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transmitted infection could arise in the future that would take decades or even centuries to cure. Recklessly introducing disease to oneself is sinning against one's own body.

As Drs. McIlhaney and Bush wrote in Hooked: New Science on How Casual Sex Is Affecting Our Children, "The individual who goes from sex partner to sex partner is causing his or her brain to mold in such a way that eventually accepts that sexual pattern as normal... The pattern of changing sex partners therefore seems to damage their ability to bond in a committed relationship." The authors' findings are summarized: "Sexual activity releases chemicals in the brain, creating emotional bonds between partners. Breaking these bonds can cause depression and make it harder to bond with someone else in the future. Chemicals released in the brain during sex can become addictive." Neuroscience confirms one of the earliest and most fundamental facts laid down in Scripture: the *"one flesh"* principle. *"A man shall... be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh"* (Genesis 2:24). Just as a piece of duct tape can capably adhere to one surface for years but lose its adhesion when ripped off and applied to another surface, so a man is meant to join a woman and become one flesh with her and only her for life but fornicating with one woman after another reduces and may even eliminate the possibility of ever establishing a lasting bond. *"Do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For 'the two,' He says, 'shall become one flesh'"* (1st Corinthians 6:16). Bonding one's body with a woman other than his wife and thereby impairing his ability to establish permanent physical and emotional connections between his wife and himself is a sin against one's own body.

"The body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body" (1st Corinthians 6:13). That the body was specifically created for the Lord makes sinning against the body all the more egregious. This is true regardless of whose body is being used, but all the more so when it is a Christian doing it. *"Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's"* (1st Corinthians 6:19-20). The purpose of a human body is to glorify God, and a Christian should know this better than anyone else; when he practices sexual immorality, he defiles a temple, turning it into a brothel. If Jesus would fashion a whip, flip tables, dump tills, and chase merchants out of the temple in Jerusalem because they

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made His *"Father's house a house of merchandise"* (John 2:14-15) and turned a *"house of prayer"* into a *"den of thieves"* (Mark 11:17), even though *"the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands"* (Acts 7:48), then how much greater an offense is it to Him when the temple of the Holy Spirit is treated with such contempt?

Fornication is unique among sins because there are sins committed along the way. Getting ready to commit sexual immorality, one would have also committed *"lewdness"* (Romans 13:13), which is defined as *"indecent bodily movements; unchaste handling of males and females"* (Thayer). And on the way to lewdness, one would first practice *"lust"* (Matthew 5:28). Somewhere in that mix is *"uncleanliness"* (Galatians 5:19), too. In many instances, the prelude to fornication also involves the *"flattering tongue of a seductress"* (Proverbs 6:24). Every one of these steppingstones is a sin unto itself before fornication even occurs. There is no exaggeration in saying this is unlike other iniquity.

When Paul warned that the *"unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God"*, he supplied ten examples of unrighteous behavior: *"Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God"* (1st Corinthians 6:9-10). Of those ten examples, four are sexual sins: fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals, and sodomites. The consequences for illicit sex are grave, so the Holy Spirit put tremendous emphasis on the subject.

Thankfully, there is hope for the sexually immoral and for every other sinner. Having said what he did about these unrighteous souls being excluded from God's kingdom, Paul continued, *"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"* (1st Corinthians 6:11). Christ affords washing, sanctification, and justification in His name and by His Spirit when one learns the gospel (Romans 10:17), believes in Jesus (John 3:16), confesses faith (Romans 10:9-10), repents of sin (Acts 3:19), and receives baptism (Mark 16:16), which is where the washing occurs (Acts 22:16).

Furthermore, God provides a sanctified outlet for this biological impulse in the form of marriage. *"Because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband"* (1st Corinthians 7:2-3; cf. Hebrews 13:4).

***"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"***

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

***"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"***

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY

Ladies' Studies @ 6:20 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

***"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"***

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

***"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN
SETTINGS OF SILVER"***

PROVERBS 25:11

"God's word should cause us to look upward to him in praise, inward at ourselves in repentance, and outward toward others in service."

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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SINNING AGAINST HIS OWN BODY

Bryan Matthew Dockens

All sin is deadly, *"for the wages of sin is death"* (Romans 6:23), and the death specified as sin's recompense is *"the second death," "the lake which burns with fire and brimstone"* (Revelation 21:8). Nevertheless, it is inaccurate to conclude that all sin is the same, for Scripture teaches otherwise. Sexual immorality is singled out as a sin unlike the rest.

Paul, by inspiration, commanded, *"Flee sexual immorality"* and immediately explained, *"Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body"* (1st Corinthians 6:18).

Fornication is unique insofar as the body itself is both the impetus and instrument of the act. Sins like theft and covetousness are motivated by an external object. Hatred and anger are responses to external stimuli, as well. Craving alcohol or other illicit substances comes from having imbibed in that sin already, and the motivation to partake at first is usually peer pressure. Sexual immorality, though, starts with one's own body and ends with that same instrument.

Venereal diseases immediately come to mind: chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, herpes, hepatitis B, HIV/AIDS. While all these conditions are treatable or even curable now, several of them were lethal until relatively recently – 1996 for HIV/AIDS, 1982 for hepatitis B, and 1943 for syphilis and gonorrhea. It is entirely plausible that a new sexually – Continued on page 2 –

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