

1 Corinthians 6:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

Analysis

But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. The contrast to verse 16: *ho de kollamenos tō kyriō hen pneuma estin* (ο δὲ κολλώμενος τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν πνεῦμα ἔστιν). *Kollaō* (κολλάω) again—'joined, united'—but now to **the Lord** (tō kyriō), resulting in **one spirit** (hen pneuma, ἐν πνεῦμα). While sexual union creates one-flesh entity, union with Christ creates one-spirit entity.

This doesn't disparage bodies (Paul just emphasized their importance!) but highlights the spiritual dimension of salvation: the Holy Spirit unites believers to Christ (Romans 8:9-11). Pneuma here is likely the shared Spirit—Christ's Spirit indwelling believers (Galatians 2:20). Paul's argument: you can't be one-spirit with Christ and one-flesh with a prostitute simultaneously. Competing unions fracture identity. Loyalty to Christ requires sexual fidelity.

Historical Context

Mystical union language permeates Paul (Galatians 2:20, Philippians 1:21, Colossians 3:3). This isn't abstract doctrine but lived reality: the Spirit's presence reorients desires, identity, ethics. Corinthians pursued pneumatic experiences (tongues, prophecy) while tolerating porneia—Paul says: the Spirit who unites you to Christ demands holiness, not just charismatic manifestations. True spirituality is cruciform, not just ecstatic. Union with Christ reshapes sexuality, finances (vv. 1-8), and all behavior.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does being 'one spirit' with Christ inform your identity more fundamentally than any other relationship or experience?
2. What competing 'unions' or loyalties (addictions, relationships, ambitions) fracture your singular devotion to Christ?
3. How can you cultivate awareness of the Spirit's indwelling presence as motivation for sexual purity?

Interlinear Text

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|-------|------------|--------------------------|-------|----------------------|------------|---------------|-----------|
| ο | δὲ | κολλώμενος | τῷ | κυρίῳ | ἐν | πνεῦμα | ἐστιν |
| G3588 | But | he that is joined | G3588 | unto the Lord | one | spirit | is |
| G1161 | | G2853 | | G2962 | G1520 | G4151 | G2076 |

Additional Cross-References

Galatians 2:20 (Parallel theme): I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

1 Corinthians 12:13 (Spirit): For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

John 3:6 (Spirit): That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Ephesians 5:30 (Parallel theme): For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Philippians 2:5 (Parallel theme): Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

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