

## **Abide**

The Disciple's Body

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## **The Disciple's Body 1 Corinthians 6:12-20**

If you have a Bible and I hope you do, I want to invite you to open with me to 1 Corinthians 6, and we are going to dive in this morning to a picture of the disciple's body. The greatest temptation we will face today when we come to this text is to think that this text is addressing someone else when it is addressing us. So keep that in mind as we begin to think about the disciple's body.

We are in the process now of trying to teach our son all the different parts of the body. How do you know where the ears are? Caleb, where are your ears? Your eyes? Your nose? Your mouth, hands, feet? Why do we have a nose? Why do we have ears? Why do we have hands and why do we have feet? I mean really think about it. Dive deep with me here for a second. Why do we have the parts of the body that we have?

The prevailing philosophy in our day is that we are simply products of our DNA. This is the way we are made up. Each of us is given a body and we do whatever we want with our body. That is the mantra of our day. We do whatever pleases us most. You look at the hot button issues in our culture, in our society right now and many of them revolve around that kind of philosophy.

When you look at discussions about the institution of marriage, homosexuality... You look at issues like free speech and pornography. You look at issues that are out there – many of them deal with the body and many of them are dominated by this philosophy that each of us has a body for us to do with it whatever we desire, and this philosophy is alive and well in the church. And the question I want to ask this morning is what if it's just not true?

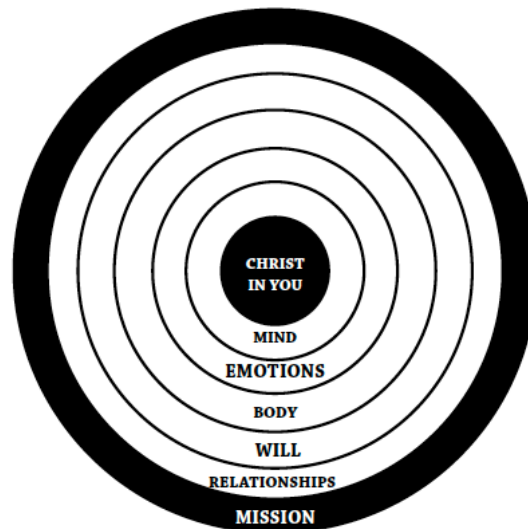
First of all, what if our bodies are not just products of our DNA and it's just the way we are? And maybe even deeper, what if our bodies are not ours to do with whatever we want? What if they actually don't belong to us at all? Now we're diving deep into a pretty countercultural thought. The idea that maybe my body is not even my own.

## **The Foundational Truth...**

That leads us into the deep end of the foundational truth of the heart of 1 Corinthians 6 that I want us to kind of get out on the table from the very beginning. As a follower of Jesus Christ, your body is not your property. Now that seems weird, unusual to us in our culture. A body is not my property and I think that I can make a pretty good contention that even if you're not a follower of Jesus Christ your body is still not your property. But we're just going to dive into this picture. As a follower of Jesus Christ, your body is not your property.

And what I want us to begin to think about this morning is how Christ does something very countercultural in absolutely changing our bodies. When you look in the concentric circles

right there, and we see Christ in us, those of us who are followers of Christ have the Holy Spirit in us. Christ in us. We've seen that. It affects the way we think. It affects the way we feel, what we desire as we saw last week, it affects our bodies. Mind, emotions and body. Christ is intended to transform our bodies.



And really what we see in the New Testament is that our bodies are a very significant part – at the core of our spiritual lives. Now that sounds kind of weird to many of us. We're not used to thinking of our bodies in terms of our spirituality. This is one of those areas where we have a tendency to relegate faith to the spiritual realm over here and then the physical realm is over here, somewhat disconnected from the spiritual realm. But I've just got to believe in reading the New Testament that somewhere along the way, that Christ is not intended to be left over here to the spiritual realm and have no effect on the physical realm.

I think one of the reasons we distinguish between these two and we don't talk a lot about what it means to have Christ in my body and for Christ to fill my body and Christ to use my body – we don't talk about that a lot because a lot of times we see the body as a barrier to spiritual growth, in some ways the primary barrier to spiritual growth. When we think about our bodies we know we all have natural inclinations that are inside of us that cause us to do things. We do things that we know don't honor God. We have desires in us, in our bodies, if we're really honest, that we know don't honor God. We look at things. We listen to things that we know don't honor God. We touch things. We sense things. We engage in things that we know don't honor God so we think of the body as this picture of evil.

And it's not helpful when we go to Romans 7, and we see schizophrenic Paul there saying,

*"I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do...it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. I know that nothing good lives in me"—Paul says—  
"...that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out...if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it" (Rom. 7:15-20).*

He comes to the end and says, *"In my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members" (Rom. 7:22-23).* Then

he says, "What a wretched man I am," and we're just wretched for having read through this and thinking through this. *"What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this"* (Rom. 7:24)—what? *"...body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord"* (Rom. 7:24-25). Apparently, Christ came not just to save our mind, to save our emotions but He came to rescue our bodies and literally to transform our bodies.

So how do we glorify Christ with what we do with our bodies? How do you glorify Christ with the way you dress your body or the way you carry your body or the way you care for your body or the way you use your body? That's what I want us to dive into.

It's so important here in 1 Corinthians to realize these were people who had distinguished the two. They saw faith in the spiritual realm over here and they thought it really didn't matter what you did with your body. And they lived in a city, Corinth, that was known for rampant immorality, particularly, sexual immorality.

In the city of Corinth, in the middle, there was a temple to Aphrodite, the goddess of love. And there were over a thousand temple prostitutes that people would go to regularly. Even people in the church were going to regularly. And they had relegated this to the physical realm and they had the spiritual realm over here and they hadn't connected the two. As a result Paul addresses that in this chapter and he specifically addresses sexual sin which we're going to dive into and talk about some but it really deals with the body as a whole. This is one of the most important passages, significant theological passages in all the New Testament about how Christ transforms our body. So let's come in on what Paul says to them and then consider what this might mean for us.

Verse 12 of 1 Corinthians 6:

*'Everything is permissible for me'—but not everything is beneficial. 'Everything is permissible for me'—but I will not be mastered by anything. 'Food for the stomach and the stomach for food'—but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. 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! 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.' But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.*

*Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body (1 Cor. 6:12-20).*

## **The Body That Belongs To Christ...**

What I want us to see here, as we are surrounded by a culture that fills our minds, telling us over and over again, do whatever you want to do to please your body. We need to fill our minds with some truths about our body. Not about what it means to please our bodies but what it means to please God with our bodies. So I want you to see these truths that must

be the foundation of our faith that affect the way we live out in the body. What does it mean for your body to belong to Christ?

### **Your body was created by God.**

Well, first of all it means your body was created by God. Your body was created by God. Now this is the crux of the picture and it's in verse 13 and we'll come back to verse 12 in just a minute but Paul uses a phrase here that was common among these Corinthians, especially the Corinthian Christians. "*Food for the stomach and the stomach for food*" (1 Cor. 6:13).

In other words, what they were saying is, "Well, my stomach was made for food and food was made for my stomach," so automatically you put them together and there's no problem there. And the implication was that's how they also looked at sexuality. "Well, my body was made for sex and sex was made for the body so they go together." This is the way things work. Paul says, "On the contrary, the body is not meant for sexual immorality."

But here's the phrase that is so key, "The body is meant for the Lord and the Lord for the body." You might underline that. That is the key phrase. The body is meant "for the Lord and the Lord for the body." Two pictures there.

The first and it's a pretty heavy truth – our bodies are meant for the Lord but what's really interesting is the second part of that phrase – the Lord is for the body. What is that about? What does that mean?

It's at this point we go, at least in our minds, we won't turn there this morning, but back to where we've turned these last couple of weeks where all this picture started way back in Genesis 1 and 2, when God created man in Genesis 1 and 2. It talks about how God gave man bodies and gave them responsibility to use their bodies to accomplish. And the picture is, God saw what He had made in man, and He said it was what? He didn't say it was good. He said it was very good. Everything else in the world was good. Our bodies – He says, "When I created man it was very good." God intended the body for good. He created the body to be good. God apparently designed the body for a reason. Much like we talked about with our emotions and our desires last week, He designed the body so that we would look to Him for everything that we need in the body. For our provisions for our body. He created us this way. Here's the deal, let me just remind you, you had very little to do with how you were created.

You had very little to do with the development of your body. When you came into the world you had no idea what to do with your body, how to care for your body. And there may be a day in the future when you'll have no idea what to do with your body, or how to care for your body. This is the picture we have.

Let's admit it. There's really not anything significant when it deals with our bodies that is really due to us. We were created by God. By His design. With the bodies we have. This is foundational because that second point there that I want you to think about with me is so key.

We're created by God and that means our bodies are invaluable to Him. Invaluable to Him. He created us. We are fearfully and wonderfully made, right? Psalm 139? He formed our inmost being. He made us who we are and our bodies are invaluable to Him. Now that was so key back here in 1 Corinthians 6 because these guys thought, much like I'd mentioned earlier, I've got my faith over here in the spiritual realm, but God doesn't really care that much about the physical realm. And if anything, he's indifferent to what I do with my body.

What He cares about is my soul – my relationship with Christ. And they needed a corrective here. They needed to realize that God was very concerned about their bodies. And God is very concerned about what we do in the physical realm. That's the picture we've got here. Our bodies are invaluable to Him.

And this picture in 1 Corinthians 6 is a dangerous tendency for us today too. To think that I can grow in the spiritual realm, but I can do things over here in the physical realm that don't matter as much. As soon as we step down that road, we are on a subtle path that leads towards compartmentalization, where we have this going on in our relationship with God but we're indulging in this physically over here and one justifies the other. That is a dangerous road to walk and some of us are there.

We, in our sinful nature, can convince ourselves that everything is okay in our relationship with God over here and our lives over here or our ministries over here, while we give ourselves physically to this over here that does not honor God. And you can't distinguish between the two. They go together. God is very concerned about your body. And this is the beauty of 1 Corinthians 6. Your body is precious to God; therefore honor God with your body. Your body is precious to God, a valuable treasure.

Not only are our bodies invaluable to Him, but He has made an eternal investment in our bodies. Listen to verse 14, "*By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also*" (1 Cor. 6:14). Now picture here what these Corinthians thought, "Well, my soul is ok. It doesn't matter about my body." God says, "Well, it mattered for Jesus' body." He didn't just have a soul raised from the dead. He was raised bodily. This is the whole point.

Go over to 1 Corinthians 15 with me. Look at 1 Corinthians 15 at the end. We'll read in verse 51 for a second. While you're turning there, get the picture here. A people that were concerned about how their souls were, where their souls would go but not concerned about where their bodies were. What would happen to their bodies, distinguishing between the two? Do you think we fall into that trap today? Do you think that it's possible for us to create a Christianity where we believe our souls are sealed for eternity in heaven but we live in our bodies here like we're going to enjoy all the pleasures this world has to offer? Do you think it's possible for us to live in our bodies here knowing everything's ok because our soul's forgiven and in heaven and we can live our life however we want to here? This is a brand of Christianity that's so rampant in the church today and it is a horrible, unbiblical brand of Christianity that says I can do whatever I want in my body here because I know my soul's guaranteed in heaven. It misses the whole point of Christianity.

Paul comes to 1 Corinthians 15. He's talking about the resurrection of the body. He talks about how Jesus was raised from the dead. Then he talks about how if Jesus wasn't raised from the dead, then our lives would be pitied. Paul literally says in the middle of this chapter, I die every day. I'm giving my life, my body to being beaten, it's being tortured, it's being this or that. It's happening to me. If I'm doing all this and I'm not going to have a resurrected body one day then I've missed the whole point and I'm to be pitied among men.

But he says that's not the case. God did not just come to resurrect, to save my soul, to redeem my soul. He came to redeem my body. Look in verse 51. First Corinthians 15:51,

*Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with*

*immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: 'Death has been swallowed up in victory.' 'Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:51-57).*

Isn't that a great text? Death has no victory. Sin in our bodies has no sting because that which is perishable here is going to be raised up imperishable.

The picture here, 1 Corinthians 6:14, 1 Corinthians 15, is the fact that God in His power raised Jesus Christ from the dead and that same power is going to raise our bodies. And we are going to reign with Him, bodily reign with Him. That's the picture. Now we don't have time to get into a discussion in 1 Corinthians 15. What's my resurrected body going to look like? Is it going to be different? Is it going to be the same? We won't dive into that but let's realize God has made an eternal investment in your body.

Now think about this. With this origin, your body, handcrafted by the creator God of the universe. And this destiny, Him making an eternal investment in your body, destined to reign with Christ, then why would we not want to give our bodies, right here, right now, to the Lord? The body is for the Lord and the Lord is for the body. That's the picture here. Our bodies have been created by God.

Now I want to pause here for a minute because we're about to jump into a picture of sexual sin and bodily sin in 1 Corinthians 6. We're going to see how serious that sin is. Before we get there, I just want to pause and say this. I'm keenly aware that there are people this morning who have dishonored God greatly with your bodies in the past. And by "past" it could mean years ago or by "past" it could mean days or hours ago. Finding yourselves indulging in things that do not honor God with your bodies. And I know that there's a weight there, as well as there should be, as we're going to see. And I know that there are probably also many people, who have had someone else dishonor their bodies. And I just want to remind you before we go any further, I want to remind you that no matter what you have done to dishonor God with your body or no matter what has been done to you to dishonor your body, you have a God who says your body is very valuable to Him. And He has made an eternal investment in your body and no matter how dirty the adversary makes you feel, I want you to know that when you recognize your body belongs to Christ, no matter how dirty the adversary makes you feel, there is coming a day when He will raise your body spotless.

And on a similar note, I know there are many people in this faith family to whom the adversary is saying, "All hope for your body is gone, because of this cancer or that disease or that illness or all the hurts that are there." And if that's the case, I want to remind you that God has promised, your body is very valuable to Him and He will raise it up completely whole one day. Completely whole. Your body is created by God. It is precious to God. There is an eternal investment in your body, therefore honor God with it.

So that's the root of this thing. Your body is for the Lord and the Lord is for your body.

### **Your body was purchased by Christ.**

Now based on that we go to this second truth. And here's why I can say the things I just said with complete confidence. Because your body is not only created by God, your body was purchased by Christ. Your body was purchased by Christ. Come back to 1 Corinthians 6 and he says this just literally, "*You are not your own*" (1 Cor. 6:19). Verse 20, "*You were*

*bought at a price"* (1 Cor. 6:20). Christ bought you at a price. And then he says back up at verse 15, *"Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself"* (1 Cor. 6:15)?

Now this is a great picture. Our bodies are members of Christ Himself. Well, let's break down this picture. Christ has united us with Himself. That's the picture that he's given us here in 1 Corinthians 6:15. Christ, He has united each of us in our bodies when we trust in Christ, He has united us with Himself. Now, this goes all the way back to the very essence of who Christ is. The whole picture of Christianity revolves around the incarnation, which is what? God in a what? God in a body. God revealing Himself in flesh. God in human flesh.

So, here's the picture of how Christ unites us to Himself. First of all, Christ took on a body like us. He took on a body like us. He took on a robe of human flesh like us. He revealed God Himself in the body. That's a great picture of the incarnation as an incredible picture of the fact that we know that the body is intended for good, it is valued by God. It's the way God came to us, in a body. So, Christ took on a body like us.

Second, Christ gave His body for us. For us. You were bought at a price. There was no sin in His body. None. No sin in His body. Not one member of His body had He given over one time to anything that dishonored God, His Father. Not one thing. No sin in His body, and yet He took upon His body the weight of all of our sin on a cross. This is why 1 Peter 1:18-19 reminds God's people, "Don't forget, you were not redeemed with perishable things, like silver or gold. You were redeemed, you were purchased, by the precious blood of Jesus Christ." That is a bodily picture of Him taking the weight of our sin from our bodies upon Himself. He gave His body for us.

So, Christ took on a body like us. He gave His body for us. Then, we just saw in 1 Corinthians 15, He arose from the grave, He ascended into heaven and Christ now displays His body through us. This is the point of 1 Corinthians 6:15. Christ now displays His body through us. Christ is revealing His body through us.

You don't see Christ physically, right now. Instead you see His hands and His feet, His eyes, His ears, His smiles through the hearts of His people. This is the picture of Christ in you. Christ in me affecting our bodies. Christ is displaying His body through us. That's what he means. Your body is literally united as a member of Christ. Christ in your body. And based on that he says, *"Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute"* (1 Cor. 6:15)?

To take the body of Jesus Christ and unite it in something like prostitution. He says, "No, never. This is unthinkable that you would ever give your life, give your body in relationship to someone else that is outside of God's design for your body. You are uniting the very nature, the person of Jesus Christ, you are indulging Christ in your sin." He says, "You would never do that." This truth is huge. We radically need a reexamination of what it means for Christ to be in our bodies and we will realize the devastating nature of sin like this. And in a culture where we are surrounded every single day by sexual temptation we need to remember that we carry around the body of Jesus Christ. And it is to be guarded with everything we have.

"Shall you unite Christ with the very thing," Paul says, "He died to save you from?" He died to set you free from that. "What do you mean set you free?" And here's where we really get into where Paul, back up in verse 12, he quotes from the Corinthians. "What do you mean Christ sets us free?" He says, *"Everything is permissible for me"* (1 Cor. 6:12). He says it twice. He says it two other times in this same book. *"Everything is permissible for me'—but*

*not everything is beneficial. 'Everything is permissible for me'—but I will not be mastered by anything" (1 Cor. 6:12).*

You see this phrase, "Everything is permissible for me." This is an extremely common phrase at this point for people at Corinth. Well, everything's ok for me to do. I'm free. This is actually something that Paul teaches at other points in the New Testament. In Christ you are free. The problem is they had taken that truth and so warped it to think that, "Well, because I'm free I'm free to do whatever I want. Everything is permissible." And Paul says, "Let's rethink this phrase." "*Everything is permissible for me'—but not everything is beneficial*" (1 Cor. 6:12). He says, "Don't ask if you have the right to do something. Ask if it's a benefit." Literally, "Is this of advantage?"

In 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians Paul uses this word "beneficial" and usually it's used to refer not only is a benefit to us but the emphasis is more on a benefit to others. Is what I'm going to do with my body a benefit for me but more importantly is it a benefit for others? That's what he says.

What we're seeing here is that Christ has died to set us free. He's died to set us free from these things. First of all, bodily sin that harms so deeply. The picture here is sexual sin very specifically in 1 Corinthians 6. And it's referred to as bodily sin because I want us to think about sexual sin as he's thinking about it but I want us to also broaden this. This is more than just sexual sin when it comes to the disciple's body. But He died to set us free from bodily sin that harms so deeply.

These Corinthian Christians were uniting themselves with prostitutes and he comes to them and says, "Is this beneficial? It's beneficial to you." And then, "Is this of advantage to the church? Is this of advantage in bringing people to Christ? This is absolutely not." The implication is clear. Is this something that helps? No, sin never helps. Sin always harms. It always harms deeply. Sin was harming deeply in the church at Corinth and sin, sexual sin, bodily sin, is harming deeply in the church today. Deeply.

You think about sexual sin. Picture our world today where there, last year, was over 60 billion dollars taken in around the world in the pornographic industry—60 billion dollars! And it's not just in the world. *Leadership Magazine*, a great magazine, did a survey of leaders in churches, not just staff - leaders in churches. Seven out of ten leaders admitted to visiting adult websites at least once a week. Four out of ten pastors admitted the same thing. One survey said 50% of all Christian men and 20% of all Christian women are addicted to pornography. That's one out of every two men in this room; one out of every five women.

Forty percent of those women altogether admitted to being involved in sexual sin in the past year. Five hundred Christian men at one particular retreat, over 90%, admitted that they were feeling disconnected from God - over 90%, because of lust, pornography, or fantasy that had gained a foothold in their lives. It's no wonder because we live in a culture where nearly half, in one recent survey, nearly half the people said that it is no problem to have a sexual relationship with someone of the opposite sex other than their spouse. And it pervades the church.

Sin harms deeply and this is sin's great deception. Because it promises that it will help. It promises satisfaction. Sin promises great reward, but it never delivers. Maybe for a moment but it never ever delivers on what it promises. Sin always harms, always harms. And that seems simple. That seems simple but there is a theology in the church today, follow very closely with me. There is a theology in the church today, and I've heard it, that says that even as a Christian if you commit bodily sin or sexual sin... When you commit sin and you



struggle with that and God brings you through it, it will make your life better as a result of your struggle with that sin.

The way it's phrased is often, "I am thankful that I struggle with that sin because of how much better it has made my life today." Specifically it's, "My marriage is better as a result of adultery." "My life is better as a result of my struggles with pornography." That is a lie straight from the adversary. Straight from the adversary. Now please do not hear me wrong. I'm not saying that God is not gracious and God is not good and God does not bring healing and restore us. He does all of that, but sin never, never leaves us better than we were before. Sin never leaves us better than we were before. If it did then Christ really missed out because He never once sinned. He could have had a much better life if He had walked through the struggles.

On the contrary, the one who is supremely wise knew that sin always harms. Sin always destroys and so you flee from it. You run from it. You don't give yourself to it. I urge you, people of God, run, flee sexual immorality! Run from it! It always harms! And it harms deeply. Always. And Jesus died on a cross to set you free from that. To set you free from bodily sin that harms so deeply and bodily sin that controls so quickly.

That's the next thing. Paul says, "*Not everything is beneficial. 'Everything is permissible for me'—but I will not be mastered by anything*" (1 Cor. 6:12). "I will not be enslaved by anything. I will not be controlled by anything." This is the way sin works. It gets in our minds and our emotions and our bodies and it controls. It so fills, especially sexual sin, it so fills and defiles every facet of our lives.

And we know this. We know this. We know that we have found ourselves at times where we're doing things that we never thought we could do before. And we see people that are engrossed in things that we thought, "I could never imagine that person doing this." This is the way sin controls. And it's little by little by little. It controls so quickly. That's why Paul says in verse 18, "Flee, avoid it, run from it. Don't play around with it to see if you can overcome it. To see if you're spiritual enough. That is a horrible decision to make. You run from it. You're not good enough. Christ in you is the only one who's good enough, so run to Christ. Avoid sexual immorality," he says.

The picture here, we all know it and some of us are there this morning. And I think we would be shocked to find that we are not alone in this room this morning. Some of us are there. We are controlled and mastered right now by some desires in our body; by things in our body that we know do not honor God and it's controlling us. It's changing the way we think and it's changing the way we act and it's changing all of that. It's controlling so quickly and if you're not there now, you could be there tomorrow. It says later in 1 Corinthians, "Take heed lest you fall." This is what is so humbling, so overwhelming, so bringing me to my knees studying this text this week.

I want to be so bold as to urge for you to pray for me. This is not a sermon that is easy to preach because I know that it is more than possible for my flesh to fall into who-knows-what. And I'm asking you to pray continually for me, for church leaders, pray for each other that God would keep us from falling into sin that controls so quickly.

He has set us free from bodily sin that devastates so painfully. And this is what he's saying in verses 16 and 17: "*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'*" (1 Cor. 6:16). He quotes here from Genesis 2. The end of Genesis 2 when Adam and Eve come together and the two will become one flesh and the beautiful picture that God had designed for their bodies

together. He says don't you know that when you unite yourself to someone this is deeper than just a fleshly activity, a physical activity; this is the uniting of your whole self with somebody he says. He who unites himself with the Lord is one with Him in spirit. He who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her, one with him. That's the picture we've got here. Bodily sin that devastates so painfully.

And that's why he says it's different. *"All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body"* (1 Cor. 6:18). What Paul is saying here is very clear. Sexual sin is extremely painful. It is extremely devastating. It breaks marriages. It undercuts trust. It destroys lives. It leads to lying, stealing, cheating, gossip. It doesn't just go alone. It devastates so painfully. First Corinthians 10:8, Paul refers back in the Old Testament when 32,000 men were struck down in one day as a result of sexual sin. What a picture! God is apparently very serious about sexual sin.

"Well then why was David a man after God 's own heart?" Don't forget. As soon as David committed adultery with Bathsheba it led him on a road that led down, first of all, to murder. Then second, God saying to him through the prophet Nathan, the sword will never depart from your house. And the baby that was born will die. Things were never the same in David's life and leadership. Never the same. Sexual sin is very devastating.

It's why, if you look in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 it talks about how those who indulge themselves in sexual sin will not inherit the kingdom of God. Will not inherit the kingdom of God. Listen to what it says, *"Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God"* (1 Cor. 6:9-10). There's bodily sin all over that picture.

We say, "Well are you saying God won't forgive me now?" No, look at what it says, *"And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God"* (1 Cor. 6:11). Therefore stop and give yourself to Him. You were washed from that. You were set free from that. My goal this morning in this text, the goal of this text is not just to make us feel guilty. My goal is not for any person to walk out of here this morning overwhelmed with guilt, but my goal is to say loud and clear it harms deeply, and it controls quickly and it devastates painfully! So run from it! Flee from it! Christ died to set you free from it!

And not just free from those things; when you're freed from slavery you're freed to something else. This is the beauty. We're freed from all of those things we just talked about—sin that harms and controls and devastates. He has set us free to enjoy His great purpose for our bodies. We're free to enjoy His great purpose for our bodies. This is Romans 7:4, which, by the way, I'm quoting from Romans numerous times. Romans was written from the city of – Guess what? Corinth. There's a direct link there between these books. And he says, *"So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead"* (Rom. 7:4). You belong to the one who has conquered sin. So we are free to enjoy His great purpose for our bodies.

And this is it, isn't it? Do we trust God's great purpose for our bodies? Singles, teenagers, ladies. Who will you trust? Will you trust your boyfriend to tell you what is best for your body or the God of the universe to tell you what is best for your body? Men, will you trust your girlfriend to tell you what is best for your body or the God of the universe? Husbands, wives, will you trust this guy or that lady that you work with, flirting with? This guy or that lady that you have met, will you trust them to know what is best for your body or the God

of the universe to know what is best for your body? Men and women across this room, students, adults alike, will you trust this page on the Internet to do what is best for your body or the Word of God to do what is best for your body? We are free to enjoy His great purpose for our bodies!

Men, I say we go with one who said in Proverbs 5:18-19, "Your fountain will be blessed and you will enjoy the wife of your youth and you will be exhilarated by her love." I'm leaving out some other parts there I just don't feel comfortable quoting this morning. But the picture is we are created to enjoy God's great purpose with our bodies. And not just to enjoy His great purpose, but to exalt His great glory in our bodies.

Don't forget, it's not just about us. It's not just about what is beneficial to me. This is the self-centered nature of sin. "What can I get? What can I get? What do I need to do?" And we don't even begin to think about the consequences of sin on all those around us. All those around us who we, we are given the body of Christ to exalt the glory of God through our bodies and when we are free from those things, we're free to show His glory, to encourage others, to lead others to Christ by the way we live in our bodies. When we give ourselves to that which harms and that which controls and that which devastates then we stop that from happening and our bodies are no longer used as instruments in the hand of God to lead our children, to lead our families, to lead the people around us who are heading to a Christless eternity. We're no longer using our bodies to lead them to Christ. We're using our bodies to lead them away from Christ. We're free to enjoy His purposes, to exalt His great glory and it leads to this last truth.

### **Your body is filled by the Spirit.**

Your body is created by God and it is purchased by Christ and your body is filled by the Spirit. This is the beautiful picture at the end. "*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God*" (1 Cor. 6:19)? We don't have time to go into Old Testament history but let me just remind you – the temple. Two things. This was the place where God's presence dwells among His people. The temple is the place where God's presence dwells among His people. As you go to the temple, this was not just a normal sanctuary like we have now and you come into this place. This was "the place." Jerusalem. The Temple. Holy of Holies. Picture where God's glory dwelled among His people.

Not only that, the temple is the place where God's holiness draws the nations to Himself. That's what He says over and over again throughout the Old Testament. He says, "I'm going to draw the nations to see my greatness and to see my holiness in the temple." That's the picture we've got in the Old Testament.

You get to the New Testament, Jesus Christ says, "I'm the temple. I'm the place where you meet the glory of God. You want to see the presence of God? Here, I'm drawing the nations to myself." He goes to a cross, He dies, He rises from the grave, He ascends into heaven, He sends His Holy Spirit and now, you and I, just as the temple in the Old Testament housed the presence of the living God, you and I house the presence of the Spirit of God in our bodies. Is that not one incredible truth?

Our bodies—we possess His presence as the church. And the beauty of this is you have the Holy Spirit in you which, yes, needs to be guarded, but don't forget the Holy Spirit is the only One who has power to help you overcome sin, help you conquer sin. And He's living in you so you're not going out fighting the body alone. You've got the Holy Spirit of God in you for that purpose.

And this is where the adversary comes to us and says, "Well, yeah, this is what the Word says but I just can't do it. Things are different in my life. I can't overcome this. I can't do this." And the adversary's telling you that over and over and over again. "You're in too deep. You can't change this." This or that. I remind you that after schizophrenic Paul in Romans 7, 8:1 he says, *"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death"* (Rom. 8:1-2). You are not in too deep for the Spirit of God to pull you. You are not in too deep for His grace and His Spirit to radically change and transform you. He's in you.

We possess His presence as a church. Not only that, but we display His holiness to the nations. John 16 talks about how the Spirit will come to us, will be in us to give glory to Christ. That our bodies, the Spirit dwelling in us then, are what draws the nations to Himself. We draw people who don't know Christ to Him through the way we live in our bodies.

And here's the truth, it's Romans 6, it's 1 Corinthians 6, every single person in this room, every single body in this room, can either be used as an instrument of wickedness or an instrument of righteousness. Those are the two choices. The Spirit is in us to transform us. And God is very passionate about us displaying His holiness through our lives.

And let me tell you why this is really good news, this last truth. "Why is it good, David, that God is so passionate about displaying His holiness in our bodies?" This is good. Because that means that God pursues us in our sin by His grace, He forgives us for our sin and He restores us in order to display His holiness. God is very passionate about saving you for His glory. That's the picture we've got here.

He longs to purify you this morning. He died and rose from the grave so that your body could be an instrument of righteousness. What you look at, what you feel, what you touch, the way you act, the way you use your bodies, the relationships you're involved in, all of that picture, He died to transform our bodies for His glory.

So here's what I'm going to do. We've talked a lot about sexual sin in particular. Thinking about bodily sin. And here's the question I want to ask. Don't miss this. Every single person in this room. Not the person beside you, in front of you, behind you. What part of your body is not bringing great glory to God? It could be a sexual part. I'm guessing based on, even if these statistics are half true, then that is a whole host of people across this room. What facets of your body - maybe even beyond that though; James 3 talks about the tongue - what we say, temper, what we're looking at, what we're taking in, what we watch, what we see. What in our body needs to be purified this morning? And I want you to get a picture of God who loves you deeply and wants to purify you deeply. So consider, just ask yourself the question what in my body needs to be purified for the glory of God?

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