

Harper, Kyle (2012). “*Porneia: The Making of a Christian Sexual Norm.*” [“*Porneia: La creación de una norma sexual cristiana*”]. *Journal of Biblical Literature* 131/2, 363-383. [kyleharper@ou.edu](mailto:kyleharper@ou.edu)

Hace falta por mucho tiempo lo que Kyle Harper nos provee aquí: un conciso *artículo*, excelente que resume los debates académicos recientes sobre el sentido del término griego *porneia* y sus cognados. Palabras con la raíz *porn* ocurren 55 veces en el NT, tradicionalmente mal traducidas “fornicación” (AV) y más recientemente “inmoralidad sexual” (NVI). El análisis de Harper está “basado en una revisión exhaustiva de los casos de la palabra en textos griegos desde el siglo sexto B.C.E. (antes de la era común) al siglo sexto C.E. (era común)” consultando más de 5300 ejemplos de la raíz (2012:365: y nota 5). Tal cantidad de datos parecería poner en duda la advertencia de Dale Martin que “el significado preciso de *porneia* es simplemente incierto dada la falta de evidencia que tenemos” (2006:231, citada p. 364). Sin embargo, si *porneia* no tenía un significado *preciso* único sino que era comúnmente usado de manera retórica a modo de calumnia o insulto, entonces ninguna cantidad de datos aclarará un significado preciso.

Tal vez las Mejores Nuevas para las minorías sexuales oprimidas es que este profesor de la Universidad de Oklahoma cita sólo *Sex and the Single Savior (El sexo y el Salvador soltero)* de Dale Martin (2006:37-50, sobre p. 378, nota 65) en lo que respecta a otra controversia: “los términos notoriamente difíciles *malakoi* y ‘*arsenokoitai*’ (1 Cor 6:9; cf. 1 Tim 1:10). Martin refuta la traducción “homosexual,” mostrando que los términos involucraban explotación económica (1996:120-123). Sin embargo, Harper ignora el punto significativo de Gaca de que *porneia* nunca se refiere al homoerotismo sino solamente a actos heterosexuales. Aunque bastante minucioso en su investigación bibliográfica (364, nota 2), Harper ignora los esfuerzos de Robert Gagnon (2001:191-92) y de Richard Davidson (2007:334, 634) por extraer una condenación de Jesús de todos los actos homosexuales del término *porneia*. (Gagnon y Davidson argumentan que *porneia* en el NT condena todo aquello que fue condenado en Levítico 18 y 20, aunque entran en desacuerdo en cuanto a si tener sexo con una esposa que está menstruando debería ser condenado).

“*Porneia* es la piedra angular ideológica y léxica de la moralidad cristiana. Yace en el corazón del modelo paulino de la sexualidad cristiana...Derivada del griego *porne* (“prostituta” [fem.]), la palabra pasó al latín como *fornication* y de allí al inglés como ‘fornication’ (español: fornicación) (2012:364). Sin embargo, “En **griego clásico** *porneia* no significa ‘prostitución’ en el sentido abstracto de ‘la institución del sexo venal/corrupto...*Porneia* es un sustantivo del verbo *porneuo*, ‘prostituirse.’ *Porneia* significa ‘la práctica de vender acceso al cuerpo de uno.’ *Porneia*, en griego clásico, se refiere a la actividad del *vendedor*. Del mismo modo, *pornos* en griego clásico es el equivalente masculino de *porne* [fem.]...Crucialmente, entonces, el griego clásico carecía de un término incluyente, único, para describir las diferentes formas de experiencia sexual abiertas al hombre en forma de esclavos, prostitutas y concubinos” (2012:369).

En el Nuevo Testamento las palabras relacionadas con *porneia* son especialmente comunes en Apocalipsis [17-18] “en las salvajes diatribas contra Roma...personificada como una prostituta idólatra, agresiva” (que representan un tercio del total de los 55 casos en el NT; 2012:395). De manera similar, el nombre *porne* “es usado con frecuencia para describir a las prostitutas profesionales (Lucas 15:30; Heb 11:3; Stgo 2:25) [y] aparece siete veces en las listas de vicios (Mateo 15:19/Marcos 7:21; 2 Cor 12:21; Gal 5:19; Ef 5:3; Col 3:5; Apoc. 9:21). Tres veces *pornoi*, hombres que se involucran en actividad sexual ilícita, aparece en las listas de malhechores (1 Cor 6:9; Ef 5:5; 1 Tim 1:10; 2012:375). Según Mat 5:32 // 19:9 Jesús usa *porneia*, quizás en el sentido de “adulterio,” para referirse a las excepciones a sus prohibiciones de divorcio (2012:375, citando la referencia desconcertante a la “indecencia” in Deut 24:1). El libro de los Hechos usa *porneia* tres veces en el texto del “decreto apostólico” (15:20, 29; 21:25), “quizás reflejando “el fuerte poder retórico de la palabra y su habilidad de condensar las vastas diferencias culturales entre los sexualmente puros ‘de adentro’ y los sexualmente depravados ‘de afuera’” (2012:376; “relaciones sexuales prohibidas,” R. Pervo 2009:365, *Hechos*; del código de pureza).

Sin embargo, “En última instancia, las interpretaciones cristianas de *porneia* derivan de las epístolas de Pablo, especialmente de 1 Corintios 5-7” (2012:376-77). Harper (2012:366) indica su acuerdo “con la afirmación de [Katy L.] Gaca que la prohibición de *porneia* marcó la ruptura fundamental con la sexualidad greco-romana, pero de manera significativa me salgo de su argumento de que *porneia* para Pablo y para los primeros cristianos era principalmente exogamia religiosa (ver Gaca, *Making of Fornication (La creación de la fornicación)*, por ej. [2003:151]; cf. “Una sola vez *pornos* se usa para describir a Esau, probablemente refiriéndose a exogamia (Heb 12:16)” (2012:375). Respecto al uso de *porneia* en 1 Cor 5:1 Harper comenta: “La relación entre el hijo y la mujer de su padre [probablemente una madrastra] constituyó incesto, tal como está prohibido en Lev. 18:8. La septuaginta (la LXX) no llama al incesto *porneia*, pero Pablo usa el término en el sentido ampliado que surgió en el judaísmo helenístico para cubrir cualquier relación sexual en violación a la ley...la interpretación de Gaca de *porneia* como exogamia religiosa no puede ser válida aquí...en, quizás, el uso canónico más importante del término *porneia*. La objeción de Pablo no tiene su fundamento en el estado religioso foráneo de la mujer. El especifica que la relación es *porneia* en la medida en que...ella era la esposa del padre del hombre, y Pablo evoca al lenguaje de la LXX de Levítico para describir a la unión ilícita” (2012:378 y nota 63). En 1 Cor 5:9-11 *pornos* no es el prostituto masculino como en el griego clásico, sino “el pecador sexual masculino, el

hombre que comete *porneia*...el hombre con una falta de auto-control lasciva” (2012:378-79). “1 Corintios 6:12-20 debe ser el quid de la cuestión de cualquier interpretación de *porneia* paulina...Como lo mostrara Dale Martin, Pablo trabaja con una perspectiva del cuerpo como una entidad permeable, vulnerable a la contaminación...Pablo dice “El cuerpo no está hecho para... *porneia*, sino para el Señor...Por lo tanto, ¿debería yo tomar a los miembros de Cristo y hacerlos miembros de una prostituta [*porne*]? ¡Nunca! ...Si existe alguna duda de que Pablo tenía en mente principalmente a la prostitución, su referencia inmediata a *porne* deja en claro que para él la prostitución era el principal escenario de tal licencia sexual pagana” (378-79). Así, aún cuando *porneia* se usa de manera retórica (como para el incesto en 1 Cor 5:1), están presentes los matices ofensivos de la prostitución clásica. **Además:**

1 Harper reconoce que *porneia* puede no tener una definición específica pero a menudo comparte la ambigüedad de los insultos y calumnias (ver “puto/a, putería” en español: original y literalmente “prostituta/o, prostitución” pero ahora usado comúnmente como insulto/calumnia sexual para los homosexuales o cualquiera cuyo comportamiento sexual uno se lo cuestionaría). Tras la aseveración de Dale Martin en lo que respecta al significado de *porneia* como “simplemente incierto,” Harper comenta: “Esta advertencia está justificada, ya que el significado de una palabra con tanta carga ideológica como *porneia* no fue ni simple ni estática. Sin embargo, debates previos...se han desarrollado exactamente como si debiera existir en alguna parte un significado estable y preciso...” (365). Reconoce “la posibilidad de que cualquier palabra cuyo significado fue tan rico y haya tenido varias lecturas/interpretaciones, podría tener diferentes significados en diferentes contextos” (365).

2 No obstante, en lugar de definiciones tradicionales de *porneia* (fornicación/inmoralidad sexual) y *moicheia* (adulterio), Harper concluye que para los escritores patrísticos del siglo cuarto, tales como Gregorio de Nisa:

“*Moixeia* era una violación sexual de una mujer respetable—sexo extramarital con una esposa, hija o viuda.

*Porneia* era sexo extramarital que no dañaba a un tercero tal como a un esposo, padre o pariente masculino que tenía una posición sobre el honor sexual de una mujer” (364).

Harper luego afirma: “La contribución primordial de este estudio es demostrar cómo una palabra compleja se tornó gradualmente inamovible por el significado presentado en la carta de Gregorio de Nisa” (365). Harper resume el tema clave como la violación del honor sexual de una *mujer*: “*Moixeia* quería decir violación del honor sexual de una mujer, y *porneia* a menudo funcionaba como término complementario que incluye actos sexuales que no violaban el honor femenino” (366). En las sociedades patriarcales, sin embargo, probablemente el tema clave era el honor de los varones responsables del honor de sus mujeres, de este modo garantizando la legitimidad de sus hijos y herederos. E incluso aun si reconocemos la conclusión de Harper respecto a Gregorio de Nisa (330-95 C.E.), eso no significaría que *porneia* haya alcanzado ese mismo significado específico en los textos del NT.

3 Harper afirma que “Los usos cristianos y judíos de *porneia* difieren radicalmente de la semántica secular [griego clásico] del término” (365; de manera similar, 366), ignorando así la insistencia continua de Gaca sobre el error de reinterpretar nuestra dicotomía “secular/religiosa” moderna con la antigüedad, donde las fuentes paganas, reflejando su contexto politeísta comúnmente eran religiosos de manera minuciosa: “La religión politeísta en la antigüedad estaba íntimamente conectada con la conducta procreativa y sexual, porque la gente adoraba a dioses que personificaban poder sexual, tales como Afrodita, Dionisio, Hera y Zeus...Los filósofos constructivamente reforman, pero nunca denuncian categóricamente las creencias griegas sobre los dioses y la base de actividad sexual en una experiencia religiosa politeísta...El mandato cardinal de Pablo [es] que el pueblo de Dios debe evitar la fornicación sexual en la adoración de otros dioses...Entre los griegos y otros gentiles...la sexualidad y los dioses estaban estrechamente entrelazados cual cordón de dos hebras....” (Gaca 2003:3, 11, 14, 303).

4 Las observaciones detalladas de Harper en lo que respecta al vocabulario *porn-*, sufre de una carencia de atención a todos los textos bíblicos positivos respecto a prostitutas reales tales como Tamar (→ Gen 38) y Rahab (→ Josué 2), a quien → Mateo honra al mencionar la genealogía de Jesús (Mat 1:5; ver 21:31-32; 9:9-13) y Santiago (2:25) y Hebreos (11:31) honran a la par con Abraham (Hanks 2000:12-16). Cuando incluimos los datos bíblicos sorprendentemente positivos sobre tales personas reales y su fe, las impresiones negativas del vocabulario *porn-*, son considerablemente limitadas.

5 Donde Harper expresa su desacuerdo con Gaca, pasa por alto la posibilidad de que la madrastra en cuestión (Cor 5:1) bien pudo haber sido una esclava extranjera (representando así tanto un matrimonio incestuoso como “exógamo” [el matrimonio fuera de un dado grupo religioso/étnico]), o que Pablo puede simplemente estar empleando *porneia* como insulto/calumnia por mal comportamiento sexual antes que en un sentido legal, específico (2012:378 y nota 63).

## ***Porneia* y sus cognatas en el Nuevo Testamento (55x; Petter 1976/80:483-84; Danker BDAG 2000:854-55)**

### **1 *Porneia* (25x); “(\*)prostitución, fornicación, inmoralidad, (!)incesto, adulterio” (?= no especificado; listas de vicios)**

Mc 7:21 // Mt 23:19 listas de vicios. *Porneia* = contra la Ley, sexo con una mujer menstruante incluso (Collins 2007:358); Mateo pone la lista en el orden de los 10 Mandamientos, con *porneia* interrumpiendo como expansión del adulterio.

Mt 25:32 // 19:9 Una excepción de la prohibición del divorcio: ¿adulterio? ¿incesto? (Davies & Allison ICC 1988:528-32)

Jn 8:41 (¿sexo prematrimonial, fornicación? María sin José)

Hch 21:20, 29; 21:25 El concilio de Jerusalén: ¿incesto? (Haenchen 1971:449; Lev 18:6-18; Barrett 1998:732-35; “fornication” 2002:233); “prohibited sexual relationships, sexual irregularity” (Pervo 2009:365-66, 377, citando a Countryman 2007:69-74). ¿Prostitución en una fiesta en un templo? (Rosner 1998)?

### **1 Cor 5:1a y b (2x) incesto (con madrastra; ¿padre muerto?; Lev 18:8);**

ver “prostituto,” 1 Cor 5:9, \*10, \*11 + codicioso, idólatra;

1 Cor 6:9 “prostituto” en lista de injustos/opresores + idólatras, adúlteros, suaves, cama-varones, etc.

**\*6:13, \*18 Ver la “prostituta” en 6:15-16** (probablemente idólatra en una fiesta en un templo pagano; Rosner 1998); cf “prostituirse” en 6:18; 10:8a y b con prostitución en una fiesta religiosa en Éxodo 32:6)  
¿7:2 sexo prematrimonial (“fornicación”), pues es una tentación por la mujer también (Jensen 1978)

2 Cor 12:21 “impureza, *porneia*, excesos” (ver 1 Cor)

Gal 5:19 lista de vicios

Ef 5:3 lista de vicios, + inmundicia/impureza, codicia; ver *pórnos*, Ef 5:5 + inmundo/impuro, codicioso, idólatra

Col 3:5 lista de vicios

1 Tes 4:3 “excesos sexuales” haciendo contraste con “poseer/dominar su propio vaso/cuerpo/esposa” (4:4)

**Apoc \*2:21; \*14:8; \*17:2; \*17:4; \*18:3 \*19:2** (“prostituirse,” \*17:2; \*18:3, \*9) prostitución figurativa: **\*17:1, \*5, \*15, \*16;** (\*2:14\*2:20 en una fiesta en un templo pagano; Rosner 1998)

**\*19:2** (“ramera, prostituta” fig. por la ciudad de Babilonia/Roma)

9:21 (+ hechicería,” prostitución cültica)

### **2 *Porneío* (8-9x); “prostituirse, fornicar”; + Mc 10:19 en “D” y unos pocos mss. tardíos (así Harper cuenta 56x?)**

### **3 *Pórne* (12x, fem.); “\*prostituta, ramera, que ofrece relaciones sexuales por pago”**

**Mat 21:\*31-32** “prostitutas/rameras” (literal) + “publicanos/recaudadores de impuestos”

**Lc \*15:30** El hijo pródigo con prostitutas/as en el país lejano (¿cültica?, pues no judío)

**Heb \*11:31** Rahab, prostituta literal

**Stg \*2:25** Rahab, prostituta literal

### **4 *Pórnos* (10x, masc.); “prostituto, puto, fornicador”**

1 Tim 1:10 lista de injustos: “prostitutos” + cama-varones + secuestradores, etc.

Heb 12:16 exogamia de Esaú (matrimonio fuera de su clan)

13:4 “prostituto” + adúltero, avaricia (contraste con la cama matrimonial)

Apoc 21:8 en el lago de fuego estarán los incredulos/infieles, los abominables...los prostitutos y hechiceros, los idólatras...22:15 estarán fuera de la Nueva Jerusalén los perros, los hechiceros, los prostitutos...los idólatras

## 1a *Porneia* (25x);

1. **Mc 7:21** ( // Mt 15:19): “Porque de adentro, del corazón de los hombres, salen los malos pensamientos, *porneiai*\*, robos [#8], homicidios [#6], adulterios [#7], codicias [#10], iniquidades, engaños [#9], **excesos**, envidia [#10], blasfemia/calumnia [#3/9], arrogancia e insensatez. Todas estas maldades de adentro salen y contaminan al hombre”. \*plural: las fornicaciones, RV60; BA; NBJ; inmoralidad sexual, NVI, DHH,

2. // **Mt 15:19**: “Porque del corazón de los hombres, salen los malos pensamientos, homicidios [#6], adulterios [#7], *porneiai*\*, robos [#8], falsos testimonios [#9], blasfemias/calumnias [#3/9]. Estas son las cosas que contaminan al hombre; pero comer sin lavarse las manos no contamina al hombre”.

\*plural: las fornicaciones, RV60; BA; NBJ; inmoralidad sexual, NVI, DHH.

**Nota.** Marcos, dirigido a lectores grecorromanos, coloca *porneiai* al principio, seguido por “robos”, tal vez porque los pecados sexuales eran considerados ofensas contra la propiedad de un patriarca (su hija virgen o su esposa). Mateo ordena los pecados siguiendo el orden de los Diez Mandamientos, con *porneiai* siguiendo el adulterio como una extensión del Séptimo Mandamiento. La RV60 en Mc 7:21 pone adulterios primero porque sigue a los manuscritos griegos posteriores e inferiores reflejados en el Textus Receptus.

3. **Mt 5:32**: “Pero yo les digo que, excepto en caso de *porneia*\*, todo el que se divorcia de su esposa, la induce a cometer adulterio, y el que se casa con la divorciada comete adulterio también”.

\* [una unión ilegal, DHH; infidelidad, BA; infidelidad conyugal, NVI; fornicación, RV60; NBJ],

4. // **Mt 19:9**: “Pero yo les digo que el que se divorcia de su esposa, a no ser en el caso de *porneia*\*, y se casa con otra, comete adulterio”

\*una unión ilegal, DHH; infidelidad, BA; infidelidad conyugal, NVI; fornicación, RV60.

**Nota.** Los textos paralelos en Marcos 10:11-12 y Lucas 16:18 no incluyen ninguna frase que permite excepciones a la prohibición del divorcio (ver la otra excepción que hace Pablo en 1 Cor 7:15, en caso de abandono por un conyuge no-creyente).

5. **Jn 8:41**: “Nosotros no somos hijos nacidos de *porneia*\*; tenemos un Padre, Dios”.

\*prostitución, NBJ, NVI; hijos bastardos, DHH; fornicación, RV60, BA.

**Nota.** Especialmente por la adición de “Nosotros”, el pronombre superfluo y por lo tanto enfático, los comentaristas comúnmente entienden que los líderes judíos querían sugerir que Jesús era bastardo, con un padre biológico desconocido y José como padre legal.

**6-8 Concilio de Jerusalén: Hch 15:20**: “Basta que escribirles [a los gentiles creyentes]

que [1] se aparten de todo lo que haya sido contaminado por los ídolos,

que [2] eviten *porneia*\*

y que [3] no coman carne de animales estrangulados o ahogados,

ni [4] tampoco sangre”.

// **29** “que [1] no coman carne de animales ofrecidos en sacrificio a los ídolos,

que [2] no coman sangre [3] ni carne de animales estrangulados

y [4] que eviten *porneia*\*”.

// **21:25** “que [1] se abstengan de lo sacrificado a los ídolos,

de [2] sangre, [3] de la carne de animales estrangulados y [4] de la *porneia*\*”

\*los matrimonios prohibidos, DHH; la inmoralidad sexual, NVI; fornicación, RV60, BA; la impureza, NBJ.

**Nota.** La NBJ nota 15:20 (b) dice: “La palabra parece designar todas las uniones irregulares enumeradas en Lv 18”. Tal interpretación daría una base para encontrar una condena implícita de relaciones sexuales anales entre varones en cada uso de *porneia*. Sin embargo, Lev 18 y 20 también condenan relaciones con una mujer menstruante y ciertos tipos de incesto comúnmente aceptados. Es altamente dudoso que un decreto tan breve y simple contuviera una agenda secreto de someter los gentiles a toda la compleja legislación de Lev 18 y 20

**2 Porne 13x** prostituta, ramera,

**9. Mat 21:31-32.** “Los publicanos/cobradores de impuestos y las *pornai*\* entrarán en el reino de Dios antes que ustedes”. \*prostitutas, NBJ, DHH, NVI; ramera, RV60, BA.

**10. Lc 15:30.** “ese hijo tuyo...ha despilfarrado tu fortuna con *pornon*\*  
\*m/f: prostitutas/os; prostitutas, NBJ, NVI, DHH; ramera, RV60, BA.

**Nota.** Gramaticalmente podría ser masculino, “prostitutos/putos” sugiriendo que el Hijo Pródigo fuera gay (que cabe bien con el contexto de la parábola). Ver David Aune 1998:909, nota 5b sobre la misma forma de la palabra en Apoc 17:5.

**11. Heb 11:31.** “Y por fe Rahab, la *porne*\* ....”  
\*prostituta, NVI, DHH, NBJ; ramera, RV60, BA.

**12. Stg 2:25.** “Rahab, la *porne*\*, ¿no quedó justificada por las obras al dar hospedaje a los mensajeros....?”  
\*prostituta, NVI, DHH, NBJ; ramera, RV60, BA],

**Nota.** Sobre Rahab y su fe ver Josué 2 y 6:17; Mateo 1:5 (la genealogía de Jesús).

### 1b *Porneia*

**13. 1 Tes 4:3.** “Porque esta es la voluntad de Dios: que ustedes sean santificados; que se abstengan de la *porneia*\* que cada uno aprenda a controlar/poseer su propio *vaso*\*\* con santidad y honor”. \*\*cuerpo, NBJ, NVI, DHH; esposa RV60. \*inmoralidad sexual, NVI, BA, DHH; fornicación, NBJ, RV60;

**Nota.** La interpretación de la RV (“esposa”) presupone que los creyentes varones deben ser casados, que contradice 1 Cor 7:7 y el estilo de vida común de Jesús y sus discípulos y Pablo y sus colegas y congregaciones (Rom 16). El uso y la ambigüedad de la metáfora “vaso” puede ser intencional, pues puede referir a casados y a no-casados.

**14. Gal 5:19.** “Ahora bien, las obras de la carne son evidentes, las cuales son: *porneia*\* inmundicia/impureza, excesos, idolatría, hechicería, enemistades, pleitos, celos, enojos, rivalidades, disenciones, sectarismos, envidias, borracheras, orgías [*komoi*\*\*] y cosas semejantes....”\*\*Ver Romanos 13:13

\*inmoralidad, BA, inmoralidad/es sexual/es, NVI/DHH; fornicación, RV60, NBJ.

**Nota.** Como en Mat 15:19 (arriba), la RV60 inserta “adulterios” primero porque sigue a los manuscritos griegos posteriores e inferiores reflejados en el Textus Receptus.

**15. Col 3:5.** “Por lo tanto, hagan morir los miembros terrenales: *porneia*\*, inmundicia/ impureza, pasión, mala codicia y la avaricia, que es idolatría, pues la ira de Dios vendrá sobre los hijos de desobediencia por causa de estas cosas”.

\*inmoralidad/es sexual/es, NVI/DHH; la fornicación, RV60, NBJ, BA.

**16-17. Ef 5:3, 5.** “Entre ustedes ni siguiera debe mencionarse la *porneia*\*.... Porque pueden saber con certeza que ningún  *pornos*\*\* o inmundo/impuro, o codicioso/avaro, que es idólatría, tiene herencia en el reino de Cristo y de Dios. \*inmoralidad/es sexual/es, NVI/DHH; inmoralidad, BA; fornicación, RV60, NBJ.

\*\*lit. prostituto/puto; fornicario, RV60, NBJ; inmoral, NVI, BA; quien comete inmoralidades sexuales, DHH.

**18. 2 Cor 12:21.** “muchos...no se han arrepentido de la inmundicia/impureza, la *porneia*\*, y excesos\*\* que han practicado” (ver 1 Corintios abajo).

\*inmoralidad sexual, NVI, DHH; inmoralidad, BA; fornicación, RV60; NBJ.

\*\**aselgeia*: vicios, DHH, NVI; sensualidad, BA; NBJ, libertinaje; lascivia, RV60.

**Nota.** En Rom 14:14 y 20 Pablo declara todas las cosas limpias (ver Tit 1:15; cp Mc 7:19, comida).

### 3 *Pornos* Ef 5:5 (ver bajo Ef 5:3 *porneia*, arriba)

**19. Heb 12:16.** DHH: “Que ninguno de ustedes se entregue a la prostitución [lit. que nadie sea un  *pornos*:. prostituto, puto]; disoluto, NBJ; inmoral, NVI, BA; fornicario, RV60] ni desprecie lo sagrado [profano/a, NVI y RV60/BA], pues esto hizo Esaú, que por una sola comida vendió sus derechos de hijo mayor”.

**20. Heb 13:4.** BA: “Sea el matrimonio honroso en todos, y el lecho matrimonial sin mancilla, porque a los *pornous*\* y a los adúlteros los juzgará Dios”. \*lit. prostitutas/putos; los que cometen inmoralidades sexuales, NVI, DHH; inmorales, BA; fornicarios, RV60, NBJ.

**21. 1 Tim 1(9)-10.** “9 ...la ley no se ha instituido para los justos sino para los transgresores y rebeldes, para los impíos y pecadores, para los irreverentes y profanos; para los parricidas y matricidas, para los homicidas, 10 los *pornois*\* y los *arsenokoitais*\*\* , para los sequestradores/ traficantes de esclavos, los embusteros/mentirosos y perjuros/los que juran en falso....”

\*lit. prostitutas, putos; inmorales, BA; adúlteros, NVI; fornicarios, RV60; los que cometan inmoralidades sexuales, DHH.

\*\*varón/es-cama/s; los homosexuales, NVIBA, DHH; sodomititas, RV60.

**Nota.** V. 10 empieza con una serie de tres: los prostitutas, los varón/es-cama/s y los traficantes de esclavos, pues el traficante de esclavos consiguió jóvenes para sus clientes mayores que querían penetrarlos sexualmente. Es un grave error traducir *arsenokoitais* como “homosexuales”, pues se limite a varones (no incluye lesbianas) y se refiere a prácticas y actos sexuales abusivos, especialmente de violación por penetración anal (sequestro de jóvenes como esclavos en un negocio de prostitución, no a relaciones de amor mutuo y comprometido; ver DBAG). El contexto en 1 Tim ilumina el sentido del otro uso de *arsenokoitais* (varon/es-cama/s) en → 1 Cor 6:9, donde ocurre con otro término: *malakoi* (suave, pasivo, afeminado) y que también parece señalar un contexto de abuso sexual (injusticia, opresión) y violación por penetración anal.

## 1 Corintios (raiz, 14x)

**42-43 1 Cor 5:1, 1 (porneia).** “Es ya del dominio público que hay entre ustedes un caso de *porneia*\* y tal *porneia*\* que ni siquiera entre los gentiles se tolera, al extremo de que alguno tiene (por mujer) a la esposa de su padre”.

\*inmoralidad, DHH, BA, NBJ; inmoralidad sexual, NVI; fornicación, RV60 [= incesto!].

**44-46 5:9-11 (pornos).** “En mi carta anterior les escribí que no deben juntarse con *pornois*”.\*

\*quienes se entregan a la prostitución, DHH, personas inmorales, NVI, BA; impuros, NBJ.

“No me refería a los *pornois* de este mundo, o a los avaros y estafadores, o a los idólatras”.\*

\*todos los que en este mundo se entregan a la prostitución, DHH; gente inmoral, NVI, BA; fornicarios, RV60; impuros, NBJ.

**47 6:9 (-10) (pornos).** “¿O no saben que los injustos/opresores no heredarán el reino de Dios? ¡No se dejen engañar! Ni los *pornois*\*, ni los idólatras, ni los adúlteros, ni los *malakoi* (suaves/afeminados), ni los *arsenokoitai* (varon/es-cama/s), ni los ladrones, ni los codiciosos/avaros, ni los borrachos, ni los calumniadores, ni los estafadores heredarán el reino de Dios”

\*los que se entregan a la prostitución, DHH; inmorales, BA; adúlteros, NVI; impuros, NBJ; fornicarios, RV60.

**Nota.** Aquí los *pornois* no es un término general para inmoralidad sexual, pues se distinguen de los adúlteros, los suaves y los varon/es-cama/s.

**48 6:13 (porneia).** “El cuerpo no es para la *porneia*\* sino para el Señor”

\*prostitución, DHH; la inmoralidad sexual, NVI; fornicación, RV60, NBJ, BA.

**49-50 6:15-16 (porne).** “¿Tomaré acaso los miembros de Cristo para unirlos con una *porne*\*?”

¿No saben que el que se une a una *porne*\* se hace un solo cuerpo con ella?

\*prostituta, DHH, NVI, NBJ; ramera, RV60, BA.

**51-52 6:18 (porneuo, porneia).** “Huyan, pues, de la *porneia*\*....el que se entrega a la *porneia*\* peca contra su propio cuerpo”.

\*prostitución, DHH; inmoralidad sexual, NVI; fornicación....fornica, RV60, NBJ, BA,

**53 7:2 (porneia).** “Por el peligro de la *porneia*\*, cada hombre debe tener su propia esposa”

\*prostitución, DHH; inmoralidad/es, NVI/BA; fornicación, RV60; incontinencia, NBJ.

**54-55 10:8ab (porneuo).** “No *porneuomen*\* como algunos *porneusan* y en un día cayeron veintitrés mil” (ver los veinticuatro mil en Núm 21:5-6; BENVI nota 1 Cor 10:8).

\*No nos entregamos a la prostitución, DHH; No cometemos inmoralidad sexual, NVI; Ni fornicemos como algunos de ellos fornicaron, RV60, NBJ, BA.

## Apocalipsis (raíz, 19 veces).

- 22 Apoc 2:14 (porneuo).** “Balaam...aconsejó a Balac que hiciera pecar a los Israelitas incitándolos a comer alimentos ofrecidos en sacrificio a los ídolos y a *porneuo*\*.  
\*la prostitución, DHH; cometer inmoralidades sexuales, NVI; cometer actos de inmoralidad, BA; cometer fornicación, RV60; fornicaron, NBJ.
- 23 2:20 (porneuo).** “Jezebel...enseña y seduce a mis siervos a *porneuo*\*.  
\*la prostitución, DHH; a cometer inmoralidades sexuales, NVI; cometan actos inmorales, BA; a fornicar, RV60; que fornicuen, NBJ.
- 24 2:21 (porneia).** “No quieren arrepentirse de su *porneia*\*.  
\*prostitución, DHH; inmoralidad, NVI, BA; fornicación, RV60, NBJ.
- 25 9:21 (porneia).** La quinta trompeta: “Y el resto de la humanidad....no se arrepintieron de sus homicidios/ asesinatos ni de sus artes mágicas, *porneia*\* y robo/rapiña”.  
\*inmoralidad, BA; inmoralidad/es sexual/es, NVI/DHH; fornicación/es, RV60/NBJ.
- 26 14:8 (porneia).** “Un segundo ángel decía: ‘¡Ya cayó...la gran Babilonia [=Roma], la que hizo que todas las naciones bebieran el vino del furor de su *porneia*\*  
\*prostitución, DHH, NBJ nota; adulterio, NVI; inmoralidad, BA; fornicación, RV60.
- 27-28 17:1 (porne...porneia).** “La gran *porne*\*...Los reyes del mundo se han entregado a la *porneia*\*\*  
\*prostituta, NBJ, DHH, NVI; ramera, RV60, BA]  
\*\*prostitución, DHH; cometieron adulterio, NVI; fornicaron, NBJ; han fornicado, RV60; cometieron actos inmorales, BA.
- 29-30 17:2 (porneuo...porneia).** “Los reyes de la tierra *porneuo*\* con ella y los habitantes de la tierra se han emborrachado con el vino de su *porneia*\*\*  
\*\*prostitución, DHH, NBJ; adulterio, NVI; inmoralidad, BA; fornicación, RV60.  
\*se han entregado a la prostitución, DHH; cometieron adulterio, NVI; cometieron actos inmorales, BA; fornicaron/han fornicado, NBJ/RV60.
- 31 17:5 (porne/os).** “La gran Babilonia [=Roma], madre de las/los *pornon*\* y de las abominaciones/abominables idolatrías de la tierra”. \*prostitutas, DHH, NVI, NBJ; ramera, RV60, BA.
- 32 17:4 (porneia).** “una copa...llena de abominaciones y de las inmundicias de su *porneia*\*  
\*prostitución, DHH, NBJ; adulterios, NVI; inmoralidad, BA; fornicación, RV60.
- 33 17:15 (porne).** “Las aguas que viste donde se sienta la *porne*\* son pueblos, multitudes, naciones y lenguas”. \*prostituta, DHH, NVI, NBJ; ramera, RV60, BA.
- 34 17:16 (porne).** “Los diez cuernos [=reyes]...odiarán a la *porne*\* y la dejarán desolada y desnuda”.  
\*prostituta, DHH, NVI, NBJ; ramera, RV60, BA.
- 35-36 18:3 (porneia...porneuo).** “¡Ya cayó...la gran Babilonia [=Roma]....todas las naciones han bebido el vino del furor de su *porneia*\* y los reyes ...*porneuo*\*\* con ella”.  
\*prostitución, DHH, NBJ nota; adulterio, NVI; inmoralidad, BA; fornicación, RV60.  
\*\*se prostituyeron, DHH, cometieron adulterio, NVI; han cometido actos inmorales, BA; han fornicado, RV60.
- 37 18:9 (porneuo).** “Los reyes de la tierra...*porneuo*\* con ella y compartieron su lujo”.  
\*se prostituyeron, DHH; cometieron adulterio, NVI; cometieron actos de inmoralidad, BA; han fornicado/fornicaron, RV60/ NBJ.
- 38-39 19:2. (porne...porneia)** “Dios...ha juzgado a la gran *porne*\* que ha corrompida la tierra con su *porneia*\*\*  
\*prostituta, NBJ, DHH, NVI; ramera, RV60, BA.  
\*\*prostitución, NBJ, DHH; fornicación, RV60; inmoralidad, BA, adulterios, NVI.
- 40 21:8 (pornos).** “Pero los cobardes, incrédulos, abominables, asesinos, *pornois*\*, hechiceros, idólatras y todos los mentirosos...en el lago que arde con fuego y azufre”.  
\*inmorales, BA; los que cometen inmoralidades sexuales, NVI, DHH; fornicarios, RV60; impuros, NBJ.
- 41 22:15 (pornos).** “Pero fuera se quedarán los perros, los hechiceros, los *pornois*\* los idólatras, y todo el que ame y practique la mentira!”  
\*inmorales, BA; los que cometen inmoralidades sexuales, NVI, DHH; fornicarios, RV60; impuros, NBJ.

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**Kyle Harper (2012). “*Porneia*: The Making of a Christian Sexual Norm.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 131/2, 363-383. [kyleharper@ou.edu](mailto:kyleharper@ou.edu).** Kyle Harper here provides us with an excellent—and long overdue—*article-length* overview of recent scholarly debates on the understanding and translating the Greek term *porneia* and its cognates. Words from the root *porn-* occur 55x in the NT, traditionally mistranslated “fornication” (AV) and more recently “sexual immorality” (NIV). Harper’s analysis is “based on a comprehensive examination of the instances of the word in Greek texts from the sixth century B.C.E. to the sixth century C.E.” consulting more than 5300 examples of the root (2012:365: and note 5). Such a quantity of data would seem to call into question Dale Martin’s warning that “the precise meaning of *porneia* is simply uncertain given the lack of evidence we have” (2006:231, cited p. 364). However, if *porneia* had no single *precise* meaning but was commonly used rhetorically as a kind of slur or insult, then no quantity of data will clarify any precise meaning.

“*Porneia* is the lexical and ideological cornerstone of Christian morality. It lies at the heart of the Pauline model of Christian sexuality...Derived from the Greek *porne* (“prostitute” [fem.]), the word passed into Latin as *fornication* and thence into English as ‘fornication’ (2012:364). However, “In **classical Greek** *porneia* does not mean ‘prostitution’ in the abstract sense of ‘the institution of venal sex....*Porneia* is a substantive of the verb *porneuo*, ‘to prostitute oneself.’ *Porneia* means ‘the practice of selling access to one’s body.’ *Porneia*, in classical Greek, refers to the activity of the *seller*. Likewise, *pornos* in classical Greek is the male equivalent of *porne*....Crucially, then, classical Greek lacked a single, encompassing term to describe the different forms of sexual experience open to men in the form of slaves, prostitutes and concubines” (2012:369).

In the New Testament, words relating to *porneia* are especially common in Revelation [17-18] “in the wild tirades against Rome...personified as an aggressive, idolatrous whore” (accounting for a third of the total 55 NT cases; 2012:395). Similarly, the noun *porne* “is frequently used to describe professional prostitutes (Luke 15:30; Heb 11:3; Jas 2:25) [and] appears seven times in vice lists (Matt 15:19//Mark 7:21; 2 Cor 12:21; Gal 5:19; Eph 5:3; Col 3:5; Rev 9:21). Three times *pornoi*, males who engage in illicit sexual activity appear in lists of evil doers (1 Cor 6:9; Eph 5:5; 1 Tim 1:10; 2012:375). According to Mat 5:32 // 19:9 Jesus uses *porneia*, perhaps in the sense of “adultery,” to refer to exceptions to his prohibitions of divorce (2012:375, citing the puzzling reference to “indecency” in Deut 24:1). Acts uses *porneia* three times in the text of the “apostolic decree” (15:20, 29; 21:25), “perhaps reflecting “the strong rhetorical power of the word and its ability to condense the vast cultural differences between sexually pure ‘insiders’ and sexually depraved ‘outsiders’” (2012:376; cf. “prohibited sexual relationships,” R. Pervo 2009:365, *Acts*; from purity code).

However, “Ultimately Christian understandings of *porneia* develop out of Paul’s letters, especially 1 Corinthians 5-7” (2012:376-77) and “1 Corinthians 6:12-20 must be the crux of any interpretation of Pauline *porneia*” (378). Harper (2012:366) indicates his agreement with Katy Gaca’s claim that “the prohibition of *porneia* marked the fundamental break with Greco-Roman sexuality, but I significantly depart from her argument that *porneia* for Paul and the early Christians was principally religious exogamy” (366 note 8; see Gaca, *Making of Fornication*, e. g. [2003:]151); cf. “Once *pornos* is used to describe Esau, probably referring to exogamy (Heb 12:16)” (2012:375). Regarding the use of *porneia* in 1 Cor 5:1 Harper comments: “The relationship between the son and his father’s woman [probably a stepmother] constituted incest, as prohibited in Lev. 18:8. The LXX does not call incest *porneia*, but Paul uses the term in the expanded sense that arose in Hellenistic Judaism to cover any sexual relationship in violation of the law....Gaca’s understanding of *porneia* as religious exogamy cannot stand here...in perhaps the most important canonical usage of the term *porneia*. Paul’s objection is not rooted in the woman’s alien religious status. He specifies that the relationship is *porneia* in so far as...she was the man’s father’s wife, and Paul evokes the LXX language of Leviticus to describe the illicit union” (2012:378 and note 63). In 1 Cor 5:9-11 *pornos* is not the male prostitute as in classical Greek, but “the male sexual sinner, the man who commits *porneia*....the man with a lascivious lack of self-control” (2012:378-79). “1 Corinthians 6:12-20 must be the crux of any interpretation of Pauline *porneia*....As Dale Martin has shown, Paul works with a view of the body as a permeable entity, vulnerable to contamination....Paul says “The body is meant not for ... *porneia*, but for the Lord....Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute [*porne*]? Never!....If there were any doubt that Paul had prostitution principally in mind, his immediate reference to the *porne* makes it clear that for him prostitution was the main venue of such pagan sexual license” (378-79). Thus even when *porneia* is used rhetorically (as for incest in 1 Cor 5:1), the insulting overtones of classical prostitution are present. Moreover:

1 Harper acknowledges that *porneia* may have no specific definition but often shares the ambiguity of insults and slurs (see “puto/a, putería” in Spanish: originally and literally “prostitute, prostitution” but now commonly used as a sexual insult/slur for homosexuals or anyone whose sexual behavior one wants to impugn). After Dale Martin’s assertion regarding the meaning of *porneia* as “simply uncertain,” Harper comments: “This caution is warranted, for the meaning of a word so ideologically charged as *porneia* was neither simple nor static. Yet previous debates...have played out exactly as though there must be a precise and stable meaning out there...” (365). He acknowledges the possibility that “any word whose meaning was so rich and layered could have different meanings in different contexts” (365).

2 Nevertheless, instead of traditional definitions of *porneia* (fornication/sexual immorality) and *moicheia* (adultery), Harper concludes that in fourth century for patristic writers, such as Gregory of Nyssa:

“*Moixeia* was a sexual violation of a respectable woman—extramarital sex with a wife, daughter, or widow.

*Porneia* was extramarital sex that did not injure a third party such as a husband, father or male relative who stood in a position over a woman’s sexual honor” (364). Harper then affirms: “The primary contribution of this study is to demonstrate how a complex word gradually became fixed on the meaning presented in Gregory of Nyssa’s letter” (365). Harper summarizes the key issue as being the violation of a woman’s sexual honor: “*Moixeia* meant violation of a woman’s sexual honor, and *porneia* often functioned as a complementary term including sexual acts that did not violate female honor” (366). In patriarchal societies, however, the key issue more likely was the honor of the males responsible for the honor of their females, thus guaranteeing the legitimacy of their sons and heirs. And even if we grant Harper’s conclusion regarding Gregory of Nyssa (330-95 C.E.), that would not mean that *porneia* had already achieved that same specific meaning in the NT texts

3 Harper affirms that “Jewish and Christian usages of *porneia* differed radically from the secular [classical Greek] semantics of the term” (365; similarly, 366), thus ignoring Gaca’s continual insistence on the error of reading our modern “secular/religious” dichotomy back into antiquity, where pagan sources, reflecting their polytheistic context commonly were thoroughly religious: “Polytheistic religion in antiquity was intimately connected with sexual and procreative conduct, for people worshipped gods embodying sexual power, such as Aphrodite, Dionysus, Hera, and Zeus....The philosophers constructively reshape, but never categorically denounce ancient Greek beliefs about the gods and the grounding of sexual activity in a polytheistic religious experience....Paul’s cardinal dictate [is] that God’s people must avoid sexual fornication in worship of other gods....Among Greeks and other Gentiles...sexuality and the gods were closely intertwined like a two-ply cord....” (Gaca 2003:3, 11, 14, 303).

4 Harper’s detailed observations regarding *porn-* vocabulary suffer from a lack of attention to all the positive Biblical texts regarding actual prostitutes such as Tamar (→ Gen 38) and Rahab (→ Joshua 2), whom → Matthew honors by naming her in Jesus’ genealogy (Mat 1:5; see 21:31-32; 9:9-13), while James (2:25) and Hebrews (11:31) honor Rahab alongside Abraham (Hanks 2000:12-16). When we include the surprisingly positive biblical data about such actual persons and their faith, the negative impressions from the *porn-*vocabulary are considerably qualified.

5 Where Harper disagrees with Gaca, he overlooks the possibility that the stepmother in question (1 Cor 5:1) might well have been a foreign slave (thus representing both incestuous and “exogamos” marriage [marriage outside a given ethnic/religious group]), or that Paul may simply be employing *porneia* as an insult/slur for sexual misbehavior rather than in any specific, legal sense (2012:378 and note 63).

6 Perhaps the Best News for oppressed sexual minorities is that this University of Oklahoma professor cites only Dale Martin’s *Sex and the Single Savior* (2006:37-50, on p. 378, note 65) regarding another controversy: “the notoriously difficult terms *malakoi* and *arsenokoitai*” (1 Cor 6:9; cf. 1 Tim 1:10). Martin refutes the translation “homosexual,” showing that the terms involved economic exploitation 1996:120-123). However, Harper ignores Gaca’s significant point that *porneia* never refers to same-sex but only to heterosexual acts. Although quite thorough in his bibliographical survey (364, note 2), Harper ignores the efforts of Robert Gagnon (2001:191-92) and Richard Davidson (2007:334, 634) to squeeze from the term *porneia* a condemnation by Jesus of all homosexual acts. (Gagnon and Davidson argue that *porneia* in the NT condemns all that was condemned in Leviticus 18 and 20, although they disagree as to whether sex with a menstruating wife should be condemned).

## EXCURSUS: Una sola carne.

Los textos que hablan de "una carne" están intrínsecamente relacionados a varias preocupaciones bíblicas fundamentales del área sexual (matrimonio, divorcio, prostitución, exclusividad, durabilidad, etc.). Aunque "carne" (hebreo *basar*; griego *sarx*) ha recibido atención detallada en los vocabularios teológicos comunes, antropológicos, bíblicos, etc., un tratamiento satisfactorio a fondo de la frase a "una carne" está faltando todavía y los desacuerdos básicos permanecen. En parte la discordancia proviene de los conceptos de la diversidad de conceptos evidente en los mismos textos bíblicos y el carácter metafórico del lenguaje.

En Génesis 2:24 Von Rad piensa que "una carne" se refiere a la carne del niño que es el resultado de la unión sexual (1972:85). H. Gunkel entendió la frase referida al propio acto sexual, pero Westermann (1976:184-2186, I:233) rechaza ambas interpretaciones de y retorna a la visión de Delitzsch de que el amor aquí crea "una unidad espiritual, una comunión personal más completa". Obviamente el lenguaje metafórico de la Escritura es aquí más sugestivo más que agudamente definitivo y señala a la compleja y multifacético *unidad en la diversidad* de la nueva familia (Prov. 31:10-31; Wenham 1987:71; Ellis 1974:204-205).

El uso de Jesús de Génesis 2:24 va obviamente más allá de la intención del texto original, desarrolla una base para proteger a las mujeres del azote social opresivo del rechazo / divorcio (Marcos 10:1-12 y //s). La exégesis feminista, incluso, encuentra una condena patriarcal en la referencia de Jesús a la dureza de corazón del varón y puede traducir el pasaje mostrando cómo el varón y la mujer "están en la vida y en la relación social porque fueron creados como iguales" (Fiorenza 1985-143). Ched Myers agrega: "Nadie de que ha sufrido la destrucción del fuego de ser 'una sola carne' (cuando yo mismo lo he sufrido) puede disputar el peso de la súplica de Jesús....En el sufrimiento quizás más que en la felicidad un hombre y una mujer pueden descubrir cuán profundamente están involucrados" (1988:266).

En referencia al uso de Pablo en 1 Cor. 6:12-20, quien también va más allá del significado de Génesis 2:24 (pero en cierto modo distinto de Jesús), Countryman escribe: "El sexo con una prostituta podría parecer que no establece ninguna relación en absoluto más allá de la requerida, breve, para la satisfacción del deseo. Pablo, sin embargo, en una interpretación atrevida de Génesis 2:24, declara que cada acto sexual entre un hombre y una mujer establece una unión de la carne como aquella del matrimonio, aunque no, aparentemente, indisoluble. En otras palabras, la prostituta y el hombre, en realidad, se pertenecen durante su relación sexual, aunque no más allá de la misma". Pablo insiste en que los hombres que tienen relación sexual con una prostituta son cambiados por ese acto: "era destructivo para el propio espíritu, es como la relación de uno con Cristo y con Dios" (Countryman 1988:204).

La exégesis cuidadosa ha dejado en claro algo de la riqueza y la diversidad de la enseñanza bíblica en este área (podrían describirse a Jesús y a Pablo más precisamente como haciendo relecturas –recreaciones del texto en un contexto diferente enfrentan nuevas preguntas –mas que "interpretaciones" científicas del significado del opaco lenguaje de Génesis 2:24). Sin embargo, los tratamientos exegéticos comunes dejan sin contestar muchas preguntas actuales: ¿una unión amorosa homoerótica constituye una relación de "una carne"? ¿Si Pablo esta en lo cierto al afirmar que una relación fugaz con una prostituta se califica así, cómo nosotros podemos negar que una unidad más profunda se desarrolle en una relación homoerótica de muchos años?

Si es de hecho el "amor, que nos liga juntos en perfecta "unidad" (Col 3:14), la relación de David para con Jonatán debería ser considerada unidad de "una sola carne" –ya que el amor experimentado era mayor que el de la familia polígama heterosexual de David, ("8 que se vuelven 1"? - cf. 2Sam. 1:26)? Por qué los heterosexuales sostienen sus matrimonios robando las palabras de Ruth que expresan fidelidad en una amistad entre personas del mismo sexo (Ruth 1:16-17 –las cuestiones sobre David y Ruth están en pie, aun cuando no hubo sexo genital). Muchos pueden escandalizarse por tales sugerencias. Pero millones de parejas del mismo sexo, sus amigos y familias estan seguros de que Dios ama y bendice su unioin como Galileo lo hizo con sus descubrimientos en la astronomía. El fundamentalismo ideológico grita "lujuria, no amor," pero sólo porque ellos se niegan a mirar a través del telescopio. Amor que puede ser sentido y observado sin el recurso de un telescopio, es todavía la más poderosa apologética (Juan 13:34-35).

## JE EXCURSUS: Una sola carne.

Los textos que hablan de "una carne" están intrínsecamente relacionados a varias preocupaciones bíblicas fundamentales del área sexual (matrimonio, divorcio, prostitución, exclusividad, durabilidad, etc.). Aunque "carne" (hebreo *basar*; griego *sarx*) ha recibido atención detallada en los vocabularios teológicos comunes, antropológicos, bíblicos, etc., un tratamiento satisfactorio a fondo de la frase a "una carne" está faltando todavía y los desacuerdos básicos permanecen. En parte la discordancia proviene de la diversidad de conceptos evidente en los mismos textos bíblicos y el carácter metafórico del lenguaje.

Por eso el hombre deja a su padre y a su madre, y se une a su mujer, y *ellos* ["los dos", LXX → Mc 10:8 y //s] llegan a ser *una sola carne*.

Cuando Génesis 2:24 habla de la unión entre Adán y Eva:

- Hermann Gunkel (1901/10) entendió la frase referida al propio *acto sexual*;
- Gerhard von Rad concluyó que "una carne" refiere a *la carne del niño que es el resultado de la unión sexual* (1972:85).
- pero Claus Westermann (1976:184-2186, I:233) rechaza ambas interpretaciones de y retorna a la visión de Franz Delitzsch (1887) de que el amor aquí crea "*una unidad espiritual, una comunión personal más completa*" (ver Col 3:14; Ef 5:31) .

Obviamente el lenguaje metafórico de la Escritura es aquí mas sugestivo mas que agudamente definitivo y señala a la compleja y multifacético *unidad en la diversidad* de la nueva familia (Prov. 31:10-31; Wenham 1987:71; Ellis 974:204-205).

El uso de Jesús de Génesis 2:24 va obviamente más allá de la intención del texto original y desarrolla una base para proteger a las mujeres del azote social opresivo del rechazo / divorcio (Marcos 10:1-12 y //s). La exégesis feminista, incluso, encuentra una condena del patriarcado en la referencia de Jesús a la dureza de corazón del varón y traduce el pasaje mostrando cómo el varón y la mujer "participan en común en una vida humana y en una relación social, porque fueron creados como iguales" (Fiorenza 1985 - .143). Ched Myers agrega: "Nadie de que ha pasado por el fuego de la destrucción de ser 'una sola carne' (como yo mismo lo he sufrido) puede disputar el peso de la súplica de Jesús....En este sufrimiento quizás más que en la felicidad un hombre y una mujer pueden descubrir cuán profundamente están involucrados" (1988:266).

¿O no saben que el que se une con una ramera, es un cuerpo con ella?, porque ¿no dice la Escritura: "Los dos serán una sola carne"? (1 Cor 6:16).

Con referencia al uso de Pablo en 1 Cor. 6:12-20, que también trasciende el significado de Génesis 2:24 (pero en cierto modo distinto de Jesús), Countryman escribe: "Tener un encuentro sexual con una prostituta podría parecer que no establece ninguna relación en absoluto más allá de la breve unión física que se requiere para la satisfacción del deseo. Pablo, sin embargo, en una interpretación atrevida de Génesis 2:24, declara que cada acto sexual entre un hombre y una mujer establece una unión de la carne como aquella del matrimonio, aunque aparentemente no permanente o indisoluble. En otras palabras, la prostituta y el hombre, en realidad, se pertenecen durante su relación sexual, aunque no más allá de la misma". Pablo insiste en que los hombres que tienen relación sexual con una prostituta son cambiados por ese acto: "era destructivo para el propio espíritu, es decir, la relación de uno con Cristo y con Dios" (Countryman 1988:204).

La exégesis cuidadosa así deja en claro algo de la riqueza y la diversidad de la enseñanza bíblica en esta área. Podrían describirse a Jesús y a Pablo más precisamente como haciendo relecturas--recreaciones del texto en contextos diferentes y frente a nuevas preguntas--mas que "interpretaciones" científicas del significado del opaco lenguaje de Génesis 2:24. Sin embargo, los tratamientos exegéticos comunes dejan sin contestar muchas preguntas actuales: ¿una unión amorosa homoerótica constituye una relación de "una carne"? ¿Si Pablo esta en lo cierto al afirmar que una relación fugaz con una prostituta se califica así, cómo nosotros podemos negar que una unidad más profunda se desarrolle en una relación homoerótica de muchos años?

Aconteció que cuando David acabó de hablar con Saúl, el alma de Jonatán quedó ligada con la de David, y lo amó Jonatán como a sí mismo....Hizo Jonatán un pacto con David, porque lo amaba como a sí mismo (1 Sam 18:1-4).

Si es de hecho el “amor, que nos liga juntos en perfecta unidad” (Col 3:14), la relación de David para con Jonatán debería ser considerada unidad de “una sola carne” –ya que el amor experimentado era mayor que el de la familia polígama heterosexual de David, (“ocho que se vuelven uno”? – ver 1 Sam 18:1-4; 2 Sam. 1:26)? Por qué los heterosexuales sostienen sus matrimonios robando las palabras de Ruth que expresan fidelidad en una amistad entre personas del mismo sexo (Ruth 1:16-17; las cuestiones sobre David y Ruth están en pie, aun cuando no hubo sexo genital). Muchos pueden escandalizarse por tales sugerencias. Pero millones de parejas del mismo sexo, sus amigos y familias están tan seguros de que Dios ama y bendice su unión como lo fue Galileo con sus descubrimientos en la astronomía. El fundamentalismo ideológico grita "lujuria, no amor," pero sólo porque ellos se niegan a mirar a través del telescopio. Amor que puede ser sentido y observado sin el recurso de un telescopio, es todavía la más poderosa apologética (Juan 13:34-35).

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## Tomado de Textos Positivos Biblia Hebrea 1-2 Reyes.

En este mismo sentido, podemos leer a Pablo, **1 Cor. 6:9-20**, donde los varones cristianos, en especial los esposos cuyas mujeres habían hecho votos de abstinencia sexual para orar (7:5), son amonestados acerca del trato con prostitutas. Como quizá es el caso en Proverbios, las prostitutas son vistas, aparentemente, como manifestaciones de las fuerzas demoníacas de la religión pagana (cf. 1 Cor. 10:18-22). Los cristianos son exhortados a “huir” tanto de las prostitutas como de su religión idólatra (6:18; 10:14). Los comentaristas tradicionales agustinianos, que expresan tanta aversión al sexo, nunca nos dicen cómo Jesús pudo llegar a ser “amigo” de prostitutas “huyendo” continuamente de ellas.

**Jacques Ellul** analiza el tema de las prostitutas con perspicacia teológica y bíblica, en especial 1 Corintios 6:12-20 (1975/76:216-217, 247-249). Admite que, incluso en Pablo, no son las prostitutas las condenadas sino los varones corintios cristianos que se juntan con ellas. Y alaba “la verdadera libertad que el mismo Jesús practica respecto de las prostitutas. Él les habla y recibe su hospitalidad... les lleva la plenitud del amor de Dios, las respeta y restaura su dignidad. Las libera del desprecio y del juicio moralizante. Derribó la barrera que las aislaba y ponía en un ghetto...” (248-249). Por supuesto, habría sido preferible en un teólogo que es explícitamente cristo-céntrico que hubiese iniciado su análisis con esas observaciones sobre Jesús, en lugar de traerlo al final como una nota al pie de Pablo. Aun cuando puede decirse mucho a favor del análisis de Pablo en su contexto, sería ciertamente muy difícil para una prostituta apreciar en ese texto paulino el evangelio de Jesús para las personas oprimidas.

También hubiese sido mejor iniciar ese análisis mediante la detenida consideración del sorprendente número de textos bíblicos que presentan a *La Ramera Heroína* (Bird 1989:119-139; respecto a los textos de la Biblia Hebrea, ver Génesis 38; Josué 2; 1 Reyes 3:13-16; cf. la genealogía de Mateo 1 y Santiago 2:25 en el Nuevo Testamento). Pero dado el hecho que Ellul es *pablo-céntrico*, en realidad agustiniano, más que *cristo-céntrico* en el área de la sexualidad, rescata los valores sociales más evidentemente en su análisis que en la sección dedicada a la homosexualidad. Si Ellul hubiese tenido en cuenta la diversidad y riqueza exegética de los estudios contemporáneos, jamás habría comenzado su análisis con las erróneas y simplistas generalizaciones como que “la prostitución es condenada” en la Biblia (247; cf. heroínas como Tamar en Génesis 38 y Rahab en Josué 2). El descuido casi total de la doctrina bíblica sobre las prostitutas en serias publicaciones eruditas, cuya rectificación han requerido Bird, van der Toorn y otras exegetas feministas, es una reveladora indicación de la ideología neoplatónica, heterosexista y sexofóbica, que domina los estudios bíblicos desde los tiempos de los padres griegos de la iglesia.

Aun cuando se abstiene de entrar en debate, Ellul piensa justificar desde 1 Corintios 6:12-20 “la especial gravedad del pecado sexual” (247), conclusión que habría sido insostenible si hubiera sido consecuente con la perspectiva cristo-céntrica que afirma en otras áreas; cf. especialmente Lucas 16:18, 18:20 y la fuente Q. Para probar la seriedad del pecado sexual, Ellul cita la manifiestamente insostenible explicación de Pablo que los otros pecados son cometidos “fuera del cuerpo” (1975/76:247-248). Incluso Gordon Fee, un comentarista evangélico conservador, admite (1987:261-63/ 1994:296-97) que el mismo Pablo nos provee una verdadera lista de pecados que son cometidos con y contra el cuerpo: ebriedad, glotonería; cf. suicidio, adicción a las drogas, tabaquismo, etc. Indudablemente, los pecados con una dimensión sexual pueden ser tan graves como cualesquiera otros; por ejemplo, el intento de violación en bandada de Génesis 19 y Jueces 19. Pero los fervientes intentos retóricos de Pablo para persuadir a los creyentes corintios de suprimir el patrocinio de la prostitución, difícilmente suministran un sólido fundamento teológico y exegético para la excesivamente amplia conclusión de Ellul (→ Fee 1987:258 nota 39 / 1994:293, nota 39).

Si la afirmación de Countryman es correcta (1988:164-166), que tanto la prostitución como el incesto fueron originalmente considerados como atentados a la propiedad, contra la jerarquía y dignidad patriarcal, un derroche de la herencia ancestral, entonces la prostitución representa una quiebra del honor debido a los padres, además de robo: el 5 y el 8 de los 10 Mandamientos, no el 7 (contra el adulterio). La diversidad de las perspectivas bíblicas nos fuerza a enfrentar cuestiones sobre los motivos básicos para las prohibiciones bíblicas. El solo intercambio del poder económico, dinero, por el poder sexual no pareciera ser el problema básico, puesto que a los patriarcas les era pagado un precio por la virginidad de sus hijas. El ferviente alegato de Pablo a los corintios carecería de convicción en el presente (1) si las prostitutas no son fieles de otra religión, (2) si es

puesta en cuestión la existencia de los demonios, (3) si es reconocido el contexto patriarcal, y (4) si el vínculo entre sexo, amor, economía y matrimonio es visto como mucho más complejo de lo que pareciera en 1 Cor. 6:9-20 y en la exposición de Ellul.

Obviamente, sin embargo, → **1 Corintios** 6:9-20 se cita para responder a una multitud de cuestiones sexuales que exceden el asunto del tema original de Pablo: los esposos cristianos que visitan prostitutas culturales paganas (Smedes 1976:109-136/1994:91-116). La doctrina de Pablo en la “ética” sexual ha desempeñado el papel de un texto patrón, análogo al de 1 Tim. 2:11-12, que aplasta los derechos de las mujeres en la iglesia y la sociedad. La riqueza y diversidad de la doctrina bíblica son ahogadas por el enfoque exclusivo en un solo texto. Muchas cuestiones importantes ni siquiera han sido preguntadas y, mucho menos, debidamente respondidas. Quizá jamás comprendamos correctamente 1 Cor. 6:9-20 y los textos bíblicos que le están asociados sobre las prostitutas, hasta que a esta minoría sexual se les permita llegar a ser consumadas exegetas. Sin embargo, hasta que llegue este utópico momento, podríamos iniciar un serio examen de lo que las Escrituras tienen que decir sobre el sexo y las prostitutas, y rechazar que un texto considerado canónico silencie otras voces, en especial la del mismo Jesús.

Aun cuando Ellul omite este detalle exegético, hubiera valido la pena, para la orientación general sobre el uso de la Biblia en cuestiones sexuales, recalcar el claro sentido de *porneia* en 1 Cor. 6:12-20 (ver 13, 18). Traducida *fornicación* en las versiones antiguas e *inmoralidad sexual* en las versiones contemporáneas, el sentido corriente del griego se refiere a la prostitución; ver *porné* en 6:15, 16 y nuestro adjetivo *pornográfico*. Los ideólogos fundamentalistas insisten a menudo en que las referencias neotestamentarias a la *porneia* tienen el propósito de condenar todo lo que está prohibido o considerado inmundo en los códigos del Levítico. Por supuesto, esto los lleva a las usuales ridículas inconsecuencias tales como considerar *porneia* al coito heterosexual de la pareja casada (ver Levítico 15 y el estudio de Countryman sobre la impureza, 1988/2007:9-142). No pareciera haberseles ocurrido a las mentes legalistas la posibilidad de que Dios en su sabiduría permitiría cierta ambigüedad lingüística en el tratamiento de las Sagradas Escrituras sobre asuntos sexuales o que esperaba que nosotros ejerciésemos, devotamente, una pizca de sabiduría, y no esperásemos tener todo explicado detalladamente en los códigos legales.

Además de traer servicialmente a Jesús para corregir a Pablo, la autoridad máxima, Ellul plantea, correctamente, un cierto número de cuestiones teológicas sobre la prostitución y la relación entre este fenómeno de la sexualidad humana y la auténtica libertad, la justicia, la opresión y el amor: “La relación con una prostituta es una relación sin amor. Es una falsificación del amor. Contiene uno de los aspectos del amor, el lado físico, pero separado de él y destruyendo su totalidad. Es de hecho un gesto de amor, pero carente de su compromiso y verdad. Es un amor roto en pedazos... Es una imitación del amor hecha con una criatura que es despreciada, que es tratada como un objeto, que es menospreciada” (247-248).

Indudablemente, mucho de lo que Ellul dice en ese sentido es exacto como generalización sociológica acerca de la opresión, la injusticia y el insulto a la dignidad humana, y es perspicaz teológicamente. Sin embargo, el vasto absoluto ético que procura trazar no puede establecerse desde las Escrituras o desde generalizaciones sociológicas (Countryman 1988:202-204). Aunque el texto ha estado sometido a una larga historia de alegorización y espiritualización neoplatónica, Dios ordenó a Oseas ir y “amar” a una prostituta. Muchos de los elementos degradantes y deshumanizadores que Ellul censura en las relaciones sexuales típicas con las prostitutas son demasiado comunes en las relaciones heterosexuales, y muchos matrimonios cristianos sufren tanto del negativismo sexual neoplatónico que podrían estar entre los peores en este aspecto.

Estudios recientes han hecho evidente que las recompensas económicas y la seguridad económica desempeñan un gran papel en las motivaciones de la mujer para el matrimonio. Además, los matrimonios cristianos nutridos en la teología de la prosperidad, difícilmente serían excepciones (de un hecho mejor comprendido desde nuestra herencia evolutiva, y no absuelto como algo debido a “la caída de Adán”). Pero, como los ideólogos comunistas en su defensa del socialismo, Ellul exalta el ideal del matrimonio heterosexual, olvidando la realidad sociológica, pero entonces condena toda otra alternativa comparando la sucia realidad con el matrimonio ideal.

Los comentarios de Ellul sobre esta área del amor ponen en evidencia un cautiverio ideológico común al saber

popular: que el amor expresado sexualmente debe ser exclusivo y permanente. En un sinnúmero de otras áreas, las Escrituras sostienen incesantes testimonios del genuino amor expresado en encuentros momentáneos y espontáneos: el buen samaritano, “la copa de agua fría”, los seis elementos repetidos en el paradigma del juicio final (ver Mateo 25:31-46, Ellul 1975/76:319-331). El amor expresado en una relación inicial, predominantemente sexual, con una prostituta, podría no representar el más alto acto de amor humano. Pero si la relación continúa y madura, podría convertirse en lo que atestiguan las innumerables experiencias conocidas por cualquiera que trabaja con tales minorías e, incluso, retratado en obras teatrales, cinematográficas y literarias. Del mismo modo, muchas relaciones amorosas homosexuales estables comenzaron con encuentros donde, a lo más, dominaban el sexo y el amor de forma mínima. Ni las Escrituras, ni aun Pablo, ni la experiencia humana nos proveen alguna base para los absolutos éticos que Ellul propone. Cualquiera que esté comprometido seriamente en el asesoramiento matrimonial cristiano podría decirle que muchos lugares comunes ideológicos acerca de la prostitución son también lugares comunes de los matrimonios cristianos.

Una persona cristiana en una relación heterosexual, permanente y exclusiva, no es garantía de que la expresión sexual sea amorosa. El hecho que una prostituta esté implicada y la dimensión económica sea más explícita que en la cultura de nuestros votos matrimoniales, no significa que el amor, la libertad y la justicia estén ausentes. Considerado sociológicamente, el matrimonio heterosexual patriarcal ha sido más bien una prisión para las mujeres, como las feministas lo han señalado agudamente. Y las personas homosexuales que han caído en la trampa matrimonial tienen muchas más razones para quejarse. El lugar ideológico común de Ellul, que el amor está única o particularmente dañado en las relaciones con prostitutas, carece de realismo sociológico y percepción psicológica y, asimismo, de fundamentos teológicos o bíblicos.

Las prostitutas en Brasil y Uruguay se han organizado a organizarse para afirmar y defender su dignidad humana con gran apoyo del gobierno. Es indudable que Ellul suscita, provechosamente, algunas de las cuestiones básicas que cualquiera de tales grupos debe resolver. Sin embargo, podemos esperar mejores respuestas si respetamos su “esfera de soberanía”, escuchamos sus cuestiones, experiencias y conclusiones y contenemos las pretensiones de que las diversas y profundas perspectivas de las Escrituras en esta área sean agobiadas por la imposición ideológica de la moralidad burguesa. Ellul hace importantes movimientos para escapar de semejante cautiverio ideológico, pero, en tanto escribe de libertad, se muestra apresado por muchos supuestos críticos. Aunque expresa cálidos juicios de aprobación al lugar que ocupa la revelación bíblica, en verdad la descuida y omite interactuar con las recientes perspectivas feministas y la sólida exégesis de muchos textos pertinentes.

### **La inmundicia de relaciones sexuales no pecaminosas**

Lev 15:16-17 emisión de semen (nocturna, masturbación?; Deut 23:9-11 (cp. vv 12-14, excremento; ver Lev 18:22 y 20:13); David, 1 Sam 20:26

Lev 15:18 (heterosexual, matrimonio)

Nota: Rom 1:24-27, inmundicia, no pecado

¿Por qué los matrimonios quedan inmundos después de cumplir el mandato divino (Gén 1:28)? Gordon Wenham (1983) concluye que el semen, como la sangre (12:1-8), es un líquido vital (que contiene vida) y que, por lo tanto, la pérdida de estos líquidos contamina (deja la persona inundo, sucia). Tales personas tienen que recuperar la pérdida y ser restauradas (citado en Philip Budd 1996:218 → Levítico). En ciertas circunstancias Dios mandó la → abstención sexual temporaria. Sin embargo, como Budd señala, no es que el sexo en sí sea sucio, sino que existieron riesgos en el extravío del semen.

Wenham, Gordon (1983). “Why does Sexual Intercourse Defile (Lev. 5:18? ZAW 95, 432-34.

**Excursus 1** Kathy L. Gaca (2003), *The Making of Fornication: Eros, Ethics and Political Reform in Greek Philosophy and Early Christianity*. Berkeley / Los Angeles / London: University of California Press (“staggering erudition”, Chris Frilingos, Review JBL 123/4 2004:756-599); cf. the Greek *porneia*, “prostitution, unchastity, fornication” (BDAG 2000: 354). Kathy Gaca shows that the Church Fathers did not draw their conclusions about sexual norms basically from the Hebrew Bible nor the New Testament: “From the beginning of the second century C.E., patristic writers actively began to adapt ideas about regulating human sexual conduct from Plato, the Stoics, and the Pythagoreans as they developed their own teachings about permissible and impermissible sexual activity....[1] **Tatian** was an ardent Christian advocate of complete sexual renunciation, also known as the ‘enocratic’ position, and [2] **Epiphanes** was a Christian Platonist and a Gnostic supporter of more libertine sexual principles. Both Tatian and Epiphanes drew on the Stoics for some of their teachings and Epiphanes borrowed from Plato as well. [3] **Clement**, also a Christian Platonist, censured both Tatian and Epiphanes for going to opposite extremes. He used Plato, the Stoics, and the Pythagoreans to develop putatively more moderate sexual guidelines....somewhere between the encratite and libertine positions” (2003:1-2) advocating “reproduction within marriage” (15). “**Tatian**, drawing mainly on Paul [1 Cor. 7:1, 7], the Septuagint, and the [later] Stoics, advocates that Christians must renounce sexual activity in order to be saved.... **Epiphanes**.... argues that the communal sexual principles of Plato and the early Stoics are the right model for Christians to follow.... **Clement** counters the encratic position by maintaining that reproduction within marriage is a worthy Christian practice.... Clement’s polemic against Epiphanes indicates that it was a matter of some real debate which pattern of sexual conduct Christians should follow, Clement’s or Epiphanes” (2003:15).

“By the second century, prominent sectors of the Christian populace started to put highly restrictive sexual principles into practice. Christian monks took to the desert to battle sexual fantasies and nocturnal emissions. Female virgins renounced marriage in order to adore Christ as their spiritual Bridegroom.... Married couples opted for the sanctity of a marriage liberated from sexual relations altogether, or at least once their pious duty of reproduction was finished” (2003:9). Gaca seeks to understand why Tatian’s encratic position became so popular (9) and concludes that the anti-sexual strain in Christian tradition was basically the result of the Church Fathers who, with their classical Greco-Roman formations, depended on Hellenistic moral philosophy, especially the *later* Stoics (4-11). In contrast with the *early* Stoics (Zeno and Chrysippus), who formulated an original theory of communal eros, rejecting marriage in favor of cultivating friendships, the *later* Stoics, followed by the Fathers, replaced the communal aspect with established Greek customs of marriage and family coupled with a preference for total abstinence (7; see the similar replacement of Jesus’ and Paul’s praxis and teaching with the *Haustafeln*, the tables of household duties in → **Colossians, Ephesians, 1 Timothy and 1 Peter**). Like the Fathers, Michel Foucault ignored the early Stoics (6-8), but one reviewer of Gaca’s work (Chris Frilingos) argues that her critique of Foucault ignores the diversity evident in his writings (2004:759). With their philosophical convictions firmly in place, most Fathers (in typical Fundamentalist fashion) proceeded to make a highly selective literalistic interpretation of a few biblical texts, ignoring or allegorizing any text that did not square with their sexual ideology that permitted monogamous, heterosexual procreative sex but preferred total sexual abstinence.

Gaca concludes that **for Paul**, based not on Greek philosophy or popular culture but on his reading of the LXX, **fornication (*porneia*) implies heterosexual relations in a context of idolatrous religion and worship**: “Polytheistic religion in antiquity was intimately connected with sexual and procreative conduct, for people worshipped gods embodying sexual power, such as Aphrodite, Dionysus, Her, and Zeus” (2003:3). Since Hellenistic culture accepted prostitution/*porneia*, the term was not included in its vice lists; Jesus, addressing fellow-Jews in Palestine, had little occasion to refer to *porneia*; but Paul, addressing non-Jews elsewhere, made it a major concern: “Paul’s cardinal dictate [is] that God’s people must avoid sexual fornication in worship of other gods” (14). “The vice of *porneia* is entirely absent from the lists in Hellenistic philosophy, but occurs frequently and near the beginning of the pauline vice lists, Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 3:5; 1 Cor. 12:20-21; Eph. 5:3-5” (14, note 38); rare (twice) in Jesus’ teaching (13, note 36; 139 note 52; see Mat. 5:32 // 19:9; 15:19 // Mark 7:21). However, fornication/*porneia* in Paul, following the LXX, is “a heterosexual deviance” and does not refer to homoerotic acts (143, 158). “Biblical *porneia* refers to acts of sexual intercourse and reproduction that deviate from the norm of worshipping God alone.... In the *non-biblical* Greek sense, however, *porneia* means ‘prostitution’ and has nothing to do with worshipping God alone” (20).

To sustain her argument that *porneia* in Paul refers to *heterosexual acts in a context of polytheistic idolatry* (119-159), Gaca refers to various texts from the LXX version of the Hebrew Bible and to Paul, who “considers sexual intercourse in honor of other gods to be worse than nonsexual aspects of other-theistic worship” (137): “Certain kinds of sexual activity are marked as apostasy, and these fit into two groups. First, sexual activity constitutes rebellion against God if it occurs while worshipping gods other than or in addition to the Lord.... Male Israelites... fornicate with Moabite women at the festival for Baal-peor [Num. 25:1-18; → 1 Cor. 10:7-8].... Similarly, Jacob’s daughter Dinah is subjected to fornication when Shechem rapes her at a festival” (122-124) [Gen. 34:2, 31; see also Jer. 2:19-22; Micah 1:6-8] (2003:122-24). Paul “tells the Corinthian Christians that God killed 2,300 Israelites because of their sexual fornicating worship of alien gods and other acts of disobedience.... (1 Cor. 10:8, 11-12 [regarding the numerical discrepancy, see NVIBE note]).... Paul issues the same message to the Thessalonian Christian community. They must abstain from sexual intercourse in worship of other gods in order to avoid ‘the avenging Lord’ (*ekdikos kurios*, 1 Thess. 4:6). The community in Rome receives notice as well. Paul states that God’s wrath is emerging against some or all pagans for sexual worship that they devote to their gods (Rom. 1:18-27)” (138; See also Matthew Kuefler 2001:255-60; Hanks 2006:594.). Regarding Paul’s teaching in Romans 1:24-27, Gaca concludes:

- The reference to “uncleanness/impurity” expressed in covetous desires (*epithumia*) in **Rom. 1:24** continues the theme of idolatry in 1:19-23 and is reemphasized again in **1:25** (Dale Martin, 1995:332-55; 2006:22; Countryman, 2007:97-99).
- The theme of idolatry continues in Romans **1:26-27**, where Paul describes the pagans as “burning with desire to comply with their devotion to alien gods such as Aphrodite, Dionysus, Hera, and Zeus” (Gaca 2003:185, with reference to gods and goddesses of erotic love).

Moreover, Gaca points out, “There is no transparent connection... between **Paul and the rabbis [centuries later]**, for the Pharisaic background that Paul claims in Philippians 3:5 differs in numerous major ways from the Pharisaism presupposed in the Hebrew-based rabbinic tradition.... [Thus it is not illuminating to assume that rabbinic sources are the manifest background for Paul’s sexual principles.]. It is questionable to use rabbinic evidence to control and fill in what Paul ‘must mean’ on topics where he is terse or convoluted, as he frequently is, while the rabbis carefully explain their positions, as they tend to do” (14-15; see similarly the differences between Philo’s Pythagorean-based procreationism and Paul, who did not exemplify nor advocate procreationism, 206-08). Gaca thus undermines one of Robert Gagnon’s favorite fallback positions when his exegetical arguments falter: Paul (or Jesus) must have condemned male homoeroticism because he was Jewish (Gagnon 2001:159-83; for Jesus see 2001:185-228). However, Gaca fails to apply her own principle when she rejects Saul Olyan’s interpretation of Lev. 18:22 and 20:13 as only prohibiting male homoerotic anal intercourse (2003:126, note 23) on the grounds of rabbinic discussion. The assumption that ancient Judaism must be seen as universally and essentially homophobic (as if the two verses in Leviticus, Philo and Josephus were the only relevant evidence to be considered) has now been roundly refuted by Ted Jennings’ work, which demonstrates that the Hebrew Bible includes a positive emphasis on homoeroticism that was unique in antiquity (*Jacob’s Wound: Homoerotic Narrative in the Literature of Ancient Israel*; New York: Continuum, 2005; see my review at [www.fundotrasovejas.org.ar/ingles/ingles.html](http://www.fundotrasovejas.org.ar/ingles/ingles.html)).

**Conclusion** For interpreting **Romans 1:18-32** Gaca thus brings strong support to the interpretation that what is condemned are only expressions of sexual “uncleanness” (1:24, 26-27) in a *context of polytheistic idolatry* (1:19-23, 25, 28a), which would thus not apply today to adult Christian believers in a consensual loving relationship. In addition, for both Paul and Jesus, Gaca concludes that **the texts condemning *porneia*** not only are limited to sexual acts in *idolatrous religious* contexts but are also limited to *heterosexual* acts, while the three pauline references to male-male anal sex (Rom 1:27; 1 Cor 6:9; 1 Tim 1:10) employ other terms and categories. Thus, Robert Gagnon’s desperate attempt (2001:191-92.) to find a basis for attributing to Jesus a condemnation of male homoeroticism in his two references to *porneia* is also shown to be groundless.

**“The Reproductive Technology of the Pythagoreans” (chapter 4, 2003:94-116).** Pythagoras was a pre-Platonic Greek philosopher and mathematician (sixth century B.C.E) known only from later citations, whose emphasis on reproduction technique was transmuted via Plato, Neoplatonism, and the Stoics into later patristic and modern Christian teaching on procreation. Thus Plato (ca. 429-347 B.C.E.) in *Republic* 546b4-d3 refers to

a Pythagorean theorem regarding a “nuptial number”, “an abstruse eugenic principle that designates the most auspicious timing for producing human offspring” (Gaca 2003:95). According to **Aristoxenus (born ca. 375-360 B.C.E.)**, writing about Pythagoreans he knew): “Followers of Pythagoras ideally should refrain from sexual activity in their early youth, marry, and maintain marital fidelity thereafter, and in general they ought to make sparing use of sexual activity throughout their lives” (101). “The reproductive technology... presumes at its core the earliest known Pythagorean tenet – that human nature is a dualistic composite of an immortal soul in a mortal body” (103). “The Pythagoreans interpret conception and birth to be an act of guiding a soul into embodiment...” (101).

**Ocellus, ca. 150 B.C.E.** (2003:109-111) reflects typical Pythagorean principles but emphasizes “the older Pythagorean argument that procreationism chiefly serves the interest of the children. Offspring who are produced in anything other than a strictly purposeful way [procreation within marriage] are ‘abject, ill-omened, and abominable’... born under a bad sign.... afflicted with the life-long curse of having been embodied in a sexually abominable way” (110).

“**Charondas**” (2003:107-09) was a pseudonymous author of a Pythagorean treatise, **ca. 50 B.C.E.** for whom “Only deliberately procreative sex acts in marriage remain permissible” (108). “Charondas thinks in a Pythagorean manner by the exclusive disjunction he makes between ejaculating for procreation... or for licentiousness.... Unless a man ejaculates into his wife to reproduce, then he does so for licentious reasons [pleasure, friendship], and such license is absolutely forbidden.... Charondas thus goes by the strict letter of his procreationist law, and he would enforce this rule on a lifelong basis” (108; unlike Plato who limited the Pythagorean restriction to about a 10-year period when the couple would produce children).

The treatises of Ocellus and Charondas show that “the older Pythagorean doctrine of procreationism gains a favorable reception during the Neopythagorean revival of the later Hellenistic and early Roman period” (2003:110). Thus, **Seneca (4 B.C.E.–65 A.D.)**, commonly classified as a Stoic, “advocates procreationism in its Neopythagorean version.... Only purposeful reproduction is justifiable, and marriage is the only institution in which it may occur.... Seneca advocates unconditional procreationism out of concern more for the sexual agents themselves than for the offspring,” considering that sexual pleasure is like “a fire ready to rage out of control” (111). **Musonius (ca. 20-30 A.D.–79-101 A.D.)**, “though primarily Stoic, like Seneca, similarly promotes Neopythagorean procreationism.... [Sexually deviant men] besmirch themselves ‘just like pigs’ and they are happy rolling in the mud.... Musonius and Seneca are the only known Stoics who advocate the procreationist dictate. They are completely anomalous as Stoics in so doing, for this Pythagorean rule conflicts fundamentally with the basic principles of stoic eros.... Both Seneca and Musonius are ascetic Pythagoreans in Stoic clothing, at least with regard to their sexual ethics” (113-15). The Stoics generally argued that friendship is the primary goal of sexual activity, quite apart from its reproductive function: “In Stoic sexual ethics... sexual activity is justified if practiced for the purpose of cultivating mutual friendship” (97-98, note 10).

In its more extreme version “procreationism forbids all other sexual activity as reckless and morally reprehensible, be it homoerotic, autoerotic, or heterosexual deviance from strictly temperate reproduction within marriage.... Though it began as a distinctively Pythagorean doctrine, in its more extreme form it later came to be understood as God’s law in ecclesiastical Christianity” (96). “Procreationism in [this]... aphoristic Neopythagorean form gains wider currency by the time of the early Roman empire.... and it was well positioned to spread further into the Jewish Platonism of Philo and into ecclesiastical Christianity via Christian Platonism” (116). Our modern Christian emphasis on procreationism thus stems from this extreme aphoristic form of Pythagorean teaching, imbibed by the Fathers from Greco-Roman philosophy, not from Genesis 1–2. Were this teaching taken literally it would require all to dedicate themselves to the *maximization* of procreation, necessary for the world of Adam and Eve, but disastrous for our modern world with its population explosion. Obviously major voices in the biblical tradition (Jeremiah, Jesus, Paul, all unmarried) were singularly uninterested in maximizing procreation, while → **Song of Songs**, the only biblical book wholly dedicated to the theme of human sexuality, consists of erotic poetry that extols joyful eroticism outside any framework of marriage and with no concern to procreate. Moreover, most Church Fathers strongly preferred total sexual abstinence and only permitted procreative sex within marriage as the inferior option. Gaca thus unmasks modern Christian emphasis on family values and procreationism as reflecting roots that are Pythagorean rather than biblical.

**55x New Testament uses of *porneia* and cognates (*porne*,  *pornos*, *porneuo*); Danker BDAG 2000:854-55; Petter 1976/80:483-84; Rev 19x; 1 Cor 14x;**

**1 *Porneia* (25x); “(\*)prostitution, fornication, unchastity, (!)incest, adultery” (in vice lists, unspecified =?)**

- 6x clearly \*prostitution; 2x clearly incest; 17x unspecified, but prostitution probably prominent
- 1-2 Mt ?5:32 // ?19:9 NRSV no divorce “except on the ground of unchastity”
- 3-4 Mk ?7:21 // ?Mt 15:19 NRSV from the human heart come “evil intentions...fornication”
- 5 Jn ?8:41 NRSV “we are not illegitimate children [Greek: we were not born of *porneia*]”
- 6-8 Acts (Jerusalem Council): NRSV “abstain...from...polluted by idols...fornication” 15:20; 15:29; 21:25
- 9-10 1 Cor ?5:1a and b! (2x) incest! “sexual immorality” reported among you...not found...among pagans”
- 11 \*6:13 NRSV “The body is not meant for fornication....” See *porne*, harlot/prostitute in 6:15-16
- 12 \*6:18 NRSV “Shun fornication” See *porne*, harlot/prostitute in 6:15-16
- 13 ?7:2 NRSV “because of cases of sexual immorality...each...his own wife...each...her own husband”
- 14 2 Cor ?12:21 NRSV “impurity, sexual immorality, licentiousness [Greek, “excess”]”
- 15 Gal ?5:19 NRSV “works of the flesh...: fornication, impurity, licentiousness...fruit of the Spirit...love”
- 16 Eph ?5:3 NRSV “fornication and impurity and any kind of greed [covetousness]” not to be mentioned
- 17 Col ?3:5 NRSV “Put to death...fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed [covetousness]”
- 18 1 Thes ?4:3 NRSV “Abstain from fornication.” See previous “instruction...sanctification...holiness”
- 19 Rev ?2:21 NRSV Jezebel’s “fornication” + “bed...adultery with her”
- 20 ?9:21 NRSV “sorceries of their fornication” fig. for idolatrous humanity
- 21 ?14:8 NRSV “wine of the wrath of her fornication” (idolatrous “Babylon” fig. for Rome + fornication)
- 22-25 \*17:2 NRSV “whore...whose fornication”; \*17:4; \*18:3; \*19:2 “whore...her fornication”

In Rev. 4x “fornication” describes the sexual acts of the great “whore” (fig. for Rome)

**2 *Porneuo* (8x); “prostitute oneself, practice prostitution, whore, fornicate”;**

+ Mc 10:19 variant reading in D and a few later mss. (so Harper counts 56x total?)

- 1 1 Cor \*6:18 NRSV “the fornicator” (see *porne* “prostitute” in 6:15-16)
- 2 ?10:8 NRSV “indulge in sexual immorality” general sense, distinguished from adultery (BDAG 854)
- 3 ?10:8 NRSV “as some of them did [indulged in sexual immorality, Greek]”
- 4 Rev ?2:14 NRSV “practice fornication” + “eat meat sacrificed to idols”
- 5 ?2:20 NRSV “practice fornication” + “eat meat sacrificed to idols”
- 6-8 \*17:2 NRSV the kings of the earth “have committed fornication” with great whore (1); \*18:3; \*18:9

References to prostitution in contexts of 4 of the 8 uses of verb clarify the meaning

**3 *Porne* (12x, fem.); “\*prostitute, harlot, whore, who engages in sexual relations for hire,” idolatrous?**

- 1-2 Mat 21:\*31-\*32 NRSV “prostitutes”
- 3 \*[Lk 15:30] ¿f/m? (Greek: genitive plural is same in fem. and masc.); NRSV “prostitutes”
- 4 1 Cor \*6:15 NRSV “prostitute”
- 5 \*6:16 NRSV “prostitute”
- 6 Heb \*11:31 Rahab; NRSV “prostitute”
- 7 James \*2:25 Rahab NRSV “prostitute”
- 8-11 Rev \*17:1; \*[17:5 m/f/?; see *pornos* below], \*17:15; \*17:16 NRSV “whore” 3x
- 12 \*19:2 NRSV “whore”

BDAG and NRSV consistently translate as “prostitute/whore,” lit. 7x; fig. for Rome 4x in Rev.

**4 *Pornos* (10x, masc.); “male \*whore/prostitute, fornicator”**

- 1 1 Cor ?5:9 NRSV “sexually immoral persons”
- 2 ?5:10 NRSV “immoral”
- 3 ?5:11 NRSV “sexually immoral”
- 4 ?6:9 NRSV “fornicators” (followed by “idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites”)
- 5 Eph ?5:5 NRSV “fornicator”
- 6 1 Tim ?1:10 NRSV “fornicators” (followed by “sodomites, slave traders” )
- 7 Heb ?12:16 Esau NRSV “immoral and godless”; see exogamy of Esau (marriage outside his clan)
- 8 ?13:4 NRSV “fornicators” (see also “adulterers in same verse)
- [Rev \*17:5 m/f?, (Greek: genitive plural is same in fem. and masc.); NRSV “whores” [= fem. *porne* ?]
- 9-10 Rev ?21:8; ?22:15 NRSV “fornicators” (cf also the “dogs” in 22:15)

NRSV translates Rev 17:5 as “whores” and interprets fornicators as including sex with prostitutes.

**Conclusions: *porne-* vocabulary** **Note:** Paul fears both prostitution (1 Cor 6:12-20) and pre-marital sex (7:9).

**1** In classical Greek the words related to the *porne-* root referred to prostitution, either literally or figuratively.. Also in the NT when contexts clearly indicate meaning, references to prostitution predominate. Thus, in the Gospels the only clear texts refer to prostitutes (Matt 21:31-32; Lk 15:30 f/m?). James and Hebrews refer positively to the harlot Rahab, whom Matthew even names Jesus' genealogy (Mat 1:5; James 2:25; Heb 11:31). And in Revelation almost all texts (14 of 19) are figurative references to Rome, denounced as a great "harlot":

***Porne:*** Rev 17:1, [5 ἡ/μ/φ?], 15-16; 19:2; ***Porneuo:***17:2; 18:3, 9; 14:8; ***Porneia:***17:2, 4; 18:3; 19:2. See also:

***Pornos* 11x** prostitute, a male who offers sexual services for pay:1 Cor 5:9-11; 6:9; Eph 5:5; 1 Tim 1:10; Heb 12:16 (Esau);13:4; Rev 21:8; 22:15

***Porneuo* 4x** prostitute oneself, practice prostitution: 1 Cor 10:8ab; Rev 2:14, 20

***Porneia* 16x** prostitution: Mk 7:21 // Mt 15:9; Mt 5:32 // 19:19; Jn 8:41; Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25; 1 Thes 4:3; Gal 5:19; 1 Cor 7:2; 2 Cor 12:21; Col 3:5; Eph 5:3; Rev 2:21; 9:21;

**2** In the NT twice (in one verse) Paul uses a *porne-*term when referring to **incest** (1 Cor 5:1a and b). But immediately in the following chapter his *porne-* references revert to the expected references to prostitutes/prostitution (6:12-20), a text that addresses Christian males tempted to seek out idolatrous female prostitutes.

**3** Aside from the 23 clear references to prostitution and two to incest, debate continues regarding the remaining 30 texts. Some argue for unspecified references to incest, adultery, or even all that is prohibited in Leviticus 18 and 20 (including relations with a woman during menstruation) but we lack consensus for any firm conclusions

**4** Kathy Gaca concludes that **for Paul** (based not on Greek philosophy or popular culture but on his reading of the LXX) *porneia* implies **heterosexual** relations (usually with prostitutes) in contexts of **idolatrous religion and worship** (2003:3, 143, 158). This recognition should discourage the use the *porne-* texts to condemn persons of homosexual orientation, but may be used to augment prejudices and violence against prostitutes.

**5** The older translation of *porneia* as **fornication** (AV/KJV, etc.) encourages contemporary readers to misinterpret many texts, since they commonly assume the modern concept of nuclear family and suppose that the Bible condemns any relation not occurring between a legitimately married couple (with a commitment/covenant involving exclusive and permanent relations and the intention to procreate heirs). Hence, the translations "fornicate, fornication, fornicator" are best avoided since they fail to represent faithfully Biblical theology and also fail to communicate clearly and accurately to the contemporary reader. The modern translation of *porneia* as **sexual immorality** (NIV, etc.) employs two words never found in the vocabulary and theology of the Bible: "moral/immorality" from Greek philosophy + "sexual" from modern science. Nevertheless, the phrase does have the advantage of using a pejorative expression without any specific content.

**Note.** Robert Gagnon (2001:435-37; 2003:72) and Richard Davidson (2007:334-35, 634-36) both interpret *porneia* in **Mark 7:21 // Matt 15:19** as a technical Jewish legal term prohibiting all that Leviticus 18 and 20 condemn (highly unlikely) to argue that Jesus thus taught that homosexuality (*porneia*) is an abomination. Alas, sometimes when the cat swallows the canary but then insists it is still safe in the cage, a yellow feather floats gently to the floor that tells a different story. And such is the case when we try to "define" *porneia* in the New Testament with too much "help" from Leviticus. Both Gagnon and Davidson recognize that Leviticus 18 and 20 include a severe condemnation of a male who has sex with a menstruating woman (Lev 18:19; 20:18; see also Ezek 18:6; 22:10; 36:17). Gagnon nimbly sweeps the yellow feather under the rug and says "forget about it" (the church always has). Davidson, more consistently, insists that a [legalistic] biblical theology of sexuality must make clear that sex with a menstruating woman is always a terrible sin, on the same level with incest, adultery, polygamy, homosexuality and bestiality (334; Jesus agreeing?!, 634). Confronted with Gagnon's inconsistency and Davidson's absurdity, Paul might plead attention to his "more excellent way" that involves focusing on a love for neighbor that avoids doing harm (1 Cor 13; Rom 13:8-10). The proposal that we should consider all the sexual references in the Holiness Code of Leviticus 17-26 assumed in a single term is arbitrary and legalistic and fails to take into account the acceptance in the Hebrew Bible of levirate practices, polygamy, concubines and male recourse to prostitutes; see [www.fundotrasovejas.org.ar](http://www.fundotrasovejas.org.ar) Reviews, Davidson). Since many members in Paul's churches were ex/slaves and would be required to sexually serve their owners or bring in income as prostitutes, would Paul have condemned them as guilty of *porneia*?! (Glancy 1998; → Romans).

**1 Corinthians 6:12-20 To Christian males tempted to seek idolatrous pagan prostitutes [f.].** 12 [Some of you are saying:] “For me all things are authorized/permitted”—but not all things are beneficial!; “For me all things are authorized/ permitted”—but I will not be mastered/ruled by anything! 13 “Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods”—but God will destroy both these and that! The body, however, is not for [heterosexual] *porneia*-prostitution, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body. 14 And God both raised the Lord and through his power will also raise us. 15 *Do you [pl] not know* that your bodies are members of Christ? Therefore, taking Christ’s limbs and organs, shall I make [them] members of a [fem., idolatrous] harlot? May it not be! 16 *Or do you [pl] not know* that he who is joined to a [fem., idolatrous] harlot is one body [with her]? For he/it says “The two [m. + f.] will become one flesh” [Gen 2:24]. 17 But the one being joined to the Lord is one spirit [with him]. 18 Keep away from/Flee [10:14; see Joseph in Gen 29] [heterosexual] *porneia*-prostitution! Whatever [other] sin that a man may commit is *outside* the body; but he who commits [heterosexual] *porneia*-prostitution sins *into/against* [Greek: *eis*] his own body. 19 *Or do you [pl] not know* that your body is a shrine/temple of the indwelling Holy Spirit whom you have received from God, and that you are not your own, 20 for you were bought with a price? So glorify/honor God in/with your bodily life.

**Introduction.** According to Michael Harper: “Ultimately Christian understandings of *porneia* develop out of Paul’s letters, especially 1 Corinthians 5-7” (2012:376-77) and “1 Corinthians 6:12-20 must be the crux of any interpretation of Pauline *porneia*” (378). However, in 1 Cor 6:12-20 Paul has not composed a rationalistic philosophical ethical exposition but a letter employing emotional rhetoric that seeks to persuade male readers not to seek out pagan (idolatrous) female prostitutes. As in all his letters, the Apostle addresses a specific historical situation (heterosexual prostitution with idolatrous pagan females; 10:14) and employs generalizations, even hyperbole, that should not be misinterpreted as philosophical or scientific absolutes with no exceptions. What is the theme and most appropriate title for 1 Cor 6:12-20? Cf. NJB and NIV (“Sexual Immorality”); NRSV (“Glorify God in Body and Spirit”).

**Note.** Two roots dominate 6:12-20:

(1) **body** (gr. *sóma*): 8x (6:13a, 13b, 15, 16, 18a, 18b, 19, 20); not the neo/platonic prison of the soul; Paul uses *soma* to denote the whole person, the “*interpersonal, social, public mode of being a Christian* .... The Christian lifestyle is *more than a private ‘inner’ state*; it manifests itself in ‘bodily’ action and behavior in the public domain” (Thiselton 2006:94); related words, stomach, 6:13, 2x; members, 6:15, 3x; flesh, 6:16.

(2) **prostitution: 2.1** gr. *pórneia*: 3x (6:13, 18a, 18b); **2.2** gr. *pórne*, 2x, “[idolatrous, female] prostitute/harlot” (6:15, 16); **2.3** gr. *pornéo*: 1x, “have relations with a prostitute” (6:18); the same root a total of 5x.

**6:12** How does 6:12-20 relate to its context? See 5:1-13 y 7:1-40; 6:1-11. What is the Corinthians’ maxim/slogan Paul cites, repeated 2x in 6:12 and what did they mean? See NJB note 6:12 g and cf. 8:9 and 10:23.

**6:13** Does 6:13 cite another of their maxims/slogans? Cf. 8:8. How did the Corinthian believers understand the meaning of sexual relations? Is a similar materialist interpretation common among us today?

With what arguments does Paul respond to the Corinthians’ reductionist maxim/slogan? See 6:13, 14, 15-16, 17, 18, 19, 20. Does Paul agree with the Corinthians’ maxim/slogan in 6:13? **Note.** Fee (255) agrees that sex and food have something in common, but says Paul emphasizes the differences: food is a *thing*; but sexual relations are between *persons* created in God’s image with spiritual implications and consequences. See NJB note 6:14 h.

**6:15** Does 6:15 refer to the religious prostitution (idolatry) common in pagan fiestas and/or fertility cults common in pagan temples? See 6:19-20; 10:7-8, 14 (with 6:18).

**6:16** How does Paul understand “one flesh” in Gen. 2:24, which he cites? See Excursus below.

**6:18** See 2 Tim. 2:22; Gen. 39:12; cf. 1 Cor. 10:14, “Flee idolatry.” How should we interpret Paul’s affirmation that “Whatever [other] sin that a man may commit is outside the body; but he who commits [heterosexual] *porneia*-prostitution sins against his own body” (6:18). The word “other” of the NIV is not in the original text, but in the Greek sometimes is only implicit (Mat 12:31; cf. NRSV). What would Paul say, then, of the person who is drunk/alcoholic (6:10; 5:11); see gluttony, drugs, cigarettes, suicide, etc.; Phlp. 3:19.

**6:19** Who represents the image of the Temple here—the individual? Or the Christian community? (as in 3:16; 12:12-30; 2 Cor. 6:16; with Christ the “head” in Col 1:18; 2:19 or the corner stone in Eph. 2:20-22).

**6:20** What characteristics of the slave market are reflected here? Does the change in ownership result in freedom? See 7:22; Gal. 3:13; 4:5; Rev. 5:9; 14:3. “Glorify God...” (see Mat 5:14-16; Rom 1:21, 23; 15:6, 9; 2 Cor 9:13; Gal 1:24). Does praise complete the enjoyment? (WCF and Shorter Catechism Q.1).

## Limited Horizons?

1. Paul's warning to Corinthian males/husbands tempted to visit idolatrous female prostitutes gives the impression of despising prostitutes as persons (6:15-16). Is Paul's attitude toward prostitutes coherent with the Hebrew Bible (Tamar, Gen. 38; Rahab, Jos. 2 with James 2:25 and Hebrews 11:31; Hos 1-3) and Jesus' example and teaching? See Rahab in Jesus' genealogy in Mt 1:5; cf. Mt 21:31-32.

2. Is 6:18 simply hyperbole? Does it fail to take into account other sins committed against our bodies?

3. Could the logic of 6:16-17 also be used to prohibit marriage and all sexual relations?

4. If all sex must be limited to permanent, exclusive marriage, how should we evaluate masturbation, the levirate practices, concubines, polygamy, etc.?

5. How should contemporary medical and scientific perspectives (psychology, sociology, economics) contribute to our sexual ethics?

6. If *ágape*-love fundamental for all of life and especially for Christian sexual praxis (1 Cor. 13), then why does Paul fail to refer to love in 1 Cor. 5-7? See 7:3-5 and the couple's eager desire to please one another (7:33-35); cf. Eph. 5:25-35. In 1 Cor 5-7 does Paul substitute "holiness" (purity) for love as the basis of marriage and sexual praxis (see 6:19)? How would you relate these two norms for human sexuality?

## Permanente values for the church in Paul's teaching:

1. Paul's critique of the Corinthians' reductionist "sex = food" analogy (cf. likenesses + *differences*)..

2. The eternal significance of our bodies and their ethical-moral acts in the light of (a) the resurrection (14); (b) our redemption (19-20); (c) our creation in God's image (13b + the Hebrew Bible, Gen 1-2; Psalm 104).

3. Prostitution as an institution commonly appears incompatible with God's Kingdom, which faults it as: (a) a system of exploitation, violence and domination of prostitutes; but cf. 6:18; (b) tending to promote impersonal sexual relations, lacking love (6:12; 7:4); treating other persons as things (like food).

4. Such sexual acts may establish relations between persons and idolatrous spiritual "powers" that transcend the purely physical (6:16; Gn.2:24; Fee 1987:253; Martin 1995:176-77; Garland 2003:233).

5. The development of a sexual praxis in a positive context of love (1 Cor.13) and the resurrection of the body (1 Cor.15); the rejection of idolatry (1 Cor.8-10) as the ideology of oppressors (especially empires).

6. The (imperfect) analogy between God or Christ (Eph. 5) in relation to the believer (or the church) and the ethical ideal of an exclusive, permanent sexual relation (6:13,15-17; 7:1-4). Such an ideal commonly is promoted as a norm, but should we accept this common tradition and interpret it an "absolute law"?

7. The Christian's body belongs to our resurrected Lord (13c, 15<sup>a</sup>, 17) and should glorify God (20).

## Conclusions

Fee (266) proposes two basic applications:

1. Against contemporary sexual failures, "Sexual immorality is still sin, even though it has been justified under every conceivable rationalization....Our bodies belong to God through the redemption of the cross; and they are destined for resurrection."

2. Greek dualism "would negate the body in favor of the soul....In the Christian view there is no dichotomy between body and spirit that either indulges the body because it is irrelevant or punishes it so as to purify the spirit." Fee concludes that such a dichotomy is reflected in the tendency of those who would "save souls" while ignoring people's material needs. See 1 John. 3:16-18; James. 2:14-17.

Which elements in Paul's argument are of greatest permanent value for Christian theology and contemporary sexual ethics? Does the text contain other elements of limited historical (contextual) value but which we cannot accept literally in their original form as universally valid today? How would a poor secular prostitute (not idolatrous) react to Paul's teaching in 6:12-20 today? Could this text be of help in sharing Jesus' Good News with prostitutes? Or would it only be helpful for a church that included no prostitutes?

**Which elements in Paul's address to [heterosexual] Christian males seeking idolatrous, pagan harlots might be applicable to same-sex (non-hierarchical) exchanges of sex for pay/material recompense (a place to live, as in marriage)?**

## Excursus: unity (“unitivity”?) + diversity (hospitality)

### 1 Unity (“Unitivity”?): “One flesh” (Gen 2:24; 1 Cor 6:16; Mk 10:8-9 // Mat 19:5; Eph 5:31).

“Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his woman/wife and *they* [“the two,” LXX] become one flesh” The Hebrew reference to “they” (Gen 2:24) becomes “the two” in the LXX, which both Jesus and Paul cite → Mk 10:8 // Mat 19:5; // Eph 5:31; see 1 Cor 6:16 ]

Evangelical Gordon Wenham says concerning “one flesh” in Gen 2:24: “This does not mean merely [1] the sexual union that follows marriage [Herman Gunkel 1901:10], or [2] the children conceived in marriage [Gerhard von Rad 1972:85], or even [3] the spiritual and emotional relationship that it involves [Franz Delitzsch 1987; Claus Westermann 1976/84-82/86, I:233], though all are involved in becoming one flesh [see the love that creates a spiritual unity, a more complete personal communion; Eph 5:31; Col 3:14]. Rather it affirms that [4] just as blood relations are one’s flesh and bone [Gen 2:23], so marriage creates a similar **kinship relation** between man and wife. They become related to each other as brother and sister are.

“The laws in Lev 18 and 20, and possibly Deut 24:1-4, illustrate the application of this kinship-of-spouses principle to the situation following divorce or the death of one of the parties. Since a woman becomes on marriage a sister to her husband’s brothers, a daughter to her father-in-law, and so on, she cannot normally [see Levirate marriage!] marry any of them should her first husband die or divorce her....The kinships established by marriage are therefore not terminated by death or divorce” (1987:71; *Genesis 1-15*, WBC; Waco, Texas: Word). See Jesus with his beloved disciple and Mary (→ John 19:25-27), implying that Jesus and John had a one-flesh relationship that transcended death in the continuing mother-son relationship between the beloved disciple and Mary.

The phrase *bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh* (Gen 2:23) “are a poetic formulation of the traditional kinship formula. For example, Laban said to his nephew Jacob, ‘You are my bone and my flesh’ (29:14); cf. Judg 9:2; 2 Sam 5:1; 19:13-14 [12-13]” (Wenham 1987:70). However, nothing in Genesis 2:24 indicates that the “one-flesh” relationship between Adam and Eve established an absolute ethical norm of **exclusivity**. Later in the same book the patriarchs Abraham and Jacob had concubines and multiple wives, and Jacob’s taking Rachel as a second wife, after being tricked by Laban into marrying her older sister Leah, is narrated approvingly (→ 1-2 Kings on concubines and polygamy). Similarly, today, someone tricked by religious leaders into a heterosexual marriage to “cure” their homosexual orientation later often enters into a same-sex relationship/ marriage, that (as in the case of David and Jonathan with their previous marriages) more authentically fulfills their need for a loving “one-flesh” relationship. Moreover, as William Countryman points out, rather than any teaching regarding male-female differences and modern ideologies of “complementarity” Adam’s delight in the woman is grounded in her *identity* with him, not her difference: ‘This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh’ (Gen.2:23, AV)“ (2007:242; *pace* Karl Barth and Robert Gagnon, whom he cites).

*And sticks [cleaves] to his wife* [Gen. 2:24]. According to Wenham “This phrase suggests both passion and **permanence** should characterize marriage” (1987:71). However, had the writers and editors of the Hebrew Bible intended Gen 2:24 to establish an ethical absolute requiring that marriage always be permanent, they would not have included the divorce law of Deut 24:1-4, nor the demands of Ezra 10 and Nehemiah 13 that Israelite males divorce their foreign wives (Countryman 2007:243-44). Countryman also indicates that “by ‘one flesh’...Jesus understands not sexual intercourse, as Paul did..., but **full kinship**. The simple fact of sexual intercourse would not prohibit divorce” (2007:170; cf. Paul, p. 243). Jesus’ citation of Gen 2:24 (LXX) in his teaching on divorce (→ Mk 10:8-9 // Mat 19:5) does not condemn all divorce, since he recognizes exceptions (Mat 19:9; Paul provides another, 1 Cor 7:15).

Wenham adds: “Israel is repeatedly urged to stick to the LORD (Deut 10:20; 11:22; 13:5, etc.). The use of the terms ‘forsake’ and ‘stick [cleave]’ in the context of Israel’s covenant with the LORD suggests that the OT viewed marriage as a kind of covenant” (1987 71). However, although the Hebrew Bible never explicitly refers to marriage as a covenant, Jonathan is said to “be knit” to David and their relationship **three times** is said to be expressed in their making a covenant with one another (→ 1-2 Samuel):

**18:1-4.** <sup>1</sup>When David had finished speaking to Saul, the soul/life (*nefesh*) of Jonathan was knit (*qashar*) to the soul/life (*nefesh*) of David, and Jonathan loved (*'ahab*) him as he loved himself [see Lev 19:18,34; → Rom. 13:8-10]. <sup>2</sup>From that day on, Saul would not let [David] return to his father's house. <sup>3</sup>Then Jonathan made a **covenant** with David, because he loved him as he loved himself. <sup>4</sup>And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that he was wearing, and gave it to David, and he also gave him his tunic and even his sword, and, what is more, his bow and even his girdle [see their further "covenants" 20:40-41; 23:17-18].

Finally, at Jonathan's death David declared that Jonathan's love for David surpassed the love of women:

**2 Sam. 1:26.** "Your love (*'ahab*) for me was more delicious than the love (*'ahab*) of women" [having eight wives and ten concubines, David had considerable basis for comparison!].

Traditionally, we thus can witness various efforts to treat Genesis 2:24 as implying laws and ethical absolutes requiring that marriage always be exclusive (Paul) and/or permanent, with no divorce (Jesus in Mark, but with exceptions permitted in Matthew)—and (most recently) as implying an ethical absolute of heterosexuality. Nothing, however, either in the text, its original context, or the canon of the Hebrew Bible supports such interpretations. Should the Genesis creation accounts be taken as providing absolute ethical norms the most obvious candidate would be the Sabbath rest (Gen 2:1-3), which became one of the Ten Commandments and has been received as an ethical norm in Judaism and by Christian Seventh Day Adventists. By similarly absolutizing other narrative elements we might also require that all humans marry (though Jeremiah, Jesus and Paul claimed divine sanction for singleness), procreate the maximum number of offspring, be vegetarian, nudist and monolingual (Countryman 2007:242-45). Therefore, biblical scholars commonly recognize that Genesis 1-2 should rather be understood as providing etiological stories (explaining why things *commonly* are the way they are). Had the original author's of the Hebrew Bible intended that Genesis 2:24 be understood as containing ethical absolutes establishing the institution of marriage as exclusive and permanent, they would not have included in their canon the provisions for divorce (Deut 24:1-4), levirate marriage (Deut 25:5-10), divine commands to divorce in Ezra 9 and Nehemiah 10, and all the legislation and stories regarding the concubines and multiple wives of their patriarchs and kings (→ Genesis; 1-2 Kings).

Nevertheless, many commentators have interpreted Paul's reference to "one flesh" in Genesis 2:24 as establishing for the church an ethical absolute of exclusivity in sexual relations. Thus B.N. Fisk argues that in 1 Cor 6:12-20: "Paul grounds his prohibition of sexual immorality [*porneia*] in three distinct but closely related arguments ...related respectively to Christ violation [vv. 15], body-violation [16-18] and Spirit violation [19-20]" (1996:557-58). Fisk affirms that 1 Cor 6:18: "declares sexual sin to be profoundly (and even uniquely) self-destructive...Sexual sin, as a bodily act...forges a bodily union...Other sins may be physically destructive (e.g. suicide, gluttony), corporately destructive (e.g. gossip, divisiveness), or spiritually defiling (e.g. idolatry) but for Paul, because sexual sin is uniquely body-joining, it is uniquely body-defiling" (1996:557-58; cited, Gagnon 2001:296). Moreover, as Thiselton explains, Paul perceived the sexual act "as one of intimacy and *self-commitment which involved the whole person*, not the mere manipulation of some 'peripheral' function of the body" and thus was far ahead of first-century cultural assumptions (2000:474, citing D.S. Bailey 1959:9-10). David Garland adds: "In the context, sex with a prostitute severs the union with Christ and sabotages its resurrection destiny" (2003:238).

However, although such comments may help us understand Paul's rhetoric, we should not confuse this with a scientific exegetical interpretation of "one flesh" in Genesis 2:24. Similarly, commentators recognize that the command in Deuteronomy not to "muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain" (25:4) originally only expressed only a humanitarian concern for animals, but Paul applies it analogically to the right of Christian workers to adequate material recompense (1 Cor 9:9-12; cf. 1 Tim 5:17-18). What is normative for the churches in such texts is the responsibility to adequately recompense their workers, but such rhetorical citations of texts should not be confused with modern scientific exegesis of the original author's meaning (Thiselton 2000:685-88; Garland 2003:409-14; *pantos* in BDAG 2000:755-56). Moreover, any attempt to make an ethical absolute of "exclusivity" out of Paul's warning to the Christian men in Corinth against seeking sex with idolatrous harlots is immediately contradicted by the granting the right to remarry to believers abandoned by idolatrous pagan spouses (1 Cor 7:15), as well as to the situations of slave-members who had to sexually service their owners, and to the Israelite provisions for levirate marriage, concubines and polygamy (see above).

Similarly, in the case of Jesus' citation of "one flesh" (Gen 2:24) in his teaching on divorce, his encouragement of permanence cannot be taken as an ethical absolute (as → Mark 10:9-12 might be misinterpreted), since Matthew's version provides for exceptions (19:9; with Paul providing another in 1 Cor 7:15 and the Hebrew Bible many more; see above). What is normative is the value of durable and permanent sexual relations, but we should not confuse our appreciation for this value with the original author's intention in referring to "one flesh" in Genesis 2:24 (Countryman argues that Jesus' use of Genesis 2:24 is closer to the original meaning regarding enduring kinship relations than is Paul's focus on the sex act; 2007:246-47). Important for modern efforts to identify normative elements in the Hebrew Bible is Jesus' reference to Deuteronomy's divorce provision as something given by Moses due to human hardness of heart (Mk 10:5; Mat 19:8). Thus the teaching in → 2 Timothy that all (Hebrew Bible) Scripture is of value (3:14-17) need not imply equal value, much less as establishing a basis for deriving ethical absolutes from each text (see also Rom 4:23-24; 15:4; 1 Cor 10:11).

**2 Diversity (Hospitality).** Methodist Kathy Rudy argues that, to avoid the sin of Sodom (inhospitality expressed in the attempted gang rape of visiting angels; Gen 19), the emphasis on one-flesh unity in marriage needs to be complemented with the Biblical teaching on hospitality: "If our sexual relations help us to open our hearts and our homes to lost travelers and needy strangers, they are good. And if they cause us to be aggressively territorial and abusive to outsiders, they are evil. Hospitality can be the new criterion by which we determine the morality of sexual acts. Rather than locating morality along lines of procreation, or along the lines of complementarity, we can now measure sexual morality by determining how well our sexual encounters help us welcome the stranger into our church and into our life with God. The original intent of ethical teachings about sexuality was to ensure that sex was pleasing to God by being open to new members joining the community of faith. Clearly this can be accomplished by hospitality as well as by birth" (1997:125-130; see Paul's effort to encourage loving and holy sexual relations as well as hospitality → Romans 13:8-14, 14:1-15:13, compared with his negative portrayal of abusive sex in 1:24-27).

**Note.** Significantly, in **Romans** Paul avoids use *porne-* vocabulary but his pejorative reference to "beds and excesses" in Rom 13:13b probably is equivalent. If so, this would indicate that his uses of *porne-* vocabulary in his earlier epistles were not intended to serve as a legal code-word to all the sexual practices condemned in Leviticus 18 and 20 (*pace* Gagnon). Rather the sexual "beds and excesses" (13b) like the preceding banquets and drunken bouts (13:13a) are typical sins of the wealthy oppressors (see the wealthy Christians feasting, drunk, and neglecting the poor in the Eucharists; 1 Cor 11:20-22). Paul's substitution of "beds and excesses" for *porne-* vocabulary in Romans may signify his realization of problems of legalistic misinterpretation of *porneia* and his determination to preserve freedom from the Law (Rom 7:6).

Rudy clarifies: "When I recommend hospitality, I do not mean that strangers need to be welcomed through sex itself," giving examples from Catholic Worker shelters and Robert Goss' ministry to marginalized groups (1997:126-27). She continues: "Unitivity and hospitality...are ways of talking about human life in a frame that is bigger than the individuated subject. Unitivity and hospitality provide us with a moral method that begins with the whole, with community, with collectivity, with the body of Christ, and makes individuals only out of that material....The command to be hospitable can be seen as a part of the great commission to tell the world the good news of Christ....With hospitality, we have no way of condemning homosexuality because the very notion of same or different sex would fall away in favor of our common identification of Christian. Moreover, there will be no way to condemn what I have described as communal sex, for all of us as Christians would understand that sexuality that is hospitable—whether it is monogamous or communal—is good. Indeed, gay male and radical sex communities might even serve as models for explicitly Christian 'experiments' in communal living and communal sex" (1997:127-128).

Similarly, Dale Martin says regarding 1 Cor 6:12-20: "The way Paul deals with *porneia* is soaked in the logic of pollution and invasion. This is sexual immorality that involves a member of the church and an outsider [pagan idolatrous]....The logic of invasion...applies to sexual intercourse only when one partner is outside the body of Christ. When two Christians commit fornication, there seems to be little danger that the body of Christ is implicated in copulation with the world. Copulation that crosses the boundary of the body of Christ, on the other hand, implicates Christ's body in coitus with the cosmos and makes the entire body dangerously susceptible to pollution and dissolution" (1995:179)

**Klawans, Jonathan (2004). "Concepts of Purity in the Bible."**

**The Jewish Study Bible. New York: Oxford, 2041-47:**

**Biblical Impurities**

Type	Source	Effect	Resolution
Ritual	Bodily flows, corpses, etc.	Temporary, contagious defilement of persons and objects	Bathing, waiting
Moral	Sins: idolatry, sexual transgression, bloodshed	Long-lasting defilement of sinners, land, and sanctuary	Atonement or punishment and ultimately, exile

“Both Ezra and Nehemiah urged the dissolution of these marriages [with local non-Jewish women] (Ezra 9:1-10:44; Neh. 13:23-31). It is rather clear that purity in some form was at issue. Terms of defilement are used with reference to the problem (Ezra 6:21; 9:1, 11-14), and the proposed solution—divorce—is referred to as a purification (Neh. 13:30)...The foreign women are in an inherent state of moral defilement [idolatry!] and that inevitably the defilement will be passed to their progeny as well” (2004:2047; see below Paul on the analogous holiness to be passed to the progeny of a single Christian parent of either sex; 1 Cor 7:14, a text often cited in defense of infant baptism; ¿holiness of child = ritual, doesn’t contaminate; or = salvation?)..

**Rom 1:24** Wherefore God gave them up in the desires/covetings of their hearts to **uncleanness/impurity** (*akatharsía*) to be dishonored their **bodies** among themselves

**Note. “Uncleanness” (Rom 1:24).** William Countryman first emphasized that in **1:24** Paul categorizes the sexual practices of 1:24, 26-27, not as “sin” (a term occurring only later—2:12 and 3:9), but as *akatharsía* (“**uncleanness, impurity**”), (1988:117; 2003:110-116; see Daniel Helminiak 2000:93-94; 2003:161-163). Countryman later maintained and strengthened his original basic position: “The language [in 1:24] is certainly pejorative; and yet it stops short of actually saying that this aspect of Gentile culture is intrinsically sinful or deserving of God’s wrath. In Paul’s laying of his rhetorical trap (Rom 1:18-32) he says, rather, that “God has ‘handed over’ the Gentiles to their disgusting culture as punishment for another sin, idolatry” (2003:174).

**6:19** Just as you used to offer your body members as slaves to **uncleanness/impurity** (*akatharsía*) and to ever-increasing lawlessness (*anomía...anomían*), so now present your body members as slaves to justice and sanctification

**14:14** I know and have been persuaded by the Lord Jesus that nothing is **common/unclean** (*koinón*) in itself, but if anyone regards something as **common/unclean** (*koinón*), then for him it is **common/unclean** (*koinón*).

**14:20** All things indeed are **clean/pure** (*kathará*) but evil for a man/person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble

Jewett points out that here Paul uses the term “clean” for “the only time in the Pauline corpus “[discounting Titus 1:15 as deuteropauline], probably echoing the language found in Luke 11:41... and Mark 7:19...that was current in oral tradition in Rome” and that Paul elsewhere spoke of all things being “allowed” (1 Cor 6:12 and 10:23), “which probably reflected his own teaching of freedom from the law” (2007:866-67)

**Luke 11:41** So give for alms those things that are within; and see, everything will be **clean** for you. (NRSV).

**Mark 7:19c** (Thus he [Jesus] declared all foods **clean**.). NRSV note: “This additional clarification by the narrator touches one of the most controversial issues in early Christianity, eating practices (see Acts 10:9-16; 15:19-20; Gal 2:11-13).” Thus commonly interpreted as Mark’s comment added to Jesus’ teaching in 7:1-19b See the food prohibitions in Lev 11:1-47 and Deut 14:3-21, which are made invalid for Christians by the teaching of Jesus, Paul, Peter and the Apostolic Decree in Acts.

**Titus 1:15** All things are **clean/pure** to the **clean/pure**; but to the ones having been **defiled** and unfaithful nothing is **pure/clean**, but both their mind and conscience have been **defiled**

Jewett reminds us that “instruction about purity/impurity comprised a fundamental part of [Paul’s] instruction of converts” (2007:168). Hannah Harrington (2006:687) points out that uncleanness/impurity is commonly linked with *porneia* (she cites 3x in Paul: 1 Thes 4:7; Gal 5:19; 2 Cor 12:21 + uncleanness/impurity with dishonored “bodies” in Rom 1:24); cf **Rev. 17:4**, the harlot (Rome), “**the unclean things of her *porneia*...**”

**1 Thes 2:3** Our exhortation does not spring from error, nor from **uncleanness/impurity**, nor from guile....

**4:7** For God did not call us to **uncleanness/impurity** but to live a holy life.

(Given previous oral instruction; 4:2, 6), “For this is God’s will: your sanctification: that you abstain from *porneia* (prostitution/sexual immorality); that each of you should learn how to control his own vessel/body in sanctification an honor, not in covetous passion like the pagans, who do not know God; that no one wrong or defraud a brother in this matter....” (4:3-6)

**Gal 5:19** Now manifest/obvious are the works of the flesh/sinful nature, which are *porneia*, [prostitution/sexual immorality] **uncleanness/impurity, excesses**, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, angers, rivalries, divisions, sects, envyings, drunken feasts, and the like

**2 Cor 12:21** “...I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the **uncleanness/ impurity** and *porneia* [prostitution/sexual immorality] and **excesses** which they practiced.”

However, cf **2 Cor 6:17** (citing Isa 52:11) Wherefore, come out from the midst of them [Babylonian empire] and be separated, says the Lord, and touch not an **unclean thing** (*akathártou*.” No reference to *porneia*; the context contrasts lawlessness and liberating justice (14), God’s temple and idols (16).

Nevertheless, the link between uncleanness/impurity with *porneia* continues in the **deuteropaulines**:

**Col 3:5** Put to death, therefore, your members on earth: *porneia, impurity/uncleanness*, passion, evil desire, and **covetousness**, which is idolatry

**Eph 4:19** The nations/Gentiles “having ceased to care, gave themselves over to **excess** in order to work **impurity/uncleanness** in every kind of **covetousness/greed**.”

**5:3, 5** But, as is fitting for holy ones/saints, do not even allow to be named among you *porneia* and every kind of **impurity/uncleanness** or **covetousness/greed**....and know this, that any  *pornos* or **unclean/impure** person, or **greedy/covetous**, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God

See also 3x in **Acts at the Jerusalem Council: Acts 15:20; 15:29; 21:25**: “abstain from idol sacrifices and blood and a thing strangled and *porneia*” (on Acts, see below).

Uncleanness/impurity (*akatharsía*); unclean/impure (*akáthartos*)

Mat 23:27 **whitewashed graves** “**but within full of dead persons’ bones and all uncleanness**”

+ Mat 2x Unclean Spirits

Unclean/impure (*akáthartos*)

Unclean Spirits: Mk 11x; Lk 6x; Acts 2x; Mat 2x Unclean Spirits (total 21x + Rev 2x)

Rev 16:13 three unclean spirits

18:2 “spirit unclean and bird unclean”

17:4, **the harlot (Rome)**, “the unclean things of her *porneia*....”

Acts 10:14 Peter: “**Not at all, Lord, because never did I eat anything** common (*koinón*) and unclean.”

28 Peter: “**God showed me not to call anyone** common (*koinón*) or unclean”

11:8 Peter: “**Not at all, Lord, because a common** (*koinón*) or unclean thing **never entered my mouth.**”

1 Cor 7:14 “**For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife...since otherwise your children would be** “unclean (*akathartá*)” [ritually impure/unsaved?] **but as it is, they are holy**” [saved?].

2 Cor 6:17 “**Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord, and do not touch an unclean thing** (*akathártou*)

**Koite bed** (BDAG 2000:554; NT 4x: literal 1x; marriage/sexual 3x; cf + 2x *arsenokoitai*)

**Lk 11:7** literal “my children are with me in **bed**” (can’t get up to help friend at midnight)

**Rom 13:13** Beds (*koitais*), figurative for sexual relations/intercourse

9:10 “sexual emission” (“from one bed” = conceive children by one man = one sexual emission)

**Heb 13:4** Marriage-bed, “Let marriage be honorable in all (by anyone) and the **bed** undefiled (*amíantos*).”

See **1 Cor 6:9** and **1 Tim 1:10** “male-beds/bed-males” *arsenokoitai* (*Subversive Gospel; El Evangelio Subversivo; Biblia y prejuicios: 40 mitos*, 2011:40-55)

**Asélgeia** excess “lack of self-constraint which involves one in conduct that violates all bounds of what is socially acceptable, *self-abandonment*” (BDAG 2000:141; 10x NT; sexual excesses 7x: Rom 13;13; Eph 4:19; 2 Cor 12:21; Gal 5:19; Mk 7:22; 2 Pet 2:7, 18; non-sexual 1 Pet 4:3; 2 Pet 2:2; Jude 4).

**Rom 13:13** Excesses (*aselgeias*) (“beds” with *aselgeai* = “sexual excesses” (BDAG 2000:554;

**Gal 5:19** Now manifest/obvious are the works of the flesh/sinful nature, which are *porneia*, [prostitution/sexual immorality] **uncleanness/impurity**, **excesses**, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, angers, rivalries, divisions, sects, envyings, drunken feasts, and the like

**2 Cor 12:21** “...I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the **uncleanness/ impurity** and *porneia* [prostitution/sexual immorality] and **excesses** which they practiced.”

**Eph 4:19** The nations/Gentiles “having ceased to care, gave themselves over to **excess** in order to work **impurity/uncleanness** in every kind of **covetousness/greed**.”

How would Paul understand “excess” in the sexual sphere? In → 1 Cor 7:1-7 he recognizes that it will be a relative matter, dependent on the sexual needs and desires of each person in a marriage relationship and thus involve mutual consent for times of abstention (David Garland 2003:258-63; Anthony Thistleton 2006:100-104). In → 1 Thes 4:3-8 (Victor Paul Furnish 2007:87-93) the Apostle makes clear that Christians should exercise self-control over the body (“vessel”) and avoid coveting that would lead to harming and/or defrauding a brother (/sister?), as in adultery (similarly in → Rom 13:8-10, also linking coveting to adultery and avoiding harm; Arland Hultgren 2011:480-86).

**Mark 7:21-22** (// Mt 15:19) “from the human heart evil thought/intentions come forth, **prostitutions/sexual immoralities** (*porneiai*) ...adulteries, covetings...**excess/lewdness** (*aselgeia*)”

**1 Peter 4:3** “For you have spent enough time in the past doing what the pagan nations choose to do—living in **excesses** (*aselgeiais*), covetings, drunken feasts, drinking bouts and detestable idolatries.” See 4:2, “covetings.”

**Jude 4** “For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you, impious/godless men, who change the grace of our God into a pretext for **excess/lewdness/wantonness/insolence** (*aselgeian*) and denying our only master and Lord, Jesus Christ.” See Jude 7, Sodom and Gomorrah “**committing prostitution/sexual immorality** (*ekpornéusasai*).”

**2 Peter 2:2** “Many will follow the **excesses/licentious tracks** (*aselgeiais*) of them (false prophets/teachers of 2:1), because of whom the way of the truth will be blasphemed” (see **excesses, aselgeiais** in **2:7, 18**):

**2:7** “And God rescued just Lot, oppressed by the **excess/indecent** (*aselgeia*) conduct of the lawless.”

**2:18** “For speaking immoderate, vain words, by covetings of the flesh in **excesses/licentious desires** (*aselgeiais*) they allure persons who are just escaping from those who live in error.”

## Conclusions

1 The best guide to the interpretation of Paul's sexual terminology is the Bible itself, especially the seven unquestioned Pauline letters, other NT writings, and the First Testament both in Hebrew and the LXX (which Paul cites more frequently than the MT).

2 Also relevant are Paul's contemporary Jewish compatriots, such as Philo and Josephus: However, since Philo lived in Alexandria and Josephus in Rome, while Paul was born in Tarsus, educated in Jerusalem, and called to minister to non-Jewish believers throughout the Roman empire, recent scholarship warns against simplistic equations of Paul's linguistic usage with contemporaries writing in such different contexts. Also recent Jewish scholarship emphasizes the great *diversity* evident in the "Judaisms" of the time (in the NT see the Pharisees, Saducees, Jesus-followers, etc.). Similar diversity is evident in the NT patristic writings and even within the unquestioned Pauline letters. Even within Romans, the differences between the more legal-judicial language and images of Romans 1-4 ("justification") and the metaphysical spiritual categories and transformations in Romans 5-16 is increasingly stressed (Douglas Campbell).

3 As in any culture and language, in treating sexual matters the recourse to euphemisms is common and this is true in Paul ("beds, male-beds, uncleanness, *porneia* = prostitution/incest!"), which makes academic theological efforts to abstract from ambiguous general terms any coherent systematic legal/ethical system exceedingly hypothetical and questionable. Undoubtedly for many of Paul's original audiences such ambiguity was reduced by their recourse to previous oral instruction (1 Thes 4), but the Apostle's zeal to encourage their liberation from the Law may indicate that his oral instructions also avoided any construction of a legalistic system of "ethics" (see his preference for a praxis referred to as a "walk" guided by the Spirit). Careful study of 1 Corinthians 5-7 (in continuity with Song of Songs!), undoubtedly is our best hermeneutical guide to the subtleties and complexities of Paul's teaching on sexual questions. Numerous texts make clear that for Paul such basic concerns as love for God and neighbor, wisdom, avoiding harm to the neighbor and community of believers and encouraging liberating justice for the weak and oppressed, are safer guides than academic word studies.

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