

# Misc. Notes & Comments - Commentary on 1 Corinthians 5-6

## Background

A few years ago, an acquaintance was using some verses from this passage (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) to promote a popular "health fad." Because this passage was part of a context (chapters 5 and 6), I decided to study the passage as a whole, to see the extent that the verses *really* supported what the individual was promoting. This outline/commentary is the result of that study.

Needless to say, the apostle Paul had something else on his mind! [Even looking at just a *few* verses around 6:19-20 would show you this. I just wanted to look at the *entire* section, even though it wasn't necessary for coming to this obvious conclusion.]

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## About the Structure and Format of this Outline

This outline-commentary follows the paragraph structure of the NIV translation, although other translations were taken into consideration during the study. In the "web edition," I have used the World English Bible (public domain), due to copyright issues, so the wording may be slightly different. (You may wish to look at other translations, as you study these chapters.)

In the outline, comments that are placed in [brackets] are *added* comments which I believe help show the flow of thought through the passage. They do not necessarily correspond with direct statements within the text itself. Also, select verses from chapter 4 are included at the beginning of the outline, to show part of the *wider* context.

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# Commentary on 1 Corinthians 5 & 6

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## The Commentary Outline:

1. The Background (Context) of This Passage - A Few Comments About Chapter 4
  2. Dealing with Sin (5:1-8)
  3. Our Limits: Who Should We Judge? (5:9-13)
  4. Dealing with Disputes (6:1-8)
  5. The Basic Issue: Two Incompatible Ways of Life (6:9-11)
  6. Do We Have A "Right" to Do Anything We Want? (6:12-20)
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## The Background (Context) of This Passage: A Few Comments About The Connection With Chapter 4

1Co 4:6 Now these things, brothers, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that in us you might learn not to think beyond the things which are written, that none of you be puffed up against one another.  
...

1Co 4:18 Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you.

1Co 4:19 But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord is willing. And I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power.

1Co 4:20 For the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

1Co 4:21 What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?

*It is not our purpose to examine all of chapter 4, but there is something that needs pointed-out:*

*The word that is translated as "arrogance," "pride," or "puffed-up," is the same in 4:6 and 4:18-19, as in 5:2. The Corinthians are filled with pride, even though they are tolerating this sin in their midst!*

*Note also that their arrogant talk is contrasted to the power of Jesus. The two don't go together! (See 4:18-21.)*

- *The people think they are "something," when they are actually "nothing"!*
  - *The people are using themselves as their own "standard" of perfection! (Compare to 2 Corinthians 10:12.)*
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## DEALING WITH SIN

### (5:1-5)

1Co 5:1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles, that one has his father's wife.

1Co 5:2 You are puffed up, and didn't rather mourn, that he who had done this deed might be removed from among you.

1Co 5:3 For I most assuredly, as being absent in body but present in spirit, have already, as though I were present, judged him who has done this thing.

1Co 5:4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, you being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

1Co 5:5 are to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

### **I. There is sexual sin among you - a kind even worse than what is "normal" for pagans!**

**A.** You are filled with pride.

**B.** You should be filled with grief. You should oppose and discipline this individual. You should judge him (cease to associate with him - see v. 11).

1. Though not physically present, I have judged him.
2. When you are assembled, you must also judge him (with the power of Jesus).
  - o The purpose for this judgment is to destroy his "sinful nature" ("flesh") and to save his "spirit."
  - o [Godly discipline is an expression of *love*. It is *not* "retaliation" or a type of "negative conduct."]

### (5:6-8)

1Co 5:6 Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole lump?

1Co 5:7 Purge out the old yeast, that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed in our place.

1Co 5:8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old yeast, neither with the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

### **II. Your attitude of boastful pride is not good.**

**A.** Illustration (applied to the group): A little yeast "influences" a whole batch of dough. The dough represents the group; the yeast represents "malice and wickedness."

**B.** Get rid of the yeast (malice and wickedness) so that you can be what you really are - "unleavened" (filled with sincerity and truth). [We should be pure in God's sight, and not let sinful influences corrupt us. See also 15:33.]

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## OUR LIMITS: WHO SHOULD WE JUDGE?

(5:9-11)

1Co 5:9 I wrote to you in my letter to have no company with sexual sinners;

1Co 5:10 yet not at all meaning with the sexual sinners of this world, or with the covetous and extortioners, or with idolaters; for then you would have to leave the world.

1Co 5:11 But as it is, I wrote to you not to associate with anyone who is called a brother who is a sexual sinner, or covetous, or an idolater, or a slanderer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner. Don't even eat with such a person.

### III. Clarification: Who should we *not* judge (= not associate) with?

**A.** I do not refer to people of the world (we would have to leave this world).

**B.** I am referring to those who claim to be believers (Christians), yet continue to practice sin. Don't even "eat" with them - referring to fellowship. [See below: Two Incompatible Ways of Life.]

(5:12-13)

1Co 5:12 For what have I to do with also judging those who are outside? Don't you judge those who are within?

1Co 5:13 But those who are outside, God judges. "Put away the wicked man from among yourselves."

**C.** It's not your job to do this type of judging to "outsiders."

1. Deal with those who are "among you."
  2. [This requirement to deal with sin that is among us applies also to other types of sin, not just sexual sin and those mentioned in v.11. See the next section.]
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## DEALING WITH DISPUTES

(6:1-6)

<p>1Co 6:1 Dare any of you, having a matter against his neighbor, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?</p> <p>1Co 6:2 Don't you know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?</p> <p>1Co 6:3 Don't you know that we will judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?</p> <p>1Co 6:4 If then, you have to judge things pertaining to this life, do you set them to judge who are of no account in the assembly?</p> <p>1Co 6:5 I say this to move you to shame. Isn't there even one wise man among you who would be able to decide between his brothers?</p> <p>1Co 6:6 But brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers!</p>	<p><b>IV. When one person wrongs another...</b></p> <p><b>A.</b> How could you dare to stoop to the point of letting <i>ungodly</i> people, rather than <i>godly</i> ones (followers of Jesus), judge matters of dispute?</p> <p><b>B.</b> We Christians will someday judge the world. We will even judge angels! Can't you deal with your own trivial issues? Let the "nobodies" in the church deal with them! [Any genuine disciple - even a "nobody" - is more qualified than the ungodly are.]</p> <p><b>C.</b> You should be filled with shame! Isn't there a single qualified person among you? You're actually choosing to go to unbelievers with your trivial disputes!</p>
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(6:7-8)

<p>1Co 6:7 Therefore it is already altogether a defect in you, that you have lawsuits one with another. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded?</p> <p>1Co 6:8 No, but you yourselves do wrong, and defraud, and that against your brothers.</p>	<p><b>D.</b> The very presence of such lawsuits and disputes is a sign of defeat.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Regardless of the outcome of the lawsuit, you are already the loser!</li><li>2. It would be better to be wronged than to "pay them back" with additional wrong. [Romans 12:21 - overcome evil with good.]</li></ol>
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[WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO "JUDGE" OUTSIDERS (SEE PREVIOUS SECTION). NOR DO WE HAVE A RIGHT TO ASK THEM TO JUDGE US! The next section tells us why.]

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## THE BASIC ISSUE: TWO INCOMPATIBLE WAYS OF LIFE:

(6:9-11)

1Co 6:9 Or don't you know that the unrighteous will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don't be deceived. Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor male prostitutes, nor homosexuals,

1Co 6:10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor slanderers, nor extortioners, will inherit the Kingdom of God.

1Co 6:11 Such were some of you, but you were washed. But you were sanctified. But you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the Spirit of our God.

### **V. Regarding the wicked way-of-life [whether it is the lifestyle of the immoral person of chapter 5, or the lifestyle of the wrong-doer of chapter 6]:**

**A.** Don't fool yourself! NO one with such a lifestyle will inherit the kingdom of God ...regardless of what his "favorite" sin is!

1. [See the list of examples, in v. 9-10.]
2. [This list contains various sexual sins, which fall in to the same category as the sin of Chapter 5. It also lists various other sins, which some people may consider less serious - but which might represent the types of sins that could cause the disputes mentioned in chapter 6.]

**B.** The contrast between you and them:

1. You were once like them.
2. God has turned you into a Christian [as defined by the Bible]!
  - o [The verbs in v. 11 are *past tense*. The implication is that, for the genuine disciple, these sins are no longer a part of his lifestyle. (He may still have to fight temptation, though.)]

[Now back to the original issue of sexual sin... (next section)]

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# DO WE HAVE A "RIGHT" TO DO ANYTHING WE WANT?

## (6:12-13a)

[The people may have been claiming that *all* things are "lawful," and so they could do as they please. But Paul shows that this is not so.]

<p>1Co 6:12 "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are expedient. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be brought under the power of anything.</p> <p>1Co 6:13a "Foods for the belly, and the belly for foods," but God will bring to nothing both it and them.</p>	<p><b>VI. Some basic principles:</b></p> <p><b>A.</b> We can do only what is beneficial [rather than doing things that are of no value].</p> <p><b>B.</b> We can do only what does not enslave us. [This would include, among other things, sinful habits and addictions.]</p> <p><b>C.</b> Concerning the focus on "the appetites of the flesh" (physical gratification), illustrated by the stomach and food:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. [Such a preoccupation is not an option for us. (It would go against the principles given in v. 12.)]</li><li>2. Both will eventually perish - both the "stomach" [what is being gratified] and the "food" [the source of the gratification].</li></ol>
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[In 10:23, Paul gives an additional principle: We can do only what builds people up (rather than tearing them down or destroying them).]

## (6:13b-17)

<p>1Co 6:13b But the body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.</p> <p>1Co 6:14 Now God raised up the Lord, and will also raise us up by his power.</p>	<p><b>VII. Application of these principles to the issue of sexual appetites:</b></p> <p><b>A.</b> The body was not created for the purpose of unrestrained sexual gratification (union with a prostitute), but for the Lord (union with him).</p> <p><b>B.</b> With his power, God raised Jesus from the dead; with his power he will raise us, also. [Jesus' <i>past</i> resurrection guarantees our <i>future</i> resurrection, and this <i>must</i> impact our present lifestyle.]</p>
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<p>1Co 6:15 Don't you know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be!</p> <p>1Co 6:16 Or don't you know that he who is joined to a prostitute is one body? For, "The two," says he, "will become one flesh."</p> <p>1Co 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.</p>	<p><b>C.</b> Our bodies are [<i>even now</i>] members of Christ [since we are united with him]. So shall we unite what is [<i>even now</i>] part of Christ with a prostitute? <b>NO WAY!!</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The one united with a prostitute is one with her in body.</li> <li>2. The one united with Christ is one with him in spirit. [Though our resurrection is still future, our union with Christ exists even now.]</li> <li>3. [Our only legitimate response (based upon these two facts) is seen in the following verses.]</li> </ol>
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**(6:18-20)**

<p>1Co 6:18 Flee sexual immorality! "Every sin that a man does is outside the body," but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.</p> <p>1Co 6:19 Or don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have from God? You are not your own,</p> <p>1Co 6:20 for you were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.</p>	<p><b>D.</b> How are we to respond to such desire? <b>FLEE FROM IT!</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is a sin against your own body [because of the significance of the union].</li> <li>2. Yet your body is a place where the Holy Spirit dwells! [Because of this, such a sin - trying to have <i>both</i> unions - is <i>not</i> an option.]</li> <li>3. About your body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o It is sacred!</li> <li>o It was purchased at a high price and no longer belongs to you (for you to use and abuse however you wish).</li> <li>o You must use it to honor God!</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
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