DISCUSSION GUIDE

BUILT DIFFERENT : *"A Disciple Belongs to Christ"*

SCRIPTURE | 1 Corinthians 6:1–20

MEMORY VERSE

"I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought" (1 Corinthians 1:10).

MAIN IDEA OF THE TEXT

Built different: disciples reflect God, so all areas of life are lived under the authority of Jesus.

DISCIPLESHIP RHYTHM

Discipleship Distinctive: Lordship

OBSERVATION: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Gather in groups of three to five people to discuss the Observation and Interpretation questions.

OBSERVATION EXERCISE 1: DISPUTES

Read 1 Corinthians 6:1–8. Who were the Corinthians asking to settle their disputes? Who will judge the world and the angels?

Suggested Response: Paul said some believers were taking disputes with other believers before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the Lord's people. Through a question, Paul revealed that believers will judge the world, including angels.

OBSERVATION EXERCISE 2: SPIRITUAL STATUS

Read 1 Corinthians 6:9–11. What sinful life patterns did Paul list? Make a list of them. In contrast, what was the spiritual status of Corinthian believers now?

Suggested Response: Paul listed sexual immorality, idolatry, adultery, same-sex sexual behavior, stealing, greed, drunkenness, slander, and swindling. He said some of the Corinthians used to be characterized by these things. But now they were washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of God.

OBSERVATION EXERCISE 3: THE PHYSICAL BODY

Read 1 Corinthians 6:12–20. What did Paul tell the Corinthians the purpose of their bodies was? How is it a contrast from the way their culture thought about a person's body?

Suggested Response: Paul explained that the body is used to glorify God. The things done in the body have an impact on a person's connection in Christ. Paul contrasted the thinking of the Corinthian culture, which considered the acts of the body to be limited to the spiritual realm. There was no connection between the physical realm and the spiritual realm.

INTERPRETATION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 1: SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF CONFLICT

Why did Paul treat the Corinthians' lawsuits against one another as a spiritual problem, not merely a legal problem?

Suggested Response: Paul saw their lawsuits as a spiritual problem because believers belong to Christ and to one another. They were handling conflict as though they had no shared identity, no wisdom from God, and no responsibility to protect the witness of the church. Their desire to win, be vindicated, or protect their rights had become more important than living under the authority of Jesus and working toward unity.

INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 2: SPIRITUAL IDENTITY

How did Paul show the Corinthians they were not defined by their lives before salvation?

Suggested Response: Paul reminded the Corinthians that their past sins were real, but they were no longer defined by them. In Christ, they had been cleansed, set apart for God, and declared right with Him. Because God had given them a new identity, they could not keep living as though sin still had authority over them. The grace that saves sinners also brings them under the lordship of Jesus.

INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 3: BOTH-AND: SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL BEINGS

Why did Paul say the body is "for the Lord" and that believers are "not their own"?

Suggested Response: Paul wanted the Corinthians to see that their physical body was not spiritually meaningless or morally disconnected from Jesus. Believers are united to Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and bought at a price. The example of the sexual union reaches back to the design of humanity as recorded in Genesis. We are physical and spiritual beings. These two realities cannot be separated. We are a unity, so the physical things we do with our bodies have spiritual implications.

Furthermore, our lives belong to the Lord, which includes our physical bodies. Therefore, we cannot use our bodies according to self-rule, appetite, or cultural permission. The whole person belongs to Christ and is meant to honor God.

APPLICATION: HOW DO I RESPOND?

QUESTION 1: In 1 Corinthians 6:1–8, Paul confronted believers who were handling conflict without wisdom, humility, or concern for their witness and the unity of believers. How do you usually respond when you feel wronged?

Suggested Response: I may respond by defending myself, fighting back, avoiding the person, replaying the situation in my mind, talking to others about it, or looking for ways to prove I was right. Paul's words remind me that belonging to Christ, not just whether I get the outcome I want, should shape how I handle conflict.

As your group responds, use follow-up questions to guide responses beyond the surface level. Encourage transparent responses.

QUESTION 2: Where are you most tempted to insist on your rights or to get even? Consider Paul's challenge in verse 7, "Why not rather suffer wrong?" Why can we give up temporary wins in light of the bigger picture?

Suggested Response: I may be tempted to insist on my rights in marriage, parenting, work, friendships, church life, online conversations, or situations where I feel misunderstood. There are times when truth and protection matter, but I also need to ask whether my response is being influenced by Jesus's example or by pride, anger, and self-protection.

Paul's challenge is hard! But living in light of eternity means I know that I will ultimately be vindicated and all wrongs will be made right. Jesus did not hold on to status. Instead, He gave up His rights so we could be saved (Philippians 2:5–8). Paul pointed to this by directing the Corinthians to think about the kingdom of God, meaning our eternal inheritance, not just temporary circumstances.

QUESTION 3: In 1 Corinthians 6:11, Paul reminded the Corinthians that they were washed, sanctified, and justified. What part of your past do you need freedom from?

Suggested Response: I may still live from shame, anger, lust, greed, insecurity, people-pleasing, bitterness, or the need to control. Paul reminded believers that their past was real, but it was not their master. In Christ, God gives a new identity that is the basis for a new way of life, a life lived in freedom.

QUESTION 4: In 1 Corinthians 6:12, Paul said, "I have the right to do anything," but "not everything is beneficial." Where in your life are you tempted to overdo something God allows?

Suggested Response: I may need to ask this about entertainment, habits, spending, relationships, food or drink, sexuality, technology, social media, or the way I use my time. Instead of only asking whether something is allowed, I need to ask whether it helps me honor Christ or is my master.

QUESTION 5: Paul said, "I will not be mastered by anything." What desire, habit, or pattern most easily gains control over you?

Suggested Response: I may feel controlled by approval, anger, anxiety, lust, comfort, food, alcohol, spending, entertainment, my phone, work, or the need to be right. Christ's lordship means I do not have to surrender myself to lesser masters. I can bring those patterns into the light and take concrete steps toward freedom.

QUESTION 6: What thoughts do you have about the integrated unity of your physical existence and spiritual life? What is one practical step you can take this week to honor God with your physical existence (body)?

Suggested Response: Responses will vary. The goal is to begin processing the deep connection between our physical existence and spiritual lives. Many people live as if these two aspects of our lives are separated and do not influence each other. Paul connected these two realms when he gave

the example of sexual union with a prostitute. He pointed back to Genesis , to how we are created by God's design and that the sexual union is not just a physical thing. It is a physical and spiritual thing—one flesh, which is immediately followed by a comment on nakedness and not being ashamed (Genesis 2:24–25). Furthermore, our bodies no longer belong to ourselves to be used any way we want. We have the Holy Spirit within us, so things done in the physical realm impact our spiritual state. And, we are under the lordship of Jesus Christ, the one who saved us, so He has authority over our lives.

I can flee from a temptation, set a boundary, confess a hidden struggle, change a habit, rest properly, use my body to serve someone, or remove access to something that pulls me away from Christ. Honoring God with my body means treating my physical life as belonging to Jesus.

QUESTION 7: How can our group help one another live every area of life under the lordship of Jesus?

Suggested Response: As a group, we can pray honestly, encourage confession, talk about real-life struggles without pretending, and remind one another that Jesus's authority is good. We can help one another connect faith to conflict, desires, habits, relationships, and the body so no part of life is treated as separate from Christ.