
Becoming Christlike – New Testament Application of Old Testament

NT 7 – 1 Corinthians 6:12–20

We are going to pick right up where we left off last time, which was in 1 Corinthians 6:12.

I only read 1 Corinthians 6:12 and commented on it. Afterwards I realized that this section from verses 12–20 really speaks to becoming more Christlike. We seek to be genuine disciples, to walk like Christ, to be living epistles of the Word; to really live it in our hearts to the place where we look like the Word. Christ was the living Word. We are his ambassadors, his representatives, his lights in the world.

We want to get the Word so deeply into our hearts that we become like Christ. Unfortunately, what we see in the world and in so much of Christianity is people living just like the world and looking just like the world.

We will look at **reflexives** in the scripture, the role of **the fruit of the spirit of self control**, which enables us to carry that out, and then look at the **parable of the sower**. These topics will show us **how** we can accomplish our goal of becoming Christlike.

1 Corinthians 6:12–20

12 “All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful.

Or other translations will say **expedient** or **profitable** or **beneficial**. As a believer who is freed from the Old Testament law and who has been born again, has Christ in him or her as we do our best to walk according to the Word and according to the Spirit, all things are lawful for us, but not all things are helpful or profitable or expedient.

So then, we make decisions about what we're going to do as a believer, as a true disciple, we ask, is this going to be helpful, beneficial, profitable, fruitful for God and for the work of Christ and the body of Christ?

“All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything.

So, Paul goes on to say to the Corinthians, all things are lawful for me, (for a second time) but I will not be dominated by anything. Different translations for dominated are “ruled by” or “mastered by” or “under the power of.” The Greek word is actually similar to *exusia*. It is [*eksousiázō*](#), and only occurs four times.

We are not to be under the authority of, ruled by, mastered by, or dominated by anything.

Stop and think about how astounding that is! It is possible for a human being not to be dominated by anything. Paul was so in control of his mind and life that he was free to totally serve and carry out what God had called him to do, which was to be an apostle and to teach the Word and to live the Word and to do signs, miracles, and wonders. He was freed to do that. He was not obstructed by any barriers, obstacles, or any inclinations of the flesh which dominated him.

Free from the Dominance of Food

And then the first example, incredibly enough, is food!

13 “Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and God will destroy both one and the other.

And why is that? Because people can become so attached to food and utilize food as a means to satisfy their flesh, to bring pleasure to themselves. (Not that we're not supposed to enjoy eating. Please get the point here.) People use food for satisfaction of the flesh rather than what the purpose of food actually is as designed by God.

Food is meant for the stomach. Food has a purpose. We eat for a reason, to fill our stomach, to then nourish our body, so we're able to carry out what God's called us to do.

What people can do is look at food instead of the purpose, as God designed it, but as a way to satisfy the flesh. Many people cannot control that desire for food and satisfaction of the flesh; hence we have incredible consequences in our country. The latest statistics show that 40 to 45% of the country is obese.

What accompanies that is health problems and all kinds of issues in life due to not viewing and utilizing food as it was designed by God to be utilized. There is overeating. There is addiction to food. There is obsession with food, and all kinds of resulting problems.

When one is so preoccupied with food, he is not free to do what God calls him to do, which is to serve, **because you're dominated by something**. In this case, it's food.

The first thing that Paul lists—food is meant for the stomach. And the stomach in our body has a purpose. It's to take the food and to break it down, and then disseminate vitamins and minerals and nutrients and sustenance to the body so we can live. This is very simplistic, but Paul utilizes this to get the point across as to what the purpose of food really is.

Everything in life has a purpose. There is a godly purpose for which it can be utilized, and then it will be beneficial and profitable. But if it is not properly used in a godly fashion, then it can be an obstacle, it can be a barrier, and people can be dominated by it or mastered by it.

Hence, we have people who are addicted to so many different things and not in control of their lives. That, again, is why we're going to get self control as a fruit of the spirit. Since each one of the reflexives talks about what we do with ourselves, we can learn how self control can help us carry out all these commands with respect to the various reflexives.

13 “Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and God will destroy both one and the other.

They are both going away!

Free From the Dominance of Sexual Immorality

The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

God, here, is extending the application and the analogy of food for the stomach and stomach for the food. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord. What Paul is

pointing out here is just as with food not being used just for pleasure, but for its purpose, the body is not meant for sexual immorality.

The body is meant for the Lord. We have a body. We have our members, we have our minds, our brains, our hands, our arms, our legs, our mouths, our eyes, so that we can serve the Lord. That is the purpose. What is severely lacking in so much of the Christian community is the commitment to God necessary in order to actually fulfill our calling and our purpose. The body, what we have is meant for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

The Lord Jesus Christ, Christ in you, the hope of glory, is meant to dwell in this body, enabling us to fulfill our mission, our calling, our destiny, and be Christlike.

So, the body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body. Why do so many people engage in so much sexual immorality? Just like food, it is used for pleasure. Sex is used for pleasure and serving the flesh.

And the key here is that so many in the world, even Christians, are serving the flesh. Their body and flesh should be helping them to serve the Lord. So actually, one is a servant of his flesh and being dominated by that and mastered by that, rather than utilizing the flesh for which it is intended in order to serve God.

14 And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power.

That should cause the reader and the listener to be thinking about the resurrection, the return of Christ and eternity.

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!

Never. Paul says, "Never." How could you possibly think that? But people think it and do it.

Many times I have mentioned the Ministry Watch organization that is uncovering improprieties in Christianity day after day after day here in the United States.

It is because Christians and leaders and pastors and teachers either don't know that their bodies are members of Christ, or if they know it are unable to exercise the self control necessary in order to not satisfy the flesh. They need self control and fruit of the spirit demonstrated so that they're able to serve.

16 Or do you not know that he who is joined^d to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh."

God, via Paul, is reminding them of the spiritual reality of two becoming one in the act of sexual intercourse, the two shall become one flesh. So... should you do this? Never.

17 But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

When we are born again of God's spirit, we have the spirit of God in us. We are part of the body of Christ. We are one with God. Then, in practical reality, we are to live that out so that we are one and in union with God and with Christ. When we manifest that, when we live that, we are living epistles.

18 Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin^e a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.

Don't pursue it, don't invite it, don't succumb to the temptation of it, as we see so often today where you're satisfying the flesh and you're serving your flesh, but instead flee from sexual immorality.

19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, **20** for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body

Here's the key. You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. The ransom price paid by Christ in his life and his shedding of his blood. You are not your own. You were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body.

Now the point here is that so many Christians think they are their own and they live like their own and they pursue things in order to satisfy themselves, thinking, "Hey, this is my life, and I can do what I want to do, and I am my own."

Rather, are we humble to the Word? Christ humbled himself. We are to humble ourselves to the point that we say "Okay, the Word is true. I am not my own. I was bought with a price. So, I am to live differently than the world. I am to glorify God in my body."

We read John 12 at the outset of this series to show the foundation that Christ said he was glorifying God in his death. **We also glorify God by our death to self and being alive to God.**

Personal Incident – Believer Oblivious to His Impact on Others

There was an incident that took place this week which has been sticking with me for a couple of days, and it's really bothered me. Of course, I won't share specifics because I don't want to embarrass the individual involved. A Christian made a decision and took action which benefited him or herself to the detriment of and negatively affecting a large number of people.

It bothered me significantly enough that I sought to bring it to that person's attention that what they did benefiting themselves had negatively impacted 50 to 100 people. What was so disturbing to me in bringing it up was that it was met with blindness to the fact that they should live any differently than anybody in the world? Everybody in the world just takes care of themselves and watches out for themselves and does what's best for them and their self interest. This person was totally blind to what I was getting at.

That was so disturbing to me. To think that a Christian who is supposed to realize that they are not their own and they are to live for God and to bless and to serve others had been so influenced by and in unison with the world and the world's way of thinking that it wasn't even a consideration.

"Well, of course I'm going to do what benefits me. That's what everybody does. So what if 50 people are negatively impacted?" It has bothered me for days because Christians and the church can become so influenced by the world and the world's way of thinking, that we're totally blind to what we really should be doing. This gets back to what I started with, that

people are dominated by and mastered by their flesh and their self-interest to the place where all they do is to watch out for self.

List of Reflexives Revisited

As you know I have been studying these reflexives. Last session I listed 20 of them that show up in the New Testament. I have finished my study of each one individually. I am going to cover those.

In each one of them the subject of the noun performs the action of the verb on him or herself. The list starts out with five or six that Christ performed in his earthly ministry.

We are told in the epistles that Christ did these things so that provides our foundation. Then we move on to the Epistles where the things that we are supposed to do are recorded.

And you might think, "Well, why does God have such an obsession with self? Shouldn't our obsession be with Christ? And shouldn't everything be pointing to Christ?"

God is pretty smart, isn't he? He knows that the answer, of course, is Christ. He knows our obsession should be with Christ. But there's something that gets in the way. What is it? **Myself.**

To get the "self" out of the way and for Christ to dominate in my life will only happen with my obsession with Christ. And by so doing, I will perform all these things that are mandated and commanded in the scriptures about how to deal with myself.

This is just so big. It's a way for us to get to genuine discipleship. I read them last time, but we're going to do it again.

Think about what Christ did. **He humbled himself, he gave himself, he made himself, he emptied himself, he sanctified himself.** That is what we are to imitate. We are to do the same. It is expanded upon more in the epistles.

I am going to cover these in order when we get to them.

We are to examine ourselves. Take a look at ourselves so we know where we are and what we should be doing.

We are to delight ourselves in God.

We are to submit ourselves to the Word.

We are to devote ourselves.

We are to train ourselves.

We are to clothe ourselves.

We are to humble ourselves.

We are to empty ourselves.

We are to give ourselves.

We are to cleanse ourselves.

We are to keep ourselves unstained from the world.

We are to watch ourselves closely.

We are to arm ourselves.

We are to deny ourselves.

There is so much focus on **self** because **self is the problem!**

Have you ever thought, “Gosh, I would be such a great Christian and a great example if I could only get rid of myself?” That is exactly what God did through Christ at the cross, **because we were crucified with him.**

We are able to deny self and to reckon self dead. Then, we will see the greatness of Christ in our lives. We don't want to be preoccupied with self in the worldly sense. We want to learn how to reckon self dead so that we are preoccupied with Christ. It is by being preoccupied with Christ that this will take place.

Transformation

There are only a few verses that speak of transformation. Isn't it interesting that the word [metamorphóō](#) only occurs a few times in the scriptures? I think it is by design. There is one occurrence when Christ was transformed on the “Mount of Transfiguration.” They saw this dramatic transformation on the “Mount of Transfiguration.” That would stick with Peter who was there. And then there are two occurrences of transformation in the Epistles.

Remember, we read earlier that the reason we have the spirit of God in us is so that he can work within us, and we can become transformed to Christlikeness.

2 Corinthians 3:17 and 18

17 Now the Lord^d is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. **18** And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord,^e **are being transformed** into the same image from one degree of glory to another.^f For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

We will cover this in depth later on. By continually looking at, continually beholding the glory of the Lord as we see it in the Gospels and we see the resurrected Christ, we are being transformed into that same image.

The other occurrence is in Romans 12:1–3.

Romans 12:1–3

1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers,^a by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.^b **2** Do not be conformed to this world,^c but **be transformed** by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.^d

Someone living like that is dramatically different from the person in the incident I referenced earlier who was blind to the fact that he or she is totally living for self instead of reckoning self dead. Consider 1 Corinthians where it says, “You are not your own.”

That is what it says! Our lives are not our own. We were bought with a price. “Therefore, glorify God in your body.” How do we do that on a daily basis? We do it by being obedient and

adhering to all these reflexives that enable us to actually allow the spirit of God to work within us. This results in us manifesting fruit of the spirit. This results in others seeing Christ.

Consider Christians in the world still living for themselves, living selfishly. If you think of what Christ did to accomplish the reality of identification—we can actually know that we were crucified with him, we were raised with him, we ascended with him. We can now do on this planet in our lives what he did.

Romans 6:9–11

[9](#) We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. [10](#) For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

Now consider that for a minute. The life Christ lives now, **he lives to God**.

[11](#) So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

So, you also must **consider yourselves**, okay...does that sound like a reflexive there? You must consider yourself dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

We too are alive to God, and we should be living to God and for God. Consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

And then it is repeated again in 2 Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 5:15

[15](#) and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

It is written in black and white so that Christians can read it, understand it, know it, and yet we have Christians worldwide who continue to live for themselves. How do we get to the place where we don't have our flesh dominate?

As we read in 1 Corinthians 6 that we began with today, we are not dominated by our flesh. We are not mastered by our flesh. We are not ruled by the lusts of the flesh, but rather we overcome it. We don't live for ourselves, but for him.

It is easy to say these words, but to actually do this takes doing what Christ said in the Gospels—deny yourself and follow me. I mentioned last time they didn't have another self to live by in the Gospels. If they denied themselves, there was nothing more for them to live by. We have another self to live by, which the Epistles say is the new self, Christ in you, the holy spirit of God in you, God in Christ in you, the new man, and the new nature. God has given all these synonymous phrases to drive home to us the greatness of what we have within.

The Epistles teach us how to reckon the old self dead and ourselves alive in Christ and live according to the new self.

I have had conversations with Christians in which we talk about the things that we do and the decisions we make. This goes back to what we started with in 1 Corinthians 6, “All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful or expedient or profitable.”

If you start getting into lifestyle choices and things that they do on a daily basis, weekly basis, monthly basis, and how they spend their time, they will say, “Well, I like this activity,” or “I like these vacations,” or “I like going to all these concerts,” or “I like, and I enjoy travel, leisure, music, my hobbies!” They like all the things they fill their time with. Perhaps there's something else that they could be doing that would be more fruitful, beneficial, and helpful. As Paul said, all things are lawful for me but not all are beneficial. One can go ahead and do all those things, but they're not all helpful. They are not all beneficial. Paul would not let himself be dominated by such things.

That is what 1 Corinthians 6:12 says. If you pose that to somebody, they will often respond, “Well, that's who I am and if I were to do those other things, I would have to deny myself.” **Exactly!** That is exactly what the scripture says. People are blind to it. Yes. Christ said, “Deny yourself and follow me. Deny yourself and be like me.”

And what did he do? He lived for the glory of God and was obedient unto death. I have hit on this so many different times, but it's the truth.

I know this series of teachings is challenging. It is for those who are interested in truly being disciples who want to deny self and follow Christ. It is for those who want to humble themselves, give themselves, empty themselves, et cetera.

1 Timothy 4:6–8

6 If you put these things before the brothers,^a you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed.

7 Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather **train yourself for godliness;**

There is another reflexive; the individual has to do this. **You train yourself for godliness**, for a relationship with God, being like God, being like Christ, walking for the Lord. This is what it means to train yourself for godliness.

8 for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

Why not focus on committing ourselves to and training ourselves for godliness? It has benefit now, and it has benefit for eternity. That seems like a no brainer, right? Yet, people are dominated by, mastered by, and ruled by the flesh.

That is what we're going to seek to overcome. This is written. It is available to us to study and learn and put into application, but it has to be read, it has to be studied.

Have the Words of the Word Been Erased?

We need to see the words in the Word, hear them, learn them, and understand them.

This came to light for me recently with an incident that occurred. I come up to the community center every morning, do my reading, prayer time, and study time. There's a little whiteboard in there that no one uses early in the morning. I began leaving notes or poems for the “Rio Trio” staff and they would leave one back. That is how the “Twas the night before Christmas” poem got written.

Without seeing one another, we were able to communicate with words. Then one day, somebody erased the words that I'd written. Suddenly the words that I had written in order to communicate my thoughts, feelings, heart, ideas to another group of people were gone. They were erased. The "would be" recipient never saw them. And I thought again about the power of words. Words need to be seen and heard by someone in order to have an impact and effect.

If you don't read words, then you just don't know. We have these words in the Word which God has had written to communicate to us truth, and yet people are blind to them. It's as if they were erased and they're not there.

This brings to mind Jeremiah 36. God told Jeremiah to have Baruch the scribe write words down on a scroll.

Jeremiah 36:4

1 In the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the Lord: **2** "Take a scroll and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel and Judah and all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah until today. **3** It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the disaster that I intend to do to them, so that every one may turn from his evil way, and that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin."

How huge is that? Judah at the time was on the path downward. Jeremiah had been prophesying and saying, "Hey, you've got to repent or there's going to be disaster and Jerusalem is going to be destroyed. There's going to be an exile." God had Jeremiah instruct his secretary, Baruch, to write all this down.

4 Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote on a scroll at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord that he had spoken to him

God was giving people a chance to hear these Words. God gave them to Jeremiah, and Jeremiah to Baruch, and then presented to the people in order to give them an opportunity to hear it so that they could actually do it. This would have enabled the people to turn from their evil way. God would forgive their iniquity and their sin so they would not suffer the consequences of defeat at the hand of Babylon and avoid being brought into captivity.

22 It was the ninth month, and the king was sitting in the winter house, and there was a fire burning in the fire pot before him. **23** As Jehudi read three or four columns, the king would cut them off with a knife and throw them into the fire in the fire pot, until the entire scroll was consumed in the fire that was in the fire pot.

The king threw these written words from God into the fire! He erased them so that it was as if they did not exist. Those words had no impact on him.

We have God's Word. In a lot of people's lives it has been erased. In other lives they have never seen them so it is as if they don't exist. Others that do hear the Word ignore it, get rid of it, pay no attention to it. Thus, it can never, ever have the intended benefit of bearing fruit in their lives.

Instead, people are are mastered by, dominated by, and ruled by the flesh. (1 Corinthians 6) We have the opportunity to learn the Word so that we are not ruled by the flesh. This will enable us to fulfill our destiny of being Christlike and being ambassadors for Christ in the world.

This series of teachings is a work in progress. And each day I am learning more. I am endeavoring to organize this in a way that it is easily understandable. When we grasp this, it will enable us to overcome the flesh, to actually fulfill what God has called us to do.

God wants us to grow to maturity. He wants us to be Christlike. Think of the hearers of the Sermon on the Mount where Christ preached the Beatitudes in his first sermon. Consider this as if you had been a Jew hearing Christ speak these things.

Matthew 5:43

[43](#) “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ [44](#) But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Remember in the Old Testament they killed those who were seeking to kill them and persecute them.

[45](#) so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. [46](#) For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

[47](#) And if you greet only your brothers,ⁱ what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? [48](#) **You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.**

You therefore must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect!? Oh, come on, that's impossible. Even reading it today, we say that's impossible.

You therefore must be perfect or mature, complete, [teleios](#), brought to the intended end. What is our intended end? To be Christlike, you therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. We are to be like God. We are to be like Christ.

Ephesians 5:1 and 2

[1](#) Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. [2](#) And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

We have read this repeatedly. Most read this and think, well, that's impossible.

It is possible! The route to that is following God's path as instructed in the Word. The path is where we deny ourselves, humble ourselves, give ourselves, make ourselves, sacrifice ourselves, clothe ourselves, empty ourselves, cleanse ourselves, keep ourselves unstained by the world. We must arm ourselves with the mind of Christ, then we can actually fulfill that.

So, we have it in the gospels, and then we have it in James.

James 1:1–4

[2](#) Count it all joy, my brothers,^b when you meet trials of various kinds, [3](#) for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. [4](#) And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

The reader says, you've got to be kidding me...perfect and complete, lacking in nothing? That is available because Colossians says we are complete in Christ, so we can actually live that out and fulfill that. We can be mature, complete, brought to the desired end of Christlikeness, lacking in nothing.

We are equipped to carry out what God has called us to do.

1 Corinthians 6:20

[20](#) for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body

We are bought with a price. We are not our own. If we actually believe that, then we can humbly ask, "Okay, God, what do I need to do?" I can glorify you on a daily basis in my body by learning to not be dominated by anything. Instead, I want to be so aligned with Christ and the mind of Christ, that I do what it says in Romans 6, **live to God**...just as Christ lives to God.

I can reckon myself dead. I can also live to God.