

1 Corinthians 6:1–20

Living as the Redeemed: Holiness, Freedom, and the Glory of God

Introduction: Redemption Must Shape Daily Living

Paul now addresses matters that touch everyday life—conflict, morality, freedom, and the use of the body. The underlying issue in this chapter is a failure to live consistently with redemption. The Corinthians believed in Christ, yet many were still thinking and acting as though nothing had changed. Paul reminds them that salvation is not only forgiveness of sin, but transformation of life.

Settling Disputes as God’s People (1 Corinthians 6:1–8)

Paul confronts the practice of believers taking one another before pagan courts:

“Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?”

God has entrusted His people with spiritual discernment. Paul reminds them:

“Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?”

If believers will one day share with Christ in judgment, they should be capable—through humility and wisdom—of resolving smaller matters among themselves.

Paul is not forbidding all legal action in every circumstance. He himself appealed to Caesar when justice required it. His concern is the shame brought on the gospel when believers publicly fight one another instead of demonstrating grace, reconciliation, and love.

Paul goes further:

“Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated?”

The cross teaches believers to value Christ’s honor above personal advantage. Sometimes it is better to suffer loss than to damage the witness of the church.

A Sobering Warning About the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9–11)

Paul issues a serious warning:

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.”

He lists lifestyles marked by persistent rebellion against God—sexual immorality, idolatry, greed, drunkenness, and exploitation. This is not a list of isolated failures, but of settled patterns of life that deny God’s rule.

Then comes one of the most hopeful statements in the chapter:

“And 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 by the Spirit of our God.”

The past does not define the believer. Jesus shed His blood to cleanse sinners completely. The resurrection declares that the old life has been judged and new life has begun. Grace does not excuse sin—it delivers from it.

Freedom with Purpose (1 Corinthians 6:12)

Paul addresses a slogan circulating in Corinth:

“All things are lawful for me.”

He does not deny Christian freedom, but he qualifies it:

“But all things are not helpful... I will not be brought under the power of any.”

Christian freedom is not the freedom to indulge the flesh, but the freedom to live for God without bondage. Anything that controls the believer—habits, desires, or appetites—has become a rival master.

The Body Belongs to the Lord (1 Corinthians 6:13–17)

Paul makes a profound declaration:

“The body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.”

God created the body with purpose and dignity. The resurrection of Jesus guarantees the future resurrection of believers, giving eternal value to the body now.

Paul warns:

“Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?”

To unite the body with sexual immorality is to misuse what belongs to Christ. Believers are joined to the Lord spiritually, forming a union that demands holiness.

A Clear Command: Flee Sexual Immorality (1 Corinthians 6:18)

Paul does not say to debate, manage, or negotiate temptation:

“Flee sexual immorality.”

Sexual sin uniquely harms the person committing it because it violates the body God designed to be His dwelling place. Victory often comes not through strength, but through escape.

The Body as God’s Temple (1 Corinthians 6:19–20)

Paul concludes with a powerful reminder:

“Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you... and you are not your own?”

Believers belong to God because they were purchased at great cost:

“For you were bought at a price.”

That price was the shed blood of Jesus Christ. He redeemed sinners from bondage, not so they could live for themselves, but so they might glorify God.

“Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

Practical Application for Believers

- Resolve conflicts with humility and grace, protecting the witness of Christ.
- Examine your life honestly—are there patterns that contradict your confession?
- Use your freedom wisely; refuse anything that brings you into bondage.
- Treat your body with reverence as God’s dwelling place.

A Challenge to the Church

The church must recover a biblical understanding of holiness rooted in redemption. The world should see a people transformed—not by rules, but by the power of the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

An Invitation to Non-Believers

If you are not in Christ, hear this clearly: Jesus shed His blood to wash away your sin. He rose from the dead, proving He is God, Savior, and Lord. No chain is too strong for His power. No past is too broken for His grace.

If you will turn to Him, trust Him, and surrender your life to Him, He will forgive you, make you new, and give your life eternal purpose.

Today, choose freedom, forgiveness, and new life in Jesus Christ.