

SESSION 5  
Sanctified



**QUESTION 1:**

*Growing up, what children's book was your favorite?*

## THE POINT

We are set apart in Christ to live holy lives.

## THE PASSAGE

1 Corinthians 6:9-20

## THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Are you familiar with the book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*?<sup>1</sup> My children are because my wife and I often read the book to them. In the story, the caterpillar had a hunger that could never be satisfied. But one day everything changed. He no longer crawled on the ground nor did he feel that intense hunger. Instead, he was fulfilled and had wings that enabled him to fly. Then the author revealed that he was never created to remain a caterpillar; he was designed to be a beautiful butterfly.

I felt empathy for this caterpillar and maybe you do too. Like this caterpillar, we were never designed to remain hungry and unfulfilled. Instead, we were designed to live in a relationship with God through the sacrifice of Christ. We were designed to live set apart from the ways of a sinful world; we are set aside to become something greater.

In 1 Corinthians 6, Paul sought to help us understand the process of being set apart from the rest of the world. That is what it means to be sanctified.

## 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

**9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,**

**10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.**

**11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.**

**KEY WORDS: Kingdom of God** (v. 9)—Whether on earth in the believer’s heart or in heaven itself, God’s kingdom can best be understood as the spiritual realm over which God reigns or where He rules sovereignly.

**Sanctified** (v. 11)—To be “set apart” for God’s special use; therefore, including holy living. Believers should live in a way that sets them apart from the ways of the impure.

**Justified** (v. 11)—To be put in right relation or right standing with God, which only God can make possible through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In the first session (pp. 14-23), we gained an understanding of the word *holy*, a rich word that applies to God who is set apart, separate, and unique from His creation. But God is not the only one who is holy; as His children, we too are to be holy and set apart from the world around us. “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Pet. 1:15-16). To be holy is to be sanctified, and the Christian life is a life of growing in sanctification.

The beauty of being sanctified and set apart in Christ is that we are no longer enslaved to sin as we once were. When we are in Christ, the Father sees us as righteous; we are no longer counted

as unrighteous. Paul listed some specific sins and reminded the Corinthians, “Such were some of you.” It was a humbling reminder that they were justified not by their actions, but because of Christ’s death and resurrection.

Paul was also sending a warning that their lives should no longer look like their old way of living. We are sanctified and set apart from the old way of life. We will only find death in sin, but we find life in Christ. When we come to Christ, everything changes.

Paul used three key words to describe that change:

1. **Washed.** We are washed clean of our sin through faith in Christ. “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:7).
2. **Sanctified.** We are set apart by God and declared holy. “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:10).
3. **Justified.** We are considered righteous in the sight of God. The righteousness of Christ is attributed to us. “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Cor. 5:21).

All this happens at the moment of salvation, the moment we believe and trust in Christ, the One who lived a perfect life, died a sinner’s death to take away our sin, and rose again to give us new life. Justification is a one-time event, but sanctification is a daily process. Our sanctification begins at the moment we are justified, but it continues throughout our lives as we grow more and more like Christ.

#### QUESTION 2:

*How would you describe your life before you encountered Christ?*

## 1 Corinthians 6:12-17

**12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.**

**13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.**

**14 And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.**

**15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.**

**16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.**

**17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.**

Paul was reminding the Corinthians they were sanctified in Christ and not to engage in the old life, because some of their old sins were exactly what they were chasing. We are set free in Christ, but the Corinthians were misinterpreting that freedom. Paul quoted one of their slogans twice—“All things are lawful unto me”—but both times he gave a truth that went against that slogan: “all things are not expedient” and “I will not be brought under the power of any.”

Earlier, Paul had written to the churches in Galatia: “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free” (Gal. 5:1). What did He set us free from? Slavery to sin. We are free *not* to sin, but some in the Corinthian church wrongly took that freedom to mean they were free *to* sin.

Specifically, some in the Corinthian church were abusing the gift of sex and engaging in sexual immorality. Paul referenced a statement that the Corinthian believers were likely using in

rationalizing their immorality: “Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats.” Eating food is a natural part of life and something to be enjoyed, and they viewed sexual pleasure in the same way. They believed food and sex were simply intended for their physical bodies and had no bearing on their spiritual lives.

The belief that what we do physically has no bearing on our spiritual lives came from a heresy called Gnosticism. Gnosticism adherents made many attempts to influence Christian thinking and theology. One aspect of this heresy was the idea that the only thing that mattered was the spiritual. Physical matter was not important, which meant a person could do anything physically because it had no bearing on his spiritual life. That view appears to have influenced many in the Corinthian church, but Paul spoke against it. “Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.” We cannot separate body and spirit. Our physical bodies belong just as much to Christ as our spirits do.

Believers are one with Christ, and marriage is a picture of the oneness we share with Christ as his church (Eph. 5:22-32). In marriage, a man and woman become one flesh; in the same way, when we become believers, we are joined with the Lord through the Holy Spirit. “Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?” Consequently, the actions of our body affect our whole being.

This truth underscores just how set apart we are from the world. We are not one with the world and its way of thinking; we are one with Christ. Therefore, since we are one with Christ and His Holy Spirit lives within us, our actions should reflect that.

Returning to the analogy of marriage, we recognize the weighty responsibility of living united to a spouse, but a deep joy also accompanies that commitment. A husband or wife’s life does not look the same as it did before marriage; spouses are to live for one another. A husband is set apart for his wife, and a wife is set apart for her husband. It’s the same in our relationship with Christ. We are joined to Christ and set apart for His purposes.

## QUESTION 3:

***What are some benefits and responsibilities of union with Christ?***

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## 1 Corinthians 6:18-20

**18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.**

**19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?**

**20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**

In verses 12-17, Paul stressed that what we do physically—in this case, sexual sin—does matter. So now he offered a course correction: “Flee fornication.” *Flee* means to run away, not just walk away, from a situation; and don’t take time to think about getting away. Get as far away as possible—and do it immediately!

In fleeing *from* temptation, it is essential to consider what we run *to*. We cannot flee aimlessly from sin, but must run ferociously toward Christ. Paul instructed Timothy, “But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness” (1 Tim. 6:11). We are to pursue the sanctified life.

God is glorified when we pursue the things of God and live sanctified lives. First Peter 2:9 declares: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” He called us out of our sin to belong to Him and be His own people—He set us apart—and we are not our own. Consequently, all our choices should bring

glory to God. To the God who chose us for a royal priesthood and called us out of darkness, we should willingly and joyfully proclaim His honor and glory.

Fleeing sexual immorality and faithfully pursuing righteousness may seem like a challenge, but it is not insurmountable. We never face temptations alone (1 Cor. 10:13). Because we trust and belong to Christ, His Holy Spirit is always right there with us. “Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God.”

As we rely on the indwelling Holy Spirit, let’s also remember the price God paid to redeem us and bring us to Himself. We value and take better care of things when we pay a lot of money for them. We typically give a lot of thought to what we purchase when it’s costly. Many of us spend weeks, even months, selecting a house and securing a way to buy it. On the other hand, we buy a snack at the convenience store without much thought. On an infinitely greater scale, God chose to purchase you and me and it cost Him greatly: the death of His Son. We are wise to take special care of what belongs to God: that includes our whole spirit, soul, and body.

**“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. 5:23).**

In submitting to Christ, we submit in both body and spirit. We are set apart—sanctified—in Christ, and our bodies are no longer to be used as vessels for sin. Instead, our bodies are to be vessels to glorify Christ. When we submit to Christ on a daily basis, and let His Holy Spirit fill us, we are well on the road of sanctification. A sanctified life lived for Christ can do nothing but glorify Him.

#### **QUESTION 4:**

***What does it mean to call our bodies the temple of the Holy Spirit?***

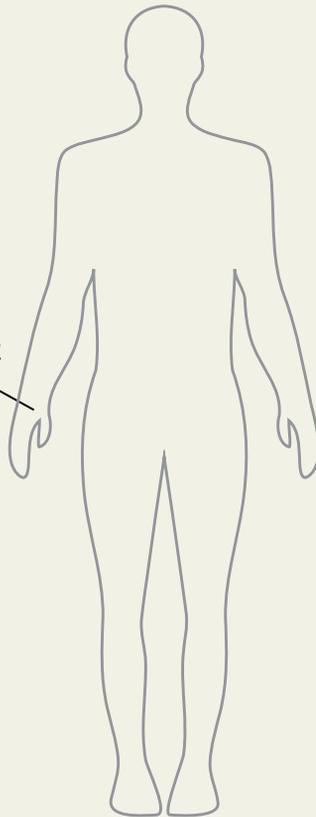
## QUESTION 5:

*What are specific ways Christians can live set apart for the glory of God in today's culture?*

## ENGAGE

*Since believers are set apart for God, our text urges us to glorify God with our bodies. Use the sketch below to describe how Christians can use our bodies to glorify God. Follow the example given.*

writing notes of encouragement

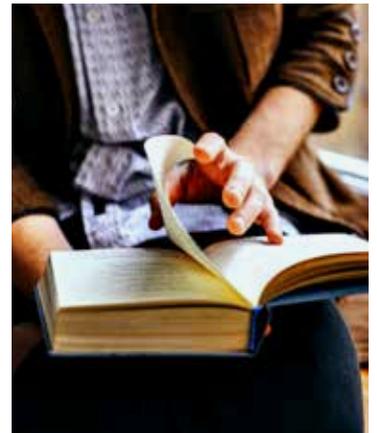
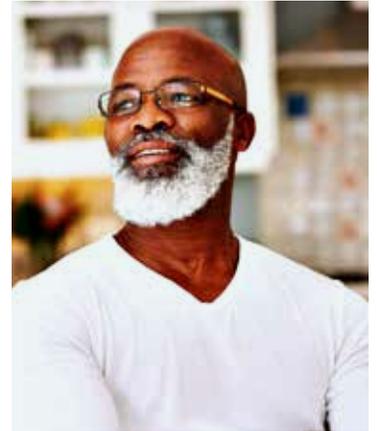


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## LIVE IT OUT

We were never designed to remain caterpillars. God set us apart for something far greater. As Christ daily transforms us, we must let Him continue the sanctification process in us.

- ▶ **Offer thanks.** Reflect on how your life has changed because of Christ. Thank Him for setting you free from the former way of life. Pray for the Lord to continue His good work.
- ▶ **Memorize.** Commit 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 to memory and repeat it to yourself when you need to flee from temptation. “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”
- ▶ **Walk alongside others.** Making the daily choice to live a holy life is much easier when you walk alongside other believers. Your Bible study group is a good place to start.



### ENDNOTES

1 Eric Carle, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (New York: Philomel Books, 1969).