

# HONORING GOD WITH OUR BODIES

GOD'S GRACE FOR AN IMPERFECT CHURCH: A STUDY OF 1 CORINTHIANS · 1 CORINTHIANS 6:12-20 · MAY 26, 2024 · GREG MARSHALL

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<sup>12</sup> "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything. <sup>13</sup> You say, "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both." The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. <sup>14</sup> By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. <sup>15</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." <sup>17</sup> But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit. <sup>18</sup> Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. <sup>19</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; <sup>20</sup> you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies." (1 Corinthians 6:12-20)

**God cares about the relationship you have with your body. All spiritual growth happens in our bodies.**

**It is possible to have desires, preferences, and appetites that are not beneficial.**

- They are not beneficial when they create separateness in us and our relationship with God and others.
- They are not beneficial when we need to orient our lives around them.

**Our bodies are not appetite machines. Our bodies are central to the plan of redemption.**

**Paul taught that sex is a sacred intimacy that is good and designed to be experienced in a covenantal relationship. At the same time, Paul taught that humans can flourish without sex.**

**Sex in its intended context facilitates intimacy and oneness that reveals a mystery about Christ and the Church. Outside of its intended context, sex creates separateness that hinders flourishing and creates damage.**

**Our bodies are literally part of the body of Christ. Our bodies are sacred.**

**The sacred oneness realized in sex is a sign of the oneness that is available to all people in Christ.**

**We flee sexual immorality to move toward true intimacy with God and others.**

**God created our bodies intentionally. He intends that we are intentional with how we share them. He indwells us in these bodies.**

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean that "All spiritual growth happens in our bodies?" What role do our bodies play in spiritual growth?
2. Have you ever had a desire, preference, or appetite that was not beneficial? How did you know it wasn't beneficial?
3. Christianity has a very high view of sex. It was created by God and is considered good in the context it was designed for. How were you raised to think about sex? Was it seen as a shameful thing, or an ordinary appetite to be satisfied, or sacred?
4. Your body is literally a part of Christ's body. What are the implications of that truth?
5. The sacred oneness realized in sex is a sign of the oneness that is available to all people in Christ. In what ways do we experience oneness with Christ in this life? How do you imagine oneness with the Trinity in eternity?
6. Surrendering our lives to the love of God includes offering our bodies as living sacrifices (Romans 12). In what ways do we offer our bodies as living sacrifices each day?

## DIG DEEPER

This week dig deeper in one or more of the following ways:

- Read the book of Philippians and notice all the ways Paul's letter calls us to be present to God and others with our bodies.
- Practice asking God these questions (and then listen): God, what do you want me to know about how I relate to my body? What does it look like for me to love you and know you more in my body?