

The Sin of Fornication

by Bill Crews

Because of peer pressure and practice, because of the depictions and insinuations of TV programs and movies, because of the explicit words of the music they listen to, because of the amoral conclusions and consequences of the theory of evolution, because moral and religious training has been stripped from the public schools, and because of the horrible examples being presented by so many adults who should know better and by their chosen "idols" and "heroes" who don't care, **it is a rare thing for boys and girls to pass through their teen years and keep themselves morally pure** (1 Tim. 5:22). Even parents who are Christians are finding it increasingly difficult to rear a son or daughter who will not give in to some form of fornication. Precious few in the general population are virgins at the time of their marriages.

Jesus lived more than 33 years upon this earth without marrying, without committing fornication, without even lusting after a woman in His heart (Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22; Jn. 8:46; 1 Pet. 1:18-19). Paul chose not to marry, lived a long life, faced many temptations, but lived a pure and exemplary life. Timothy and Titus also come to mind. Timothy had been taught the Old Testament Scriptures from the time he could learn (2 Tim. 3:15) and was told by Paul: *"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity"* (1 Tim. 4:12).

Thayer's Lexicon defines the New Testament word "**fornication**" as "unlawful sexual intercourse" (which would include our English word "*fornication*," and "*adultery*," and "*homosexuality*," and "*bestiality*"). Nobody has to commit fornication; 1 Corinthians 10:13 makes that crystal clear! And the Bible still says: *"But the body is not for fornication"* (1 Cor. 6:13 - such is a prostitution of the body). And *"Flee fornication. . . he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body"* (1 Cor. 6:18). And: *"Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed"* (1 Cor. 10:8). And: *"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband"* (1 Cor. 7:2, KJV). There is no hope for those who persist in it; they shall not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-10). As with adultery, those who would commit fornication would destroy their own souls (Prov. 6:32). But those who will repent genuinely of it can be "*washed*," "*sanctified*," "*justified*" as were some at Corinth (1 Cor. 6:11).

ADDENDUM: You will notice that most of the scriptures used above on the subject of fornication are from the first letter to the church at Corinth. This is not coincidental. Corinth in Paul's day was a commercial and cosmopolitan city of four or five hundred thousand people. Prosperity and immorality thrived there. Among the many temples to pagan gods there was the great temple to Aphrodite -- the Greek's counterpart of the Roman goddess Venus -- housing its 1,000 "priestesses," public prostitutes with whom men could satisfy their fleshly lusts while disguising it as religious devotion. So loose were the public morals at Corinth that elsewhere to "Corinthize" meant "to fornicate" Do you think that it was easy for Christians in ancient Corinth to rear their sons and daughters to be pure individuals? Surely not, but God required it.

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