09] And so I needed to ask myself, am I becoming a better friend after I watch these movies? Am I becoming a better person after I watch these movies? Am I becoming a better boss or employee after I listen to this or do this or hang out with those people or I buy these products?

Is these things affecting me? Am I a better dad? Am I a better husband? Am I better be able to do this or do you? I'm doing things that I want to do. And Paul warns the church, and he warns us, you've got to be careful.

You have the incredible amount of freedom, but it might not be the best thing for you. And so the way to ask that is, is it the best thing for the people around you? he asks it again in verse 12 all things are lawful for me the exact same thing that they're saying everything is possible we can do it we're freedom we're freedom in Christ the culture says do it but then Paul comes back but he says but you're not going to be mastered by anything he says be careful Tobin because there's things that you can do but these things can become addictive and these things can grab you and put you into bondage and hurt you and they can gain control in your life and they're okay right now but if you don't moderate your life if you don't have people asking you questions you can be destroyed you can be pulled back into bondage it's like the passage in Exodus the people leave Egypt and they're happy and they're free but all of a sudden within about three days they want to go back to Egypt and he says in the same way you and I are like that in our lives we've been free but in the same way you and I struggle with wanting to go back into bondage because we are using these freedoms to do what we want to do but it's destroying us the first person or the second person

I ever saw die in a trauma unit was alcoholic I sat over his bed he was going through DTs he was drying out trying to dry out because he had tried many other times and as this guy shook his body to death right in front of me and he was crying oh Jesus oh Jesus he died and I'm looking at him I'm looking at my mind I'm thinking I wonder if he thought when he took that first drink he would end up here and so Paul is warning you and I that we have a lot of freedom but some of these things that we can go to are going to destroy us eventually the church struggled with that the people just wanted to hop down to the temple and have a prostitute because a prostitute was a casual thing it wasn't a long term relationship no one got hurt it was just an innocent thing and it was legal but Paul said yeah but morally you're destroying yourself yeah Jesus is going to forgive you yeah you're right and the culture is saying it's great but you're putting you're putting pain in your heart you're hurting yourself you're destroying yourself and the freedom that you're having is not good and he says the freedom that you're having isn't not just good for you but it's hurting everybody around you it's like that illustration I used last week in the boat and the guy's drilling a hole in the boat and you're looking at him because you're in the boat with him and you're going what are you doing and he goes well this is my area and sometimes in a church we just think this is my area and we don't think that affects the whole boat but it sinks the boat and so Paul's trying to warn the church that you're sinking the church because you're using these freedoms and your freedoms are just destroying yourself maybe the question

I should ask or maybe the question we should ask as a church and as a family is do these freedoms make me a better person to hang around as I live out my life and I do these things am I a better person and people loving me more or am I hurtful and less friendly and less nice to be around one last thing the church struggled with and this is a massive thing it's in verse 13 and basically what he's just saying is it's food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food and what they said in their life this is the church now they said it's just sex it's just like food you need food to meet your physical needs so you need sex to meet your you need sex to meet your physical needs and God made it this way and by the way remember the Greeks thought that everything physical was terrible and bad and your body's gonna fall apart and so there's no need to take care of your body because it's just physical and it's temporal but what you want to take care of is your soul and sex doesn't impact your soul and it doesn't impact your soul then you can do anything you want because it's not spiritual and we've already learned that it is spiritual and they were impacting their souls and they're impacting their bodies and they didn't even know that and Paul says hey you're destroying yourselves and this body that you think is gonna be destroyed for some reason

[24 : 04] God has in his great plan and we're gonna talk about this later in Corinthians he's gonna raise your body up did you know that? that when he comes back again your body's gonna be made new and it's gonna be made holy and he's gonna raise your body up and there seems to be this imagery here he's telling us be careful how many scars you put on your body be careful how you scar your body because you're gonna have those scars you know Jesus has scars right?

you go to heaven the only man made things in heaven are these scars in Jesus' hands and he got those scars because of you and me and Paul is begging the church it's not just casual sex it's not something that you can just do and be independent it's not something that doesn't involve a relationship it's not something that is freedom it's not something that you can just leave your options open because if you move in this way if you act self-centered if you act selfishly it's gonna destroy you it's gonna break your body and the problem is that some of us have our body so broken that when we come into other relationships and we try to have a meaningful relationship with people we can't do it because it's so scarred it's like every time you have sex you pour a little bit of yourself out into that person's life and you pour a little bit of yourself out into that person's life and then when you finally find the person you wanna spend your life with your cup is empty and it's cracked and it's scarred and you just can't you just can't cope for 30 years

Christina for me and then Christina is together we've been doing marriage counseling you know what the number one reason people get divorce is you might think it's money but it's not money the number one reason people get divorce is because they were sexually active before they got married with their partner or with some other spouses and this activity has so scarred their hearts and their bodies that when it comes down to have a meaningful relationship they just can't do it and so we see people in counseling and there's this tension there there's this brokenness there there's these scars there and they're trying to figure out why can't I talk to this person why can't I love this person the way that they love me why doesn't this thing work and often it's because they've chosen to use their bodies in a disordered way and the consequences of that disorderedness prevents them from having a relationship that they want does that make sense

C.S. Lewis said it like this in the Screwtape Letters Screwtape Letters is a great book about these demons talking about how they're going to drag people down and away from Jesus and this is what he says he says each time a man and a woman enters into a sexual relationship there's a spiritual bond that is formed and this bond this spiritual bond must be either eternally enjoyed or eternally endured this bond that you form whenever you have sex with any person it's not just sex it's not just casual that it is bonding you're giving yourself parts of yourself to this person and that bond you'll either enjoy for the rest of your life or you're going to regret it the rest of your life Lewis goes on and he says the reason that God takes sexual sin so seriously is because it corrupts and it shatters spiritual relationships sexual sin shatters our bodies it shatters our relationship with God it shatters your relationships with the people around you it shatters your relationship with your future husband or your wife and God takes it incredibly incredibly serious and when Paul said this guys people looked at him and they thought he was an idiot because up until this point food was sex and sex was food but when Paul says this in 1 Corinthians he's lifting sex really high and he's elevating it above all things and not only is he lifting sex really high he's lifting women really high because you know until Paul started talking about these things women in every society was down here so in Corinth if you were a man you could have sex with whoever you wanted even after you were married you could have sex with whoever you wanted it didn't really matter but if you're a woman and you're married you couldn't have sex with anybody else you could only have sex with your husband throughout history until Christianity came on the scene women were always devalued and put down and Paul elevates them he elevates singleness he elevates marriage he elevates sex and he puts all these things on his pedestal and he says no this isn't how you should do it this is how you should do it so what do we do now?

we know that we're disordered we know that we're thinking wrong we know that our activities are wrong what do we do? and Paul says it in verses 14 through 20 he says hey understand that as you walk that Christ is always with you understand that as you walk as a Christian that Christ is in you that he's beside you that your bodies were created as his temple and now as Christians God's spirit lives within us that our bodies aren't our own but they're God's and they've been given to God so that we could serve him so it's kind of why he says in verse 18 flee immorality it's really strong words and he says when that thing gets near your body you need to run away and get away from it because if you don't it's going to destroy you it's going to destroy you and it's going to destroy everybody around you and I think the problem with us as Christians is we don't take that seriously I mean we say things like you know yeah but you know

[29 : 55] I really love that person yeah you know I really we're going to get married someday and it's going to be okay you know I really care about them you know my husband doesn't meet all my emotional needs that I need but this guy treats me so tenderly you know my wife doesn't really fulfill all my sexual desires and my need for release and so I need to go here you know porn isn't really that bad because it it makes me feel in control and it makes me feel good about myself because the rest of my time I don't feel very good about myself you know it's not really immoral it's just it's legal but it's not really that bad and what Paul is saying to you and I in the church is that all these things are just symptoms and samples of our disorderedness and we've lost his holiness and what he's looking at so the question maybe is this what values do you hold are your values disordered where do you get where do you get where do you get your morals you get them from the Wall Street Journal

South China Morning Post Oprah Newsweek I mean there's a lot of us as Christians in the family of God and we're living like good Corinthians we're living like good Corinthians with what we watch what we spend our money on how we serve and the question is are we different than the world around us are we one last thing and we'll end for me this is this is an incredibly hard passage but it's probably no passage that I know of that's filled with more hope and grace and care in all the scripture and if you look at verses 11 and verse 20

Paul says some of you are just like this but you were washed means that you had God's Holy Spirit fill you and change you some of you are just like this but you were sanctified you were made holy for God's service some of you are just like these people but you were justified you were counted righteous by what Christ did on the cross in his spirit all of us he says you're bought with a price God loves you so much he wanted to redeem your broken body so much that he breaks his own body on a cross so that you might be made whole and new Paul is trying to teach us in this passage guys the only thing that can reorder our lives the only thing that can reorder our beliefs the only thing that can reorder our thinking the only thing that can reorder our desires the only thing that can reorder our behavior is the cross is Jesus Christ before you go back to bed tonight go back through this verse and I want you to notice one thing

Paul doesn't come at us and say shame on you for doing that you shouldn't be doing that Paul doesn't say don't do that because you're going to get STD or you're going to get AIDS or something bad is going to happen don't do that Paul doesn't come in and just heavy handedly hit you and beat you and tell you how terrible we are but what he does instead is he just looks at the cross he says remember what Jesus has done for you remember how he's broken for you remember how he died to make you whole remember how he died to fix the brokenness in your cup it's not about anger it's not about wrath it's not about consequences per se but what he's saying is it's about love and it's about grace what this passage says is there's nothing you've done there's no mistake that you've done sexually or with your money or with your finances or with relationships there's nothing that you've done that

God doesn't know about and he isn't ready to heal there's no amount of disorder in your life that can't be fixed because the cross can fix everything so Paul doesn't say shame on you you shouldn't have done that you shouldn't have done these things you shouldn't have looked at that you shouldn't have acted this way but what he says is just look at what God's done for you and as you look at those things we want you to respond and understand how much he loves you and how much he cares for you and how much he wants to be with you I had to work through a lot of scars before I realized that in my life and I'm still feeling the consequences of some of those scars but what the passage says is God knows he's ready to heal us if we let him if we want to you know when we started

[36 : 15] Watermark we said that we wanted to be a community that was different than the culture we wanted to be a family that could discuss pray help confess forgive and heal each other Watermark is a community of disordered broken fractured sinful people who are on a journey together being healed by the cross don't ever forget that don't ever forget that church of Corinth forgot that because of that they were getting destroyed and eaten up by the culture around them one action point I want to give you you're going to leave here today and you're going to go through your work and your business and your home and your family this week and you're going to have a ton of amount of freedom in your life you're going to be able to do a lot of things in the workplace and you're going to be able to do a lot of things at home and a lot of things in the restaurants that are totally legal but they might not be moral they might not be what honors the Lord and so before you do that would you ask yourself these questions that I'm wanting to ask myself if I do this will it make me more spiritually mature if I do this will help other people grow in their faith if I choose this will I be denying myself and serving the people around me that's a big one for me if I do this freedom this thing that I can do will I be denying myself instead of serving Tobin serve somebody else who needs to be served if I do this will I bring glory to God and it could be a ton of different things you could be dating a guy or a girl you could be hanging out with a group of people you could be having sex outside the office sex outside of marriage you could be fulfilling your sexual fantasies you could be taking a new job you could be watching things that are questionable you could be listening to things that are questionable you could be buying products that you hope will fulfill your life and make you happy and whole and great and happy you could be using your money in different ways and all of these things are not just sex because the passage isn't just about sex the passage is about your soul and how you choose to walk with the

Lord and is the cross enough or do we need something else that's what the passage is about he just uses sex as a vehicle because they were really struggling with it but we might be struggling with something else father we thank you for this day we thank you for your mercy and your grace we thank you that you come at us with your word you come at us with the cross I think most of us have never experienced that before because we're in a world where we're getting come at by pain and sorrow and harsh words and harsh languages you come at us as a father who loves his children so what I pray for us today as a church I pray that we would learn from the church of Corinth I pray that we wouldn't take advantage of our freedoms but we'd realize that they have an incredible capacity to do amazing things but they also have an incredible capacity to hurt to damage those around us and to bring us into bondage

Lord you've given us incredible amounts of freedom in the gospel as your people but still those freedoms have powers to change and to influence help us to be a church that uses that wisely help us to be a people that uses that wisely may we be able to say that we're better because of the freedoms because our freedoms are focused on others and on your son father I pray for those my brothers and sisters here right now who are struggling with Christianity maybe they're struggling with the sexuality part of it maybe they're struggling with they have to give up something maybe they have to give up their lifestyle and they know that they don't want to do that Lord I pray that you would meet them in their heart they would see your love for them and your desire to bring them to a place that is not disordered but has meaning and purpose and hope father help us to be a church that holds your grace and your freedom well that makes it attractive to those around us who are dying so they might see your son and fall in love with him father we love you we pray these things your son

Jesus name amen oh oh