

1Corinthians 18-04-22b

Let's continue our study now in 1 Corinthians chapter 6. So what we're trying to do here is make sure we don't do what I was talking about at the end of the first session, which is, and over the break, we were talking about how, and it was Joe Leighton Wall, someone reminded me, that wrote *Going for the Gold*, and it's a really excellent book. He's one of the first, I always like it if somebody agrees with me, and I will recommend their books endlessly if I think they are endorsing what I think, and he was one of the first published sources, he and Jody Dillow, that acknowledged what we have seen in Scripture that so many of the warning passages that talk about the possibility of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, or of outer darkness, or of loss in the future, are written to believers. And it is so easy to dismiss that in especially modern Christian circles and say, well, unbelievers are going to suffer those things, but we're clear of all that, we're saved and so no worries.

Everybody will be happy over there. And it's just not true. Similarly, when we come to passages like this in Corinthians, and they're talking about idolatry and fornication and these things that are out of the realm of our normal experience, and we say, well, that was those heinous, pagan, slightly warmed over Greeks, they got saved, but they had all kinds of problems, and we tend to put it in the realm of them instead of the realm of us.

But if you look at this from the theme that we talked about earlier, that this is a problem of self first. The Holy Trinity of me, myself, and I. I want vindication, I want justification, I want satisfaction, I want stimulation, I want to feel good, I want to enjoy. And Paul says many of these things, not fornication and sodomy and the list above, but many of the things that there's no law against still should not be done.

So not only are we to stay away from the obvious evils and the obvious sins, but even in the realm of permissible and allowable things, there is a limitation. And it is what has been called the law of love. Which is, I look around me and say, is this allowable thing creating a burden on those around me? Is somebody suffering? Is somebody given a hardship? Is it unwelcome? Is it unhealthy? Is it creating a stumbling block? I have my eyes, in a healthy way, on others.

My behavior, I'm not on an island here, I have connections, I have a periphery. And I may be doing an allowable thing, but if it is causing the weaker brother problems, or if it's causing a stronger brother problems, it's a little dangerous to say, well, they're mature enough, they ought to be able to handle it. Maybe they are mature, and maybe the reason they're not handling it is that you haven't been paying enough attention to this passage.

So we have to govern ourselves not with an ever-expanding body of laws, which, if you look at the U.S. legal code, you can see that all it ever does is grow and try to cover every conceivable permutation, and it's never enough. Our legal system is reactive. Case law says, oh look, here's somebody that got through, we need to pass a new law.

Here's somebody where justice was not done because the law wasn't specific enough. They didn't read them their Miranda rights, so they're scot-free. And it's reactive, it tries to shovel dirt in a hole where justice has already left.

We govern ourselves not by looking at the past the way the legal system does, precedent. If you ever watched Perry Mason, and there's three volumes of corpus juris secundum or whatever is on the table there, and one of them is, this is like trivia, but if you watch enough Perry, I got to looking at those volumes, and one of them is Acts and Wills, and others is Contracts, and it's like volume 97 and 98, and then there's like volume 89. And I thought, why did they pick those three, but when you read the spine, you can kind of figure it out, but this is volume 97, that big thick book, there are 96 previous books just that big, and it's all legal precedent.

And I'm thinking, you know, it used to be a law library, I did some computer work for lawyers, oh my gosh, until they got that thing digitized and available on Westlaw, is an online thing now, because nobody can contain what it takes to check the past on what courts have decided, and so on. Well, Paul says here, look, you don't look at the law, you don't look at what has been allowed or what has been disallowed in the past, you don't go to court before unbelievers to find out what's right and what's wrong, what do you look at? Is it helpful? And helpful implies and requires that there are other people around. You're not out there like, you know, the guy on the island with the soccer ball named Wilson or whatever it was, you know, you're not all by yourself.

There's a periphery, and you have an effect. We are supposed to be shining like lights, we are supposed to draw in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation those around us who are interested in light, who don't love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil, and there are plenty of them, but if there is anybody who wants the light of Christ, the light of life, we should be reflecting that light, and we should be aware. We don't live our lives to model righteousness or anything like that, but we should be aware that we should not let our good be spoken of as evil.

And if you open a bar in your church, your good can be spoken of as evil, and I used to go to a church that opened a bar in the church, and I thought, you know, I believe in grace, and I believe in freedom, but that is not helpful, especially to people who have alcohol problems in their family or in their periphery, and if you've been in the military, they had at one time, I think in the Marine Corps, there was like a 45% alcoholism rate in the Marine Corps. It's easy to do, and you're not helping, even though the New Testament doesn't prohibit drinking alcohol, it prohibits drunkenness, and you say, well, as long as we don't get drunk, we're fine. No you're not.

You've got to look and say, is it helpful? Is this the light of Christ shining to a lost and dying world? Probably not. There are other considerations that govern us. All things are not helpful.

Things may be allowed, but I will not be brought under the control of any. Obsession, compulsion, addiction, excess attention, excess time, excess resources that ought to be in

balance, and it's not. It's out of balance.

It's wonderful to have rubber on your tires, but if it's lumped in one place and your tire's out of balance, that tire's gone from being a good tire to being a bad tire, and that extra rubber is not helpful, and it will take your car out of control if you go fast enough. Have you ever gone past somebody on the highway, and one of their tires is just bouncing up and down like this, and you say, do you not, did you lose a wheel weight, or can you not feel that? I've gone by, and I mean, the tire is leaving the ground, and I think, wow, that is a great suspension. If they don't know that their tire is only touching every six feet.

It's got to be in balance, and their argument here, he takes the pins out from underneath. He destroys the foundation under their argument by using this example. Food for the stomach, and the stomach for food.

That's your rationalization. You say, well, it's perfectly appropriate. This is what these things are for.

My body is set up to do certain things and enjoy certain things. Why would there be grapes and fermentation if not to enjoy it? Doesn't the Old Testament say, you know, to make sure, doeth good like a medicine, and is merry, and what not, be merry? But it also says, don't look on it when it's red, because it's the downfall of kings, and downfall is when it's out of balance, when it's out of place. So, God will destroy both it and them.

The body is not for porna, and you know that element of porna transcends just the action, or the realm of the action in, you know, illicit physical activities. It has the idea of crossing boundaries, crossing covenant boundaries, crossing moral boundaries, crossing into a realm of self-satisfaction that costs. And the body is not for that.

And he says, the body is for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. Now, when's the last time you ever went to church, and the pastor stood up and said, well, the title of our sermon this morning is, The Lord is for Your Body. The Lord Jesus is for your body.

That's our subject this morning. I thought about titling this one that, but it's not the whole subject. But think about that.

Here's a scripture that says, the Lord Jesus Christ is made, in brackets, for the body. And the body is made, in brackets, for the Lord Jesus Christ. Body is for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body.

I thought he, you know, thank you Lord for saving my soul. I thought it was all in the realm of the spirit. And here it's, doesn't he say, you know, the carnal mind is enmity against God, and the flesh can't inherit the kingdom and all the rest of it.

So, how can the Lord be for the body? Well, he's going to explain it. Do you not know? How many times, this is really an indictment, how many times Paul tells the Corinthians, have you

ever done this with your, it happens a lot, parents and children. It happens with employers and employees.

It can happen between spouses. It can happen in almost any context where you have a previous shared experience where something was established, something was set down by way of an observation or a policy or whatever, and then it gets broken. And I used to tell our girls when they were toddlers, one of the first things they learned when they could understand English was top up.

You know, these little sippy cups and, you know, bottles and different things. And all of that stuff will leak. And so, one of the first phrases our girls learned was top up.

And when they, before they could even walk, if they had their bottle and they were going to set it down, and they laid it on its side, we'd say top up, top up. And they learned to set it up right. Their little sippy cup, top up.

So, you know, once they're older, if they come in and have a bottle of bleach cleaning fluid or something, and they lay it on its side in the car because we're going to go clean something somewhere, and I say, do you not know top up? Do you not remember top up? Do you not remember the whole concept of things leaking? Bleach, upholstery, top up, top up. You know, do you not, how could you not know this? You've learned this since you were one. And I'm picking on my girls.

I don't know that they ever actually did that. But the concept here is, how many times does he say, do you not know? What he's saying is, when I was with you, I taught you this stuff. How can you live out of harmony and out of compliance with what you know? And it ought to scare us a little bit.

Because how much do we know, biblically? How many studies have we been through together? How long have we been in the word of God? I ask myself this question. It's doubly worse for somebody up here that purports to stand up and teach, and I say, not only have I heard it, I have taught it. Do I not know? How can I do what I do and think what I think and fail how I fail? Do I not know? Well, of course I know.

What's the problem? I don't live in the light of what I know like I should. So when Paul says, do you not know, he's saying, you do know, and you're flagrantly disregarding what you know. We're not supposed to disregard what we know.

We can forget what we know. We can fail to process what we know. You're in a hurry.

You're loading the car. The bottle falls over. You might note it, but you don't really go through the whole process of, oh, yes, leaks, bleach, impossible to match the color.

We just don't think. Why? Preoccupation. Preoccupation is dangerous in the spiritual realm, and we can get preoccupied with the details of life, one of the areas of subjectivity.

We can get preoccupied with people. We can get preoccupied with self. We can get preoccupied with all kinds of things, and we don't process what we know.

Every time you see, do you not know in here as we go through, we ought to circle it because we do know. It isn't a matter of knowledge. It's a matter of application of the knowledge.

It's a matter of remembering it. So how do you defeat that cycle of forgetting to do what we know? Slow down. Slow down.

Take time for reflection. This is where devotions or time of prayer, take time out, and in the presence of God, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, reflecting on what we learn from the Word of God, that's where our objectivity comes from. That's where our clear perspective comes from.

That's where our 20-20 vision on people and circumstances and our own selves, the Word of God cuts through all of the fog, all of the distraction, all of the milieu. But if you do not have dedicated reflection time, I used to call it meditation, then I realized it sounded kind of Eastern. Meditate on the Word of God, and I thought, well, meditation has almost gotten a bad connotation now.

But to go back and think about it, to stop and devote conscious time to, what have I learned recently from the Word of God? This is where Bible reading is great, especially when you read things that we've already been through, because it leaps off the page, and you say, oh, I remember that phrase, you know, whatsoever things are good, I remember that it's to the extent that. When Paul says to elect according to the foreknowledge of God and Peter, they're not elect according to the foreknowledge of God, they were chosen to be the point of the spear going out into the Greek Empire and into the Roman world to communicate the Lord Jesus. That's what they were predestined to, that's what they were chosen for, not salvation.

And somebody has moved that word to a completely different verse. It's one of the most, you know me, every time I think about that, I have to extemporize on it. But when you get to something like that, when you're in your Bible reading, you remember when you're reading in Genesis, you're reading in Samuel, you're reading in the Psalms, you're reading in Isaiah, or any of the books that we've studied.

Now we've been through the whole history of the northern and southern kingdoms, and we remember Uzzah and his garden, and we remember Ezekiel being lifted up by the hair of the head and weeping for Tammuz, and we remember how many fish were pulled out of the Sea of Galilee. Ken and I have had long conversations about why does it list the number of fish, and the guys that got burned up trying to go fetch the prophet and bring him before the king, and they match. But it draws us back to objectivity.

It gives us clarity of view. Do you want to drive your car? I had to go on a piano appointment, and I had been tangled up with work, and the boss called, and I had to send an email, and there

was a report that was suddenly needed out of nowhere. I was rushing around, getting all of this done, because I had to go for a piano appointment.

And so I got done, got dressed, grabbed all my stuff, got my cup of coffee, headed out to the truck, and I was just going to be on time, but my windshield was completely iced over. And I don't mean just a fog of ice. It was chip it off for the next five or ten minutes of ice.

And I thought, man, I wish I'd have thought to come out here and warm up the truck and turn on the defrost about 15 minutes ago. But I had to just chip enough that I could see so that I could leave and be on time and wait for the defroster to do the rest. And so have you ever done that? You have a little, and sometimes it ices up while you're driving, and you just have this one little clear thing where the heat's hitting, and you think, I really don't like this.

I don't like driving when I can't see out the side. I can't see out the back. I can only see through this little hole, and I'm changing my angle to see if anybody's coming.

I can't tell when I make a right or left turn. We want clarity. The only way to get that, the only way to be able to see out of all of your windows, is to stop.

Paul says here, I will not be brought under the power of these things. What are we supposed to be under the power of? Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but, what? Be filled with the Spirit. If I'm going to be brought under the power of anything, and it's my choice, I want to be under the power of the Spirit.

Okay, so let's say I do that. How do I get myself under the power of the Spirit? I want you right now, right where you're sitting, as soon as I stop talking, I want you to get yourself under the power of the Spirit. What are you going to do? Oh Lord Jesus, please pour your Spirit on me right now.

Oh God, I yield myself. I pull the strings. I just want to be a vessel.

Fill me. Oh Lord, give me an impulse. Let the Spirit take control, and take the reins, or whatever else.

All of that is bogus. We know how the power of God comes into the life of the believer. And the Spirit of God is available, but what is required for Him to speak, and to influence, and to do His work? What is essential? What can He not do anything without? The Word of God.

Well, how is He going to do anything with the Word of God if we don't give Him any space in our thinking to suggest it, to remind us of it, to help us see its application? You have to stop. You have to think. You have to set aside time, so that God the Holy Spirit is just like anything else.

You know, your kids grow up and move away from home? I did that once. Not anymore, but I did it once. And the constant influence of your parents is no longer there.

Why? Well, I'm not located where they are, and, well, I could call them on the phone, or they could call me, but why do I not get the same level of communication and guidance that I had before? No time. I'm busy being a midshipman. I'm busy being a marine.

I'm busy doing this, that, and the other. And I just have occasional little dial-up calls, and just a little bit of catch-up, and, oh, how are you doing? Well, I do this, that, and the other. You talk 15 or 20 minutes maybe, but they are not the part of your life that they are when they are raising you.

And it's a matter of time and conversation. How does intimacy get maintained and grow and flourish? Time, converse. Well, if you don't give the Holy Spirit any time, how close is He going to be? How much can He say in the five minutes when you say, oh, Lord, thank you for this food, and then we're off? Oh, God, help me today.

Do well, and then we're off. Well, if we don't listen, if He's not... They used to say, get me Jesus on the line, operator. I don't want the Lord Jesus on the line.

I want God the Holy Spirit on the line, because He is the comforter that the Lord Jesus sent to be with us and to lead us into all truth. But if you don't give Him time, He can't talk. Now we've got call waiting.

If the Holy Spirit is always on hold, because we're talking to somebody else, we're thinking about something else, that's the self-centered obsession that Paul is preaching against here. You can't let these things bring you under their power. The Lord is for the body.

Now, what does that mean? The body is for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. What is their belief? My body is just an avenue of satisfaction for me, whether it's illicit promiscuity, whether it is orgies or drunkenness or gluttony or being well thought of as I go to court and win, satisfaction. My body is a means of gratification for me in all of these different areas.

Paul says, you know what? Your body is not yours for your gratification. Your body has been purchased by the Lord Jesus and it belongs to Him. It is for His gratification.

So when he goes on to say, do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? What is the thrust of this argument? What is the point of it? How does it have any traction? It isn't that somebody might not have a good time going to the temple prostitute in Corinth or having some sort of illicit experience. What's the problem with it? That doesn't please the Lord Jesus, and it's His body. Am I going to take what belongs to the Lord Jesus and do something with it that He doesn't want? I may get all kinds of wonderful gratification and satisfaction out of it.

And by the way, this is an illicit thing, but it applies to licit things also. I may, like the fellow I mentioned in the last session, I may really enjoy a game. But if I devote my body to that, if I spend inordinate amounts of time and effort with that, I'm taking an asset that belongs to the Lord Jesus and using it in a wrong way.

It's kind of like embezzling from your company. It's kind of like taking the company car and taking vacations in it when that's not why the company gave you the car. Taking assets that belong to someone else and using them indiscriminately and selfishly and self-centered for gratification purposes.

He says, do you not know that your bodies are, they don't just belong to Christ, they are members of Christ. They're integral to Christ. We are the body of Christ on this earth.

And what you do matters because you belong to Him and it reflects on Him. And if they went to a temple prostitute, how do they stand out from idolaters? Idolaters go to the temple prostitute. People who belong to Jesus go to the prostitute.

So what does that do to their testimony? What does that do to those who are trying to seek the light? It's going to completely confuse them. Well, you've got your God and I've got mine and they're basically equal. But when there is separation, when there is distinction, when you represent the Lord Jesus because you belong to Him, it's along the lines of the parable that Jesus gave of the servant put in charge of the household while the master was away.

And if while the master is gone, he begins to eat and drink and beat his fellow servants and act like he owns the house and forget that it belongs to the master, what's going to happen to that servant when the master returns? Paul puts that in the context of our body, our lifestyle. In the same way that peripateo means to walk around, to walk the perimeter, and peripateo comes, you know, walk worthy of your calling, your walk is your lifestyle. Well, the body is what is walking.

And so the body is put here for your daily life. Certainly not. Do you not know, in verse 16 here, do you not know? Once again, do you not know? You're not thinking, you're not stopping and reflecting on what you have learned and what you were taught.

And if you circle all of these do you not know, it's very, at least for me, it's been very convicting. I know all kinds of things. I think, wow, how have I been wasting my time and my energies and my opportunities and assets, perhaps, in things? Do I not know? Of course I know.

I'm not thinking. I am not living in the light of what I know. Do you not know, verse 16, that he who is joined to a harlot is one body? And with her is an *italics* there.

What is the one body we are a part of? For this reason a man shall leave father and mother and the two shall be one flesh. He quotes it here. So as believers, we are body of Christ.

And he says, and he's talking about your physical body here. He says, if you unite your physical body with a prostitute, you're uniting Christ with a prostitute. And that's something he would not do.

All of this Mary Magdalene fantasy nonsense is a direct attack on this concept. If you've ever heard, you know, the first time I ever saw it was I was trying to escape the walls of the Naval

Academy and I would go anywhere that they would let me go when I was a plea. And they had a performance in Washington, D.C. And so I signed up, got on the bus and went.

Well, it was Jesus Christ Superstar. I actually saw the thing, acted out live on the stage. It was the most heinous, blasphemous, disgusting thing.

I don't know how to love him. It was just grotesque. And part of the implication of it and many since then, this whole, I don't know, Brown, somebody named Brown wrote a book and it became a movie and it was, yeah, The Da Vinci Code.

It's all this notion that Jesus and Mary Magdalene had children and that there's this line descended. It goes to this. Paul is shocked by the very idea.

He says the Lord Jesus had a different purpose and he lived in the light of his purpose and it wasn't self-gratification. And he didn't, you know, when he was all done preaching for the day, go off and visit Mary or anybody else. He was here to do the will of his Father and he was dedicated to it and he remembered who he was and he remembered what he knew all the time.

How did he do that? How many times does Scripture say he went off by himself? He went out to reflect. He went out to pray and to talk with his Father. Sometimes he had to do it in the middle of the night because he had such a busy day.

But he never failed to devote the time. He lived his life in the power of the Holy Spirit. He communed with his Father in and through the Holy Spirit just as we are supposed to do.

That's how he did it. That's how we are to do it. Do you not know? But verse 17, he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

And so he's arguing here for our unity. The Greeks wanted to divorce the realm of the spirit from the realm of the body. What I do with my body doesn't matter because my spirit is pure.

Paul says, your body belongs to the Lord and you are his body and you are one spirit. He has already told the Corinthians, you're the temple of the Holy Spirit. You group.

Well you individually are also a repository for the spirit and you are joined to the Lord Jesus by that spirit in the same way that we become a living human when we are a body and the Neshama is breathed into us and we have spirit, we are truly alive. But he's angling still toward the future as you go through this. And so he goes on to say, flee Pornia.

Every sin that a man does is outside the body but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. And the idea here is that he just got through saying the body is for the Lord and the Lord is for the body. And so he's saying other sins that you commit that are outside the realm of promiscuity and sexually related sins are actions but when you sin with your body you have implicated the Lord Jesus in that action.

You have joined him to it in a very physical way. And it is a particularly severe kind of sin

because your physical body belongs to the Lord Jesus. It is redeemed and he's going to go on to talk about the resurrection.

This same body is the one that is going to be transformed. We're not going to drop this body away and get issued a new one. This one is going to be changed.

We shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed. Those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake. And there is a relationship and you say, well what about people that sharks ate them, fish food, your molecules have been scattered to the winds and you don't have a corpse in a box someplace.

There is at least in principle in scripture a clear and consistent witness that it is this body that rests in hope. It was no small thing to Abraham to get Machpelah and for the subsequent patriarchs to be buried with their ancestors, to be gathered to their fathers, gathered to their people. And Joseph and his bones is a sign and a symbol of his faith in God's promise of deliverance.

But there is a physical component to that body. And everybody is free to do what they want and I know lots of believers who have had themselves cremated and it's not much different than being buried at sea or being dissolved. Some of the people in the space shuttle were believers and they got atomized, vaporized in that intense heat.

But in some way, in some shape, in some form God is going to collect those molecules and transform them into the resurrection body. That's what scripture consistently teaches. And Paul is tying into that teaching which he gave the Corinthians when he was there.

And when you get to chapter 15 it's all about the resurrection in this book. But he says, your body is important. You need to be a good steward of your body because it belongs to the Lord Jesus and it is His to transform.

It ought to be transformed in its walk and in its practice now and it should be sanctified and holy at the time that He is ready to transform it. This goes back to Jesus' teaching about plucking out the eye and cutting off the hand. Because you need sanctification looking ahead to the kingdom.

And there is a sort of not often remarked on relationship between our physical frame and the resurrection and the future that He relies on here for His argument. Every sin a man does is outside the body. He who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.

Or do you not know? Here's another, do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit in you? It is sanctified, it is sealed. He says over in Ephesians, we are sealed with a view toward the day of redemption. This body is sealed.

The indwelling of the Spirit marks this body out and separates it from the bodies of unbelievers and this mortal is going to put on immortality. He doesn't say we're going to drop the mortal

and get a new immortality. This mortal, this body will put on immortality.

We are not unclothed, we are clothed upon. And the scriptural witness on this is very strong. There's something about this body that we carry forward.

And He says you need to keep that in mind when you do things with your body. Whether it be ingesting substances or joining it to various and sundry people. What you do in this body, particularly in the realm of Pornia, reflects.

And keeping this principle in mind is something He encourages us to do. The temple of the Holy Spirit in you, whom you have from God and you are not your own. We say, well, me, that's my spirit and that's my soul.

He says the whole package doesn't belong to us. You are not your own. He's just been talking about your body is the temple of the Spirit.

And you, meaning you, your body and the whole package are not your own. You were bought at a price, therefore glorify God in your body. Period.

All the rest of that, if it's still in your New King James, just cross it out, it's not there. A much later and well-known addition to Scripture, and in your spirit, which are God's, actually destroys the thrust of the argument. He's talking about the body and what you do with it and in it.

Glorify God in your body. Period. And the only way to do that is to not be brought under control of passions, to not be brought under control by self-gratification.

And the only way to do that is to be controlled by something else. What is the something else? His temple is here. So who controls the temple of God? And you go back to Ezekiel and think about those that had moved the altars and set up idols and were doing all kinds of heinous things in God's temple.

And God's glory hiked up his skirts and left. When the temple was no longer a fit place for God's glory, the glory departed. And if we do not maintain the temple and cleanse the temple and ensure that the temple is a fit place for the Holy Spirit, He's going to stop talking.

And we're going to lose that guidance. What was that I dropped? Oh, I think it was just a connector. Sorry about that.

So, in conclusion, from this passage, what do we come away with? I would suggest three things. It's always three things in a good sermon. First of all, think about the center of this argument, which is, do you not know the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom? Seeing, entering, and possessing the kingdom all imply a physical presence.

You've got to be physically there to see a thing, technology aside. You have to be physically present to enter a thing, and you have to be physically present to occupy and possess a thing. So this talks about our resurrection presence in and around the kingdom.

In that light, what I do now matters. So, first of all, we have this forward look. I'm not looking to the past.

What is the legal precedent? What does the law say? What are the rules? What is allowed and what is prohibited? Paul says, no. What dictates and governs our actions is, first of all, our hope, our future view. What's going to happen at the judgment and in the kingdom? Will I be in or will I be out? Is the Lord Jesus, when I knock on the door, going to open it and invite me in to sit at the table? Or is He going to look through the little sliding panel and say, I never knew you.

Depart from me, you who work iniquity. And you have to be there for that to happen. That's post-judgment.

When the Lord Jesus is sitting down at the table, all the judgments are over. These are believers that the Lord Jesus says, you're not coming into the intimate circle here. I don't know you.

You're a worker of iniquity. You have not any inheritance here. You are not going to enter the room, i.e., the kingdom.

And it's a near perfect parallel to that whole idea. So these self-gratifying practices of any kind, these are just examples that pertain in Corinth. But anything that takes control of us, anything that is harmful either to ourselves or to those around us, even if it's allowed, is off the table.

You will not inherit the kingdom of God. And you have been qualified to inherit. You were washed, you were sanctified, and you were justified.

You've been redeemed, reconciled, and propitiation has taken place. There's no reason for you not to inherit. Number two, what is the governing control that ought to be active in our lives? If we are looking ahead in hope to the kingdom, and that is our expectation, and that is what we think about during the day, then how do we practically achieve progress toward that goal? We have to be controlled by the Spirit.

We have already been washed and sanctified. That's why we can be the temple of the Holy Spirit. If we had not been washed, sanctified, and justified, the Holy Spirit couldn't take up residence.

But He's here. The temple is built. So, first of all, guided by that future hope, the expectation, and the reality of the coming kingdom.

Secondly, it is dependent upon, not just dependent, it is essential that there be control by the Spirit, not control by the lust of the flesh, or self-gratification. And thirdly, remembering what we know requires taking the time to think it, taking the time to review it. And if it doesn't happen until we schedule it, then we need to schedule it.

We need to say, every morning, every noon, every evening. That's, of course, Psalm 55, 17, I've quoted it many, many times, but that's how David did it. That's how David became a man after

God's own heart.

Evening and morning and at noon, I will pray and cry aloud, and He will hear my voice. And I've said before, I've often found it fascinating, the concept of praying out loud. There's something special about that, and how are the prayers of the Lord Jesus recorded in Scripture? Somebody heard Him pray them.

When you go to John chapter 17, how did John write that prayer down? The Lord Jesus was praying out loud. That's how John heard it, and remembered it, and wrote it down. Vocal prayer is a scriptural habit, Old Testament and new.

So those three things come out of this section, and we don't escape, because we're not fornicators, or thieves, or covetous, or sodomites, or whatever else. All of us are in danger of being brought under the control of something that we think makes us feel good. We don't belong to ourselves, and we're not here to please ourselves.

We belong to the Lord. Our body belongs to the Lord, and what it does, and what we do with it, should be in His service, and for His pleasure, not for our own. And with that, and the influence of the Holy Spirit, and the Word of God in our lives, we will be on a straight path through the narrow gate, into the kingdom, to not only see it, but to enter it, and to have an inheritance within it.

So Paul gives us everything we need. It's just a matter of asking ourselves, do you not know? Let's close in prayer. Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word.

Thank You for the Apostle Paul, and this wonderful message that was originally delivered in Corinth, but is so pertinent and meaningful for us. We pray that as we reflect on it, Your Holy Spirit will help us see its pertinence, and the way it should be reflected in how we live, how we think, and the way we choose to invest our time and our resources. We pray that in all things, the Lord Jesus will be glorified, that His light will be reflected in us and through us, to believers in our periphery, and to the unbelieving world around us.

We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.