



Epiphany 2 ARTICLE NO. 2006.11

Epistle

One Body of Believers - One Temple of God and the Holy Ghost

1 Corinthians 6:9-20



[Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

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

12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.

14 And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.

16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Refs

Corinthians I
Date: 53 ± 1
Location: Ephesus by Paul A.D. 53 - 54 in Ephesus.
Reference: From Jesus To Christianity;
L.Michael White - Harper 2004

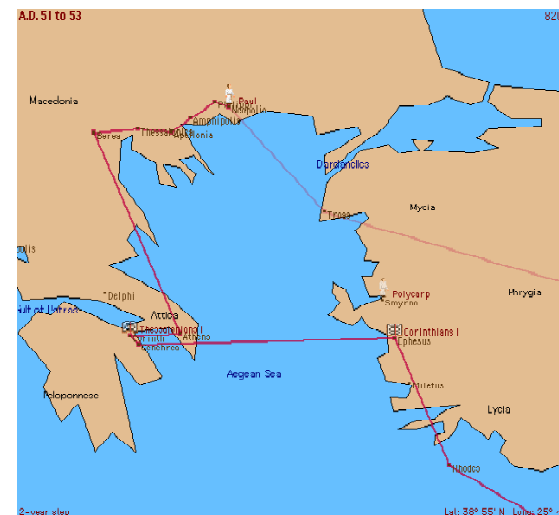
Much of this tract is commentary - don't take it as Gospel. It is here to encourage meditation and study. Use your gift of discernment, to find the truth.

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St. Paul preached successfully at Corinth, where he lived in the house of Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:1), where Silas and Timothy soon joined him. After his departure he was replaced by Apollo, who had been sent from Ephesus by Priscilla. The Apostle visited Corinth at least once more. He wrote to the Corinthians in 53 from Ephesus, (this was his second letter since he began his ministry, and the one of the earliest scriptures to be written - before the Gospels) and then from Phillippi in 55 - 57.

Corinth this great pagan city, that had a bad name for profligacy throughout the Roman world. To "act the Corinthian" was synonymous with leading a loose life. Corinth, which had been destroyed by the Romans, was reestablished as a colony by Julius Caesar 46 B.C., and made the capital of the Roman Province of Achaia by Augustus. It was built on the southern extremity of the isthmus connecting the mainland with the Morea, and was on the great line of traffic between East and West. Its two magnificent harbors, one at each side of the isthmus, were crowded with shipping and were the scenes of constant bustle and activity. Corinth was filled with Greeks, Romans, Syrians, Egyptians, and Jews, many of the last having lately come from Rome on account of their expulsion by Claudius; and its streets were thronged by tens of thousands of slaves. Crowds, too, came from all parts every four years to be present at the Isthmian games. On the summit of the hill to the south of the city was the infamous temple of Venus, with its thousand female devotees dedicated to a life of shame.



Phillipi

Corinth

Ephesus

From Jesus to Christianity

White, L. Michael

Harpers

0-06-052655-6

More Insight

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Corinth. 'Tis not every one who can afford to go to Corinth, "Tis not every one who can afford to indulge in very expensive licentiousness." Aristophanês speaks of the unheard-of sums (amounting to £200 or more) demanded by the harlots of Corinth.—Plutarch: Parallel Lives, i. 2.

Corinthian (A), a rake, a "fast man." Prince Henry says (I Henry IV. act ii. sc. 4), "[They] tell me I am no proud Jack, like Falstaff, but a Corinthian, a lad of mettle."

Corinthianism, harlotry.

To Corinthianize, to live an idle, dissipated life.

To act the Corinthian, to become a fille publique. Corinth was called the nursery of harlots, in consequence of the temple of Venus, which was a vast and magnificent brothel. Strabo says (Georgics, vii.), "There were no fewer than a thousand harlots in Corinth."

Bibliomania

It was to this center of traffic, excitement, wealth, and vice that St. Paul came, probably about the end of A.D. 51; and here he spent upwards of eighteen months of his Apostolic career. He took up his residence with two Christian Jews, Aquila and his wife Priscilla (refugees from Rome), because they were of the same trade as himself. Like all Jews he had learnt a trade in his youth, and in their house he supported himself by working at this trade, viz., that of tentmaker, as he had determined not to receive any support from the money-loving Corinthians. He began by preaching in the synagogue every Sabbath; "and he persuaded the Jews and the Greeks". Of this period he says that he was with them "in weakness, and fear, and much trembling". The ill-usage he had received was still fresh in his memory, as, writing a month or two later to the Thessalonians, he recalls how he had been "shamefully treated at Philippi". But when he was joined by Silas and Timothy, who brought him pecuniary aid from Macedonia, he became more bold and confident, and "was earnest in testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.

Additional Comments

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But they gainsaying and blaspheming, he shook his garments and said to them: "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." He then began to preach in the house of Titus Justus, adjoining the synagogue. Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, and his family, and several of the Corinthians were converted and baptized. Amongst these were Caius, Stephanas, and his household, and the house of Fortunatus and Achaicus, "the firstfruits of Achaia" (1 Corinthians 1:14, 1:16, 16:15). The growing opposition of the Jews, however, and the wicked state of the city had a depressing influence upon him; but "the Lord said to Paul in the night, by a vision: Do not fear, but speak; and hold not thy peace, because I am with thee; and no man shall set upon thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city. And he stayed there a year and six months, teaching among them the word of God" (Acts 18:9-11). Many were converted; some of them noble, wealthy, and learned, but the great majority neither learned, nor powerful, nor noble (1 Corinthians 1:26). During this long period the Faith was planted not only in Corinth but in other portions of Achaia, especially in Cenchreæ, the eastern port. At length the unbelieving Jews, seeing the ever-increasing crowd of Christians frequenting the house of Titus Justus, next door to their synagogue, became furious, and rose up with one accord and dragged St. Paul before the newly-appointed Proconsul of Achaia, Gallio, the brother of Seneca (A.D. 54). Gallio, perceiving that it was a question of religion, refused to listen to them. The crowd, seeing this and supposing that it was a dispute between Greeks and Jews, fell upon the ringleader of the latter (Sosthenes, who succeeded Crispus as ruler of the synagogue) and gave him a sound beating in the very sight of the judgment seat; but Gallio pretended not to notice. His treatment must have cowed the Jews, and St. Paul "stayed yet many days". Cornely is of opinion that at this time he made his journey as far as Illyricum, and that his first visit to them "in sorrow" was when he returned. Others with greater probability place it later. St. Paul, at last taking leave of the brethren, traveled as far as Ephesus with Priscilla and Aquila. Leaving them there he went on to Jerusalem and came back by Antioch, Galatia, and Phrygia, where he confirmed all the disciples. After having thus traversed the "upper coasts" he returned to Ephesus, which he made his headquarters for nearly three years. It was towards the end of that period that the First Epistle was written.

The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume IV

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Nilil Obstat. Remy Lafort, Censor

Imprimatur. +John M. Farley, Archbishop of New York

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verses 9-10 are never included in the BCP lectionary readings. These verses are very specific in identifying those who will never inherit the Kingdom of God. Not a very political thing to do these days, is it? But it follows this list with the promise that those who repent, (are washed), are sanctified (made holy) and justified will be able to enjoy the KOG.

St. Thomas defines **holiness** as that virtue by which a man's mind applies itself and all its acts to God Whereas religion is the virtue whereby we offer God due service in the things which pertain to the Divine service, holiness is the virtue by which we make all our acts subservient to God. Thus holiness or sanctity is the outcome of sanctification.

The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume IV

Justification for Cranmer means not that we are made essentially or intrinsically righteous but that we are pronounced righteous: "to justify" means "to pronounce, declare or exhibit as just"

(see *article XI of Religion of the Anglican Faith* and Thomas Cranmer on Justification in *Homily on salvation*)

The Corinthians had a number of slogans that helped to distinguish their religion.

"*All things are lawful unto me*" meaning "I am free to do anything". i.e. we are not tied down by the Jewish laws.

"*Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats.*" meaning we have no dietary restrictions (unlike the Jews, we even eat meat sacrificed to idols).

Paul's Corinthian group are obviously backsliding, being influenced by outsiders and from within the group. Some of them have been visiting the temple harlots (where was the money coming from?) Earlier in this book, Paul was saying that the Corinthians were money hungry, and were tight with their money, so that he had to support himself by tent making.

Paul says in verse 12 that he will not let anything take away his freedom or have power over him to distract him from his path to righteousness.

To counter

"Meats for the Belly, and the belly for Meats"

Paul makes a slogan for the Corinthians to add to their repertoire.

"The body for the Lord, and the Lord for the body."

Paul's argument against fornication with the temple harlots was: that to do so polluted the body of Christ of which they were members, and so Christ was also affected. Though they were joined to Christ for ever, in the Spirit, they were also joining their body, for a time, to the Harlot and this was fornication, and a deadly sin. For in verse 9 he had warned them that fornicators would be excluded from the Kingdom of God. Paul tells them to "*flee fornication*", which implies get away from it at all costs.



The ruins of the Temple of Apollo in Corinth, where the Temple of Venus was once housed.

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Every sin that a man **doeth** is without (outside of) the body, but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

The body is physically affected, possibly permanently damaged by disease, as a consequence of this sin. Surely Paul had seen the change in a man's life because of relationships with the temple harlots. Men reduced to poverty, boys losing their virginity (important for believers, and often mentioned by Paul), men totally distracted from the path to righteousness, men ignoring their spiritual responsibilities towards the brethren Nothing was more sure to destroy the spiritual life of a brother, than the sin of fornication which was not only a sin against one's own body, but the body of believers.

"Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you."

This phrase which refers to the one body of all the believers as being the temple of the Holy Ghost, occurs only once in the Bible. But see 1 Co. 3:16 where Paul refers to the body of believers as the Temple of God. He warns that the penalty for defiling the temple of God is destruction for the defiler.

I have often heard it said that Paul is referring to the individual body as being the temple, but as you can see this is not the case. Any reference to temple in this way, always relates to the entire body of believers. One of the benefits of 16th c. English as used in the KJV is that it is obvious from the text whether one person or a group of people are being addressed (Thee, thou, ye, you). In the modern translations, this distinction is often lost and as a result it is easy to misunderstand a passage. For instance if you compare

1 Corinthians 3:17 KJV

"17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. {defile: or, destroy}"

1 Corinthians 3:17

"17 If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are."

It would be easy to think that the **you** relates to the **anyone** and suggests an individual.

Amori Christi et Ecclesiae -
Glen C. Miller OSV

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If you think back; that God has only one temple, you might question the plurality of temples that would result if every person's body was itself a temple. But what about the temple of the Holy Spirit. Could there be more than one temple? It is not immediately obvious that this is the same temple as the temple of God - and there can be only one. For God dwells in His temple, which is now the body of believers, but once was the Temple in Jerusalem.

So, the thrust of Paul's arguments in these passages are that the Corinthians must think of themselves as a part of the body of Christ - a member (body part), of which they are inseparable from other believers and from Christ, so that anything that they do which defiles them, defiles all believers, and Christ. and they are not to think of themselves as individuals, free to do whatever they want to do, and act in a way that reflects badly on the entire body of believers, such as eating food sacrificed to idols in a public place, where people who do not know any better might be scandalized. And definitely not to visit the temple harlots, because that brings a temporary death through sin, which impacts not only the brethren in Corinth but those elsewhere through the insult to the body of Christ.

The passage ends with this warning:

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Temple of God
1Co.3:16 Know **ye** not that ye are the **temple of God**, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in **you**?

1Co.3:17 If any man defile the **temple of God**, him shall God destroy; for the **temple of God** is holy, which *temple ye* are.

2Co.6:16 And what agreement hath the **temple of God** with idols? for **ye** are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in **them**, and walk in *them*; and I will be **their** God, and they shall be my people.

1 Corinthians 3:16
"16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

1 Corinthians 3:17
"17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. {defile: or, destroy}"

Recommended Books

			ISBN
From Jesus to Christianity	White, L. Michael	Harpers	0-06-052655-6

Most of these passages are straightforward. But it does make clear the fact that we are all one body and inseparable, and that the sins of anyone of us, affects the entire body, because it affects the relationship between God and his temple, which is all of us believers.

Many passages in the Epistles contain advice that we should correct any brother or sister who we see is about to commit a sin, or a trespass against another. In the early Church any breach of the covenant, and trespass, that was observed by another would trigger a recall of the particular law that was being transgressed. The responsibility of the brethren towards one another was that of “keeping them on the straight and narrow path” towards sanctification. If the brother did not respond to this advice (brotherly love) a group discussion with him/her by the experts on law, would spell out in no uncertain terms which law was being transgressed - and by law I mean moral law as well as legalism. It was vital to the health of the community that each brother perform properly. If any brother failed to respond to this advice, then he would be considered a novice again, and would be sent back to “kindergarten” training. It was well understood that the life and future of the entire Church could be in jeopardy through the indiscretions of an individual.

Today, we seldom see such an action between brethren. It is characteristic of modern Protestant churches, and evangelicals especially that each person is responsible for their own salvation. This is a great pity. In the early 18th c. Churches such was not the case. Somewhere in the last 100 years, we lost this caring attitude, this *agape* love for other brethren (see Proper 21 for how it used to be).

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So what to do?

Set a good example:

Suppose after service on the Sabbath that a friend invites you to do something that is not only unsuitable for a Sunday, but is definitely forbidden in the Scripture. No matter how close you are to them, say “Friend (that’s what Jesus called his close companions), today is still the Sabbath and I want to keep the feeling I got from the service as long as I can, so I am going home to relax and read something uplifting, and spend some quiet time with my family - why don’t you come over for a cup of tea, and enjoy the rest of the morning with us”.

Remind them

When you know someone is not doing the right thing, talk to them about it. Don’t patronize them, don’t beat about the bush, don’t appear embarrassed, just quote the appropriate verse in context.

“Fred, being angry with your niece is hurting your relationship with God. God says quite clearly in Matthew Chapter 6 verse 15, that if you harbor any grudge, or feel angry towards someone, you will be unable to receive God’s forgiveness for any transgressions of your own, and that situation will not change until you have forgotten all the hard feelings that you now have. When you are unable to receive God’s forgiveness, you immediately suffer the penalty that is attached to every sin you commit, only with God’s forgiveness does the penalty not attach to the sin.”

You have warned him. If the next day he still feels badly towards his niece, it is time for someone else to support you and help him to understand the scripture. If he still doesn’t forgive the transgression against him by his niece, then it is time to get the clergy involved. Would you do it?

Today many people's level of belief is quite small. Jesus said to his Apostles that their level of belief didn't amount to a grain of mustard seed. And these were people who knew Jesus intimately, and knew he was the son of God.

Many Churchgoers hardly **understand** more than a few passages in the Bible - they are familiar with them, and can quote them, but don't **understand** the real meaning. Some of the Church Father's understood three or four levels of meaning in the Gospel passages, especially the parables, yet today much of this is ignored, and many people read the words and get a only a superficial idea of the real meaning. It is hard to believe in something you don't really understand. Even harder to argue with someone who holds a contrary understanding to you. In many churches it is live and let live, each person is on their own.

Because some people don't know for absolute certainty what God wants them to do with their own lives, it is hard for them to tell anyone else what they should be doing.

Paul had no such problem. He knew what was right and said so publicly and loudly. He had many enemies and suffered for his outspokenness. He was beaten and tortured and left for dead. His converts disobeyed him, and backslid, and many left the community of saints. But he knew Jesus Christ and because of Paul, we are alive in Christ today.

Who, today, understands, and who will stand up and say what is right?

I pray that you are going to be one of them.

