

A Follow Up Bible Study

January 20, 2021

Building on the Messages of the Lessons from the Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Warm Up

Would you agree that *freedom and liberty* are the most prized qualities of the USA? If so, we need to be honest with ourselves how we define *freedom*, what we assume it means. What definition of *freedom* did you learn in school? If you don't recall what you were taught, what is your understanding of *freedom* drawn from your American experience?

Take note of the focus of your definition of *freedom*.

It is critical that I am clear about my understanding of *freedom* lest my civic definition shapes my understanding of *freedom in Christ*, rather than letting Scripture define my understanding of the *freedom* Christ has prepared for me.

1. Sermon for January 17, 2021

Text: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Theme: Grow in Jesus' enlightened understanding of freedom.

Share your questions or comments regarding Sunday's sermon.

Share your questions or comments regarding Sunday's sermon **text**.

¹² "All things are permitted for me" — but not all things are beneficial. "All things are permitted for me" — but I will not allow anything to control me. ¹³ "Foods are for the belly, and the belly is for foods, but God will do away with both of them." However, the body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. ¹⁴ God raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. ¹⁵ Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then remove the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Certainly not! ¹⁶ Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute is one body with her? For it says, "The two will become one flesh." ¹⁷ But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.

¹⁸ Flee from sexual immorality! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰ for you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God with your body.

2. The EHV labels this section as "Flee From Sexual Immorality!" The NIV labels it simply "Sexual Immorality". The word *freedom* is not found in this text. What in this text points to Paul offering us *Jesus' enlightened understanding of freedom*?

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3. Note the quotation marks in vs. 12-13. The Greek text does not include quotations marks or any form of punctuation. Punctuation is drawn from context. These quotation marks reflect the translators' understanding that Paul is quoting the justification offered by some Corinthian Christian men for their *Christian liberty* to use the services of (temple?) prostitutes.

Based on how Paul quotes them, flesh out their reasoning.

4. Paul brackets his teaching about sexual intimacy between these 2 parallel phrases.

However, the body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body.

You are not your own, ²⁰for you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God with your body.

Explain the parallels and how each verse informs the other.

What does Paul mean when he says, *the Lord is for the body*?

5. The Greeks held conflicting views of the human body. Many saw it as beautiful and perfect - an object for art and display. They were utterly revolted by circumcision. The contrasting Greek philosophy saw the body as a prison for the soul - the real person. So the body was of no consequence. This created contempt for the body, neglecting it and/or disconnecting behavior from the soul.

Paul corrects their dismissive comments about the body with good news that reveals how highly God values our whole person - body and soul. Identify these points of good news.

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6. The *Certainly not!* of v. 15 is the same Greek word Paul uses in Roman 6. *Shall we keep on sinning so that grace may increase? Absolutely not!* This is the strongest negative in the Greek language. It is absolutely appalling to faith - to the new self.

In v. 18 Paul says, *Flee from sexual immorality!* Does this remind you of any Bible Story? Why doesn't Paul just tell us to *resist sexual immorality?*

7. Paul specifically addresses men employing female prostitutes, the most common form of prostitution. Those who want to justify their sexual freedom today might argue this text only addresses sex with a prostitute. Noting that Paul doesn't address consensual sex without pay, recreational sex (outside a relationship), sexual exploration of a relationship, sharing a bed before marriage, homosexual sex (recreational or in a relationship) or pornography. What are they ignoring?

8. While Paul is clearly addressing sexual immorality - sexually misusing our bodies - what in this text provides Biblical truths that speak to **other misuses of our bodies?**

9. Ever since Satan tempted Adam and Eve to break *free* from being servants of God, to become their own gods/lords, sinners have rebelled against God's claim to be our Lord and that we are his servants - in fact slaves.

Expose the deception that *I am only free if I am my own master and have no other lord.*

How would you explain to someone that being a slave of Jesus Christ is true freedom?

10. Is there anything else we want to discuss from this text?

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First Lesson: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

***3** The boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD in the presence of Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days. Prophetic vision was not common.*

² Now it happened that Eli's eyes had begun to grow dim, so that he could not see. Once when Eli was lying down in his place ³ and God's lamp had not yet gone out, Samuel was lying down in the LORD's temple, where God's ark was. ⁴ The LORD called Samuel, and Samuel said, "I am here." ⁵ He ran to Eli and said, "I am here, since you called me."

Eli said, "I did not call. Lie down again." So he went and lay down.

⁶ Then the LORD called once more, "Samuel!"

So Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "I am here, since you called me."

He answered, "I did not call, my son. Lie down again."

⁷ Now Samuel had not yet experienced the LORD's presence, that is, the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

⁸ The LORD called Samuel for the third time. So he got up and went to Eli and said, "I am here, since you called me."

Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the young man. ⁹ So Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'"

So Samuel went and once again lay down in his place. ¹⁰ The LORD came and stood there and called as he had the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!"

Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

11. What is v. 1 telling us? How big was the Bible at this time? Imagine living with that limit.

12. What do we sense about Samuel's character by his actions and words?

13. How are we to understand v. 3? Remember that the ark was in the Holy of Holies and that only the High Priest could enter there once a year on the Day of Atonement.

14. The EHV has a footnote with v. 7. "Literally *did not know the LORD*". Explain this verse.

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15. We don't know how to pronounce YHWH because the Jews stopped speaking this name out of *reverence* or for fear of *misusing the name of YHWH your God*. What insight should they have learned from Eli? All we can do is guess, but why do you think Samuel didn't reply exactly as Eli instructed, leaving out YHWH's name?
16. What's the little surprise in the first half of v. 10?

Gospel Lesson: John 1:42-51

⁴² *[Andrew, Simon Peter's brother] brought him to Jesus.*

Looking at him, Jesus said, "You are Simon, son of Jonah. You will be called Cephas" (which means "Peter").

⁴³ *The next day, Jesus wanted to leave for Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me."*

⁴⁴ *Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter.*

⁴⁵ *Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote — Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."*

⁴⁶ *Nathanael said to him, "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?"*

"Come and see!" Philip told him.

⁴⁷ *Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said about him, "Truly, here is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit."*

⁴⁸ *Nathanael asked him, "How do you know me?"*

Jesus answered, "Before Philip called you, while you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

⁴⁹ *Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"*

⁵⁰ *Jesus replied, "You believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that!"* ⁵¹ *Then he added, "Amen, Amen, I tell you: You will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."*

17. Why did Jesus tell Simon his new name was "Rock"? (Cephas - Hebrew; Peter - Greek). What does this say about Jesus? What does this say about Simon?

18. There are many things unstated and implied in vs. 43-45. Explore and explain.

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19. Imagine how shocked Nathaniel was when he heard Jesus proclaim from a close distance, *“Truly, here is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.”* Nathaniel’s question, *“How do you know me?”* might suggest he wondered if Philip, Andrew, or Peter had told Jesus about him. Jesus’ answer makes it clear to Nathaniel who Jesus was. *“Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”* List the epiphanies Nathaniel confesses. Note what this reveals that our Old Testament brothers in the faith understood about the Messiah.

This affirms the epiphany noted in question 17, when Jesus renames Simon and called him Peter. Jesus is the Son of God who knows us inside and out. What does Jesus’ statement about Nathaniel reveal about Nathaniel? How does that enlighten our understanding of Nathaniel’s seemingly hasty judgment *“Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?”*

20. Jesus tells us that Nathaniel *believed*. Recalling the meaning of that word *believe*, explain what it means that Nathaniel *believed*.

21. What is Jesus promising Nathaniel and the other followers in v. 51?