

Impurity Is Nothing New

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 6:9–11

Code: B120619

It's no surprise the world thinks the biblical view of sexuality is outdated. Society tells you that you need to advance your thinking beyond the Dark Ages, open your mind to new perspectives, and get with the times. In a word, the world says you need to be more *modern*.

But there's nothing modern, enlightened, or new about how sexuality has saturated and defined our culture. Our society isn't the first to celebrate promiscuity and promote all kinds of lascivious, perverse behavior.

As wicked and perverse as society is today, it's always been this bad—possibly worse. We sometimes think the sexual promiscuity that goes on in our culture is something new. That we've reached a new all-time low, and that the world is more sinful than it's ever been. It isn't.

Just look at the world of the New Testament. Specifically, look at the Corinthian church. Paul introduces us to the congregation at Corinth in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 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 Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.

Welcome to the First Church of Corinth! Paul's congregation was full of ex-fornicators, ex-idolaters, ex-adulterers, and ex-homosexuals. Sexual sin was so rampant in Paul's time that it was part of *everyone's* past.

Perversion was commonplace and widespread. It was tolerated and accepted—it was even advocated and encouraged. The early church was founded in the midst of an anything-goes, no-shame culture.

Over the last several decades, we've seen a cultural shift back to that no-shame mentality. The sexual revolution of the 1960s and '70s, and the homosexual revolution beginning in the '80s have made sexual perversion commonplace again. Our culture is dominated and driven by all kinds of sexual deviance. And it's not discreet or disguised; it's celebrated.

In fact the only shame these days is to not tolerate other people's shameless behavior.

And the widespread sexual perversion isn't limited to secular society. Popular pastors speak endlessly on how to improve and expand your sex life. Christian college campuses are being confronted and influenced by underground homosexual student groups. And adultery and

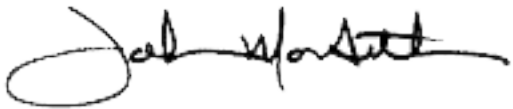
promiscuity run rampant throughout congregations all over the country and around the world.

The church doesn't need to be more modern when it comes to sexuality—in terms of destructive sexual deviance and perversion, we're already far too much like modern society as it is.

We're essentially back in the days of Corinth. And to help us know how to navigate a culture so given over to sexual perversion and prurience, we need to look at the instructions Paul gave to the early church.

The church at Thessalonica wasn't far from the Corinthian church. Believers there would have been confronted by the same perverse culture that permeated the world of the early church. In 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul gave them clear commands and instructions to live holy, pure lives in spite of their sinful surroundings.

And that's where we'll pick it up next time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Fort". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and a long, sweeping underline.

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