

Let Us Avoid Fornication
(1 Corinthians 10:8)

Introduction:

1. In our lesson we are concentrating on the activity mentioned in this verse that God's people are to avoid -- "fornication" [sexual immorality].
2. Recently, a number of celebrities and politicians have shown that fornication is a widespread problem [we have been reminded of the statement that Moses made in Numbers 32:23b].
3. The New Testament teaches that it was necessary for the early church to know God's will on this subject, and it is necessary for us to know it, as well.
4. Let us begin our study by answering the question . . .

Discussion:

I. WHAT IS "FORNICATION?"

- A. "Fornication" is a general term that includes all types of unlawful sexual activity.
- B. To be more specific, "fornication" includes "sex outside of marriage," "adultery," "homosexuality," "incest," "prostitution," etc.
- C. Caution: Sometimes the Bible uses "fornication" in a figurative sense to refer to "idolatry" (Ezekiel 16).

II. WHY MUST "FORNICATION" BE AVOIDED?

- A. We must avoid "fornication" because the Bible teaches us to do so.
 1. 1 Corinthians 6:18
 2. Ephesians 5:3
 3. Colossians 3:5
 4. 1 Thessalonians 4:3
- B. We must avoid "fornication" because of its consequences.
 1. What did "fornication" do for people in the Old Testament?
 - a. (Romans 1:29) "Fornication" was one of the sins that caused God to give up on the Gentiles.
 - b. (1 Corinthians 10:8) "Fornication" caused 23,000 Israelites to fall in one day.
 - c. (Jude 7) "Fornication" caused God to pour out His wrath upon Sodom and Gomorrah.
 2. What will "fornication" do for people today?
 - a. (1 Corinthians 6:9-10) "Fornicators" will not inherit God's kingdom [this point is also made in Galatians 5:19-21].
 - b. (Hebrews 13:4) God approves of the marriage relationship, *"but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."*
- C. These passages clearly show us why "fornication" must be avoided.

III. HOW IS "FORNICATION" AVOIDED?

- A. Let us first point out how a person guilty of "fornication" receives forgiveness.
 1. The good news is that anyone, including "fornicators," can be washed, sanctified, and justified (1 Corinthians 6:11; Acts 18:8).
 2. A child of God who commits "fornication" can also be forgiven (1 John 1:9; Acts 8:22).
- B. Keys to avoiding "fornication":
 1. having a pure heart (Mark 7:21-23)
 2. avoiding "fornicators" (1 Corinthians 5:11-13)
 3. following God's plan for marriage (1 Corinthians 7:2).
 - a. In the beginning, God revealed His will for sexual intimacy (Genesis 2:24).
 - b. Jesus endorsed this plan in Matthew 19:4-6.

Conclusion:

1. The Bible is very clear in revealing God's will concerning fornication.
2. As we pointed out this morning, let us depend upon "the grace of God" and "the blessed hope" to motivate us to behave properly so we will avoid fornication.