

SLOUCHING TOWARDS GOMORRAH

1 Cor 5:1-13, 6:12-20

I. AT ISSUE: SEXUAL IMMORALITY

A. Corinthian issues:

1. Incest—glaring blemish on congregation; both offender and those tolerating him rebuked
2. In addition (6:9): fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals, sodomites
3. In fine: Corinthians compromising with loose sexual standards of Greco-Roman world

B. American situation: resembling Sodom & Gomorrah—cf. Robert Bork's *Slouching Toward Gomorrah: Modern Liberalism and American Decline*

1. Rationalizations—cf. Michael Jones: *Degenerate Moderns: Modernity as Rationalized Sexual Misbehavior*—intellectual justifications seedbeds for depravity; “ideas have consequences”
 - a. Repudiating Victorian era's restrained sexual morality as prudish
 - b. Progressive/Socialistic thinkers, organizations—Margaret Sanger illustrative
 - c. Women's suffrage (rooted in French Revolution's “equality” & Marquis de Sade helps shape “Roaring Twenties” and significant sexual
 - d. Lambeth Conference & Anglicans endorse contraception, 1930; cf. Mary Eberstadt: *Adam and Eve After the Pill: Paradoxes of the Sexual Revolution*; Martin Luther considered it worse than incest or adultery; Calvin called it an “unforgivable crime;” Paul VI accurately predicted consequences in 1968
 - e. William Reich's *Sexual Revolution* supports unfettered sexual indulgence at any age for any reason—part of Frankfurt School's cultural Marxism flourishing the U.S. following WWII
 - f. “Kinsey Reports” influence academia, judiciary, press, despite demonstrable falsehoods; anti-Christian
 - g. Radical Feminist manifestoes and organizations—Simone de Beauvoir's *Second Sex* & Betty Frieden's *The Feminine Mystique* dismiss motherhood & housework as beneath a woman's dignity; cf. Abigail Favale: *The Genesis of Gender: A Christian Theory*—“giving my students poison to drink”.
 - h. Schools & mandatory “sex education” classes—c.f. William Kilpatrick's *Why Johnny Can't Tell Right from Wrong: Moral Illiteracy and the Case for Character Education*; Miriam Grossman's *Unprotected* says colleges give “a tacit approval of promiscuity and experimentation”
 - i. Joseph Fletcher's *Situation Ethics* & “new morality” greatly influential
 - a. “Situation ethics aims at contextual appropriateness—not the ‘good’ or the ‘right’ but the ‘fitting.’”
 - b. *Agape* singular absolute: “Only one ‘thing’ is intrinsically good; namely love: nothing else at all.”
 - c. Ethical “principles or maxims or general rules are *illuminators*. But they are not *directors*.”
 - d. Presuppositions: Pragmatism; Relativism; Positivism; Personalism
 - j. Churches impacted by “situation ethics”.
 - a. Nazarene Mildred Bangs Wynkoop's *Theology of Love* shapes post-1972 thinkers/preachers—citing her influence, Thomas Jay Oord and some 90 Nazarenes contributed to *Why the Church of the Nazarene Should be fully LGBTQ+ Affirming*
 - b. Methodism's predicament analyzed by Karen Booth in: *Forgetting How to Blush: United Methodism, Christians and Fractured American Politics*.
 1. Leaders “promoted a value neutral approach to sexual ethics called ‘the new morality.’”
 2. In 1972 “sex education” added to *Book of Discipline*
 3. Gay activists continually pressure denomination to be more affirming
 4. In 2024, United Methodism's governing General Conference deleted the “denominations specific disapproval of adultery, premarital/extramarital sex, and homosexual behavior from its Book of Discipline.”
2. Sobering sociological/statistical data demonstrating success of the Sexual Revolution of the 1960s
 - a. Pornography easily available, generally tolerated if not celebrated
 - b. Contraception generally approved & practiced throughout world
 - c. Fornication widespread, generally approved—“living together”
 - d. Adultery pervasive, thought generally condemned
 - e. Sodomy normalized & supported—e.g. “gay pride” month
 - f. “Pedophilia chic” supported in certain circles (APA) though still condemned by most
 - g. Bestiality generally condemned, though Peter Singer and some support it if animals unharmed

II. RIGHT RESPONSE: DISCIPLINE

- A. Confront: have courage to deal with offender
- B. Explain: reasonable rules, rooted in biblical texts as well as natural law
- C. Expel/Excommunicate: sever ties with evil-doers