

MY BODY BELONGS TO GOD**1 CORINTHIANS 6:12-20**

- I. God has principles for my body. 6:12-13
 - 1. My actions must edify self. 6:12
 - 2. My actions must not enslave the soul. 6:12
 - 3. My actions must exalt the Savior. 10:31
 - 4. My actions must encourage the saints. 8:13
 - 5. My actions must evangelize sinners. 9:19-22; 10:32-33
 - 6. My actions must exemplify the Savior. 11:1
- II. God has plans for my body. 6:13-14
 - 1. In the present God will use me. 6:13
 - 2. In the future God will raise me. 6:14
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 - 2. I am indwelt by God.
- V. God has paid for my body. 6:20
 - 1. God is the owner of my body.
 - 2. I am to honor God with my body.

**GOD'S GUIDELINES
FOR THE GRAY AREAS OF LIFE**

**(Paul's Corinthian Principles)
1 Corinthians 6:12 – 11:1**

1. Will this action edify self? (6:12)
Will it build me up? Profit me? Help me personally?
2. Will this action enslave my soul? (6:12)
Can it bring me into emotional/psychological (even chemical) bondage?
3. Will this action exalt the Savior? (10:31)
Can I glorify my Lord in this activity?
4. Will this action encourage other saints? (8:13)
Is this a potential stumbling block to someone else?
5. Will this action evangelize sinners? (9:19-22; 10:32-33)
Will this help or harm my witness for Christ?
6. Will this action emulate my Savior? (11:1)
Is this something I could see Jesus doing?

“My Body: All For The Glory Of God”

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Introduction:

- 1) The sexual revolution that was birthed in the 1960’s, flowered in the 70’s and 80’s, and matured in the 90’s and the early 21st century did not deliver what it promised. Promising liberation and freedom, it actually gave us shame and suffering, disappointment and devastation.
- 2) The pain and sorrow experienced by so many is perhaps captured best in a letter written to Josh McDowell several years ago.

Dear Mr. McDowell,

Having premarital sex was the most horrifying experience of my life. It wasn’t at all the emotionally satisfying experience the world deceived me into believing. I felt as if my insides were being exposed and my heart left unattended. I know God has forgiven me of this haunting sin, but I also know I can never have my virginity back. I dread the day that I have to tell the man I truly love and wish to marry that he is not the only one – though I wish he were. I have stained my life—a stain that will never come out. Monica
- 3) What has been the fallout of the new morality and our alleged liberation from sexual oppression and narrow thinking?
 - The Federal Government reported in December 2000 that 65 million American are walking around with an STD (*U.S. News & World Report*, 12-18-2000, p. 14).
 - Approximately 15.3 million Americans contract an STD annually. That is almost 42,000 every 24 hours. One in 4 is under the age of 20.
 - At the present rate 1 in 4 Americans between the ages of 15 and 55 will eventually acquire an STD.
 - 30 years ago there were only 4 types of STD’s, today there are more than 25 (*Focus on the Family*, letter, Sept. 2004).
 - And let us not forget: many STD’s are incurable, others can render you sterile, and some are potentially fatal.
 - At least 50% of all High School students will have had sexual intercourse by the time they are 18.
 - And according to Josh McDowell: by age 18, 43% of church youth have engaged in sexual intercourse, and another 18% have fondled breasts or genitals. Additionally, 36% of the youth said they were not able to state that sexual intercourse was morally unacceptable before marriage!
 - Each year more than 1 million high school women in America become unwed mothers. And add to this that in that same year alone, over 400,000 girls between the ages of 15 and 18 will make the tragic decision to have an abortion.
 - ¾ of teenage pregnancies are unintended.
 - More than half of women who become pregnant as teenagers do not finish high school.
 - 70% of families headed by women who became mothers under the age of 25 live below the poverty level (Center For Population Options).

- 4) And yet it is an amazing reality to think: if we would simply do sex God's way, one man with one woman within the covenant of marriage for life, every single STD and virtually every one of these tragic realities would disappear in one generation!
- 5) Why, how, did we get where we are? I believe the answer is quite simply. We have forgotten or ignored a basic biblical truth: My body belongs to God. It does not, in the ultimate sense, belong to me or any other person. My body, all of me, belongs to God.

Transition:

This was a message the church at Corinth in the 1st century needed to understand. This is a message the church in the 21st century needs to understand. Paul develops a healthy and Christ-honoring understanding of this truth with 5 basic observations.

- I. God has principles for my body. 6:12-13 (also 8:13; 9:19-22; 10:31-33; 11:1).
- Two words dominate this section: body (8) and *porneia* (3, trans. "sexual immorality").
 - One phrase like the beating of a drum resounds 3 times in 6:12-20, and 6 times in the whole of chapter 6: "Do you not know" (6:2, 3, 9, 15, 16, 19).
 - Influenced perhaps by an incipient Gnosticism, Platonic philosophy and/or aberrant doctrine of the Spirit, the Corinthians had developed a false view of spiritual freedom and the body.
 - Paul counter-punches with a total of 6 guiding principles in 6:12-11:1 that will help us have a proper understanding of how we should use our body so that we can honor Christ in all that we do. Challenging a popular slogan at Corinth: "All things are lawful (NIV "permissible") for me," Paul says, always ask the following 6 questions:

**GOD'S GUIDELINES
FOR THE GRAY AREAS OF LIFE**

**(Paul's Corinthian Principles)
1 Corinthians 6:12 – 11:1**

1. Will this action edify self? (6:12)

Will it build me up? Profit me? Help me personally? Is it good for me in Christ?

2. Will this action enslave my soul? (6:12)

Can it bring me into emotional/psychological (even chemical) bondage?

- This settles the issues of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, pornographic materials. In this context let me add a little food for thought.
- The first and second leading causes of premature death in the United States are tobacco and alcohol.

- **Tobacco** causes well over 1,000 needless deaths every day, a death toll of 450,000 Americans annually, more than AIDS, alcohol, car accidents, murders, suicides, illegal drugs, and fires combined (*USA Today*, 7-18-95). Direct medical cost related to smoking in the US alone is over \$50 billion annually (*The American Issue*, Oct. 1996). “What’s the leading cancer killer of women?...Lung cancer. Its five-year survival rate is 15 percent, compared with 86 percent for breast cancer. And thought the disease is largely preventable, the annual toll has grown by 600 percent since 1930. The reason: cigarettes. More than 85 percent of women who get lung cancer are current or former smokers—yet one woman in five still smokes. In 2001, tobacco companies spent a record \$11.2 billion on promotions and advertising” (Karen Springen, *Women, Cigarettes and Death*, Newsweek (May 10, 2004), P. 69).
- **Alcohol**, “there are 40 million problem drinkers in America” (*US News & World Report*, 9-8-97: p.57). “15.3 million people in the United States meet the criteria for either alcohol abuse or alcoholism” (*Monday Morning Report*, 1994). “Alcohol consumption, misuse, and its consequences have been estimated to cost our society \$86 billion each year” (*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*, 1993). “Alcohol plays a major role in suicides, fires, gunshot wounds, stabbings, falls, drownings, domestic violence, pedestrian injuries, and motor vehicle crashes. Someone is killed by a drunk driver every 24 minutes in America” (*Baptist Record*, Jan. 1997). Alcohol is the #1 killer of people under the age of 24. Nearly half of all trauma beds are occupied by patients who were injured while under the influence of alcohol” (*Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1995). “Alcohol causes almost 105,000 deaths every year” (*American Council on Alcohol Problems*, 1996 annual report). Then there is Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. FAS is one of the three leading known causes of birth defects with accompanying mental retardation. *Its prevention is simple: Pregnant women should not drink any alcohol.* “10.5 million adults exhibit symptoms of alcohol abuse.. 7.5 million are considered “problem drinkers.” About 76 million American have been exposed to alcoholism within their families. Nearly one in five U.S. adults lived with an alcoholic as a child.” (Charles Sell, *Helping Troubled Families: A Guide for Pastors, Counselors, and Supporters* (Baker Books, 2002). Divorced or separated people are three times more likely than married men and women to have been married to a problem drinker and alcoholic” (*USA Today*, October 1, 1991). “Alcohol abuse costs American businesses an estimated \$134 billion a year [Up from \$100 billion in 1997]. People with untreated alcohol problems use twice as much sick leave as other employees. They have more on-the-job accidents. Indeed, alcohol abuse adds \$23 billion to the nation’s annual medical tab.” (Susan Brink, “The Price of Booze,” *U.S. News & World Report* (February 2, 2004) p.48). “Before reaching legal drinking age, the typical U.S. child will view about 180,000 beer ads. As many as 60% of high school students use alcohol regularly, and only 23% of parents strictly prohibit their children from drinking until they’re of age.” (*Youthworker*, Sept/Oct 1998 (page 19).

- **Drugs** – “Ten percent of the U.S. population are addicted to prescription drugs.” (Charles Sell, *Helping Troubled Families: A Guide for Pastors, Counselors and Supporters* (Baker Books, 2002). “About 13.6 million Americans overall used illicit drugs”. (*Baptist Press*, 8-26-99). Today an estimated 7.7 million persons age 12 or older need treatment for an illicit drug problem; 18.6 million need treatment for an alcohol problem.” (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, February 26-27, 2003 report And when it comes to the use of “hard drugs,” these “gateway drugs” as they are often called is often the beginning (*USA Today*, 8-14-97).
- **Pornography** – “At least one woman is raped every 48 seconds. Pornography often serves as a manual for rape.” “The typical child molester abuses 380 children in his lifetime. Both adult and child pornography are often used as an aid during the crime.” “Pornography’s number one consumer group is adolescent boys between 12 and 17 years old. This distorts their view of women, family life, and their own sexuality.” “It attacks love, affection, commitment, and fidelity.” (*Baptist Banner*). “In 1998 Larry Flynt gave every U.S. representative, senator and cabinet head a complimentary subscription to his pornographic magazine *Hustler*. Only 63 refused the subscription.” (*Reason*, May 1998 (page 14). “There are nearly three times more hard-core pornography outlets in the United States than there are McDonald’s restaurants, and pornography brings in an estimated \$13 billion dollars annually. (1998)..” “Currently, pornography addicts comprise 3-6% of our population and are 96% male. Like most addicts, these teachers, lawyers, engineers, and pastors find they can’t quit on their own. Like other addictions, pornography needs more and more stimulation to reach the “highs” that were originally experienced, stimulation that can result in such damaging behaviors as incest and prostitution.” “Paralleling pornography’s availability, rape has increased 523% since 1960.” (Carol McGalliard, Caught in the web of pornography,” *Light and Life*, Jul/Aug 1998 (Vol. 131, No. 4) pages 7-11. “There are now at least 40,000 sex-oriented sites on the Web, and probably thousands more. No one has been able to count them all.” “Maryland resident Jon-David Messner began posting nude pictures of his wife on the Internet. “The surfers felt that she was real, as opposed to a mammary-enhanced blond bimbo,” says Messner. His site...grossed over \$3 million last year. He spends over \$40,000 a month on high-speed phone lines to handle the demand.” “We all know adult entertainment industry drives the Internet.” (Brendan I. Koerner, “A Lust for Profits,” *U.S. News & World Report* (March 27, 2000). “87 percent of girl child molesters and 77 percent of boy child molesters admitted to regular use of hard-core pornography. Of 36 serial murderers interviewed by the FBI in 1985, 81 percent admitted using pornography.” “Pornography creates an emotional sickness in men called ‘The Centerfold Syndrome’ – a sickness that causes men to view women as body parts and not as human beings.” “Men who become addicted to pornography become sexual predators who are unfaithful to their wives and may molest their own daughters to satisfy their sexual desires.” (Jason Pierce, “Opponents of Pornography Contend It’s Not ‘Harmless’ or Victimless,”

Baptist Press (May 4, 2001). “25 million Americans visit online sex sites between one and ten hours a week, according to a recent MSNBC study. Sex is the number one searched-for topic on the Internet, and experts estimate that 60 percent of all web site visits are sexual in nature.” “Adult content web sites account for the Internet’s largest volume of business – generating an estimated \$2 billion a year with an estimated 200 new such sites launched every day.” “Studies consistently reveal that the largest consumers of pornography are males 24 year old and younger.” (Richard Land, “Can We Stand the Costs of an X-Rated Culture?” *Light* (Summer 2001). “In 1973, Americans spent some \$10 million on pornography, according to *U.S. News & World Report*. In 1997, Americans spent \$8 billion on porn.” “According to a recent report broadcast in November on CBS’s flagship *60 Minutes*, Americans spend “somewhere around \$10 billion a year” on so called “adult entertainment” products. As correspondent Steve Kroft reported, “Consumer demand is so strong that it has seduced some of America’s biggest brand names, and companies like General Motors, Marriott, and Time Warner are now making millions selling erotica to America.” “The impact of the pornographic invasion can be seen in rising rates of sexual violence and rape, sexual experimentation and confusion among teenagers, and in the lives of countless victims who have fallen for the empty promises and false eroticism of the pornography industry. The saddest victims are children subjected to sexual abuse for demented pornographic thrills...” “What would have been outlawed as obscene just a few years ago, is now common fare in images on the front cover and clothing stores aimed at teenagers...” (Albert Mohler, “The Pornography Crisis: A Time for Candor,” *Crosswalk.com* (12-2-03). “Porn now takes in more money than rock and country music combined, more than Hollywood’s box office receipts. Every family motel chain offers on-demand “adult movies.” “So the film industry has gone from 1,000 films eight years ago to 10,000 last year.” “Focus on the Family found that 20 percent of American adults have patronized pornographic websites, with that percentage holding true for both Christians and non-Christians. Some Christians, though, are rationalizing the issue, as in a recent article on the online religion site Beliefnet that claimed “porn saved my marriage.”” “Jesus Himself addresses the moral and spiritual consequences of pornography: “Everyone who looks at a woman lustfully” – perhaps the best description of what pornography entails – “has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” Pornography is a type of adultery. What we do in our imaginations is the moral and spiritual equivalent of what we do in our actions.” (Gene Edward Veith, “The Pornographic Culture,” *World* (April 7, 2001).

3. Will this action exalt the Savior? (10:31)

Can I glorify my Lord in this activity? Will this action please Christ and honor Him?

4. Will this action encourage other saints? (8:13)

Is this a potential stumbling block to someone else?

- This principle appeals to our conscience.
- This principle and the next opens the door to discuss the issue of modesty in dress, especially for ladies. To our shame those who claim the name of Jesus often dress scarcely different than those who don't.
- C.J. Mahaney of Sovereign Grace Ministries is correct when he says any discussion about modesty begins with the heart, not the hemline. Wanting, as I do, to give women the benefit of the doubt, C.J. says, "I choose to believe that most Christian women who dress immodestly are not intentionally promoting immorality. Some are no doubt failing to exercise sufficient wisdom and diligence."
- Valerie Lowe is not so gentle: "When you wear your clothes tight and too short, you're making a statement about yourself. My advise to you is, "if you are not for sale, please take the sign down!"
- Ladies, you must understand that there is nothing God-glorifying in wearing sensual, low-cut, too-short, revealing clothes. Further, you are not considering the best interest of your brothers in Christ and you are providing an unhealthy picture of what a woman of God is to unbelievers.
- Dannah Gresh in her book *Secret Keeper: The Delicate Power of Modesty* reminds young ladies, "when you wear clothing that accentuates curves, and other parts of your body, you reveal a special gift from God, a gift that He intended solely for your husband" (*Charisma*, Aug. 2004).
- C.J. and Sovereign Grace Ministries offer a "heart check" for all Christians to check their motives for how they dress. Ask yourself:
 - ❖ What statements am I making with the clothes I wear?
 - ❖ Does my clothing satisfy me, or does it please God?
 - ❖ Is what I wear a reflection of the Word of God, self-control and appropriate attire, or do I identify with popular culture and worldliness in the way I dress?
 - ❖ What standard do I use when selecting clothing-society's standard or the Bible?

5. Will this action evangelize sinners? (9:19-22; 10:32-33)

Will this help or harm my witness for Christ? Does this action reveal the beauty and attractiveness of the Lord Jesus?

6. Will this action emulate my Savior? (11:1)

Is this something I could see Jesus doing?(WWJD)

II. God has plans for my body. 6:13-14

- "Food for the stomach... God will destroy both it and them" is another Corinthian slogan.

- No doubt there was another slogan that said, “Sex for the body... God will destroy both it and them.”
- Paul corrects this faulty theology with a theological and an eschatological argument rooted and grounded in Christology.

1) In the present God will use me. 6:13

- The body (*soma*) is not for sexual immorality (*porneia*) but the Lord (cf Rom 12:1). My body is for Him, His use, His plan, His purposes.
- “And the Lord is for the body.” God saved you to use you. He saved you to free you. NOT to do what you want, but to live as you ought! Here is the theological argument.

2) In the future God will raise me. 6:14

- Here is the eschatological, Christological argument, an argument fully developed in 1 Cor. 15. God raised up the Lord. God will raise me up too! God will not destroy my stomach or my body! They have a different future that the Corinthians imagined.
- Paul invokes the principle of destiny. I am headed for
 - heaven not hell
 - glory not the gutter
 - the Savior not Satan
- Where I am going tomorrow should effect the way I live today!

III. God has protection for my body. 6:15-18

- First of 3 “Do you not know” (1:15, 16, 19) in this section, Paul would say, “what you don’t know can hurt you.”

1) Remember your sacred union. 6:15-17

- Paul’s argument is grounded in 1) His doctrine of being “in Christ” and 2) the Old Testament doctrine of God’s intention for sex in marriage.
- Sexual immorality is any type of sexual behavior contrary to the will of God. It includes premarital sex, extra-marital sex and unnatural sex (cf 6:9). It also includes anything that does not promote purity and the glory of God, i.e. oral sex, fondling genitals, heavy petting.
- Illustration: If Jesus came and spent a week with you, would you live next week different than last week? Point: He has come to live with you!!!
- What you do, He does! It matters greatly to Jesus what you do with your body.

2) Run from sexual perversion. 6:18

- Flee (pre. imp.) – run away as fast as you can from any sexual, sensual behavior. Be a Joseph (Gen. 39).
- Why? To avoid the scarring of the soul. Gordon Fee notes, “no other sin is directed specifically in the way that sexual immorality is” (p. 262).

- You have given your body that belongs to God to another.
- You have given your body that belongs to your mate to another.
- ❖ How do we run from sexual immorality? (10 quick principles).
 - 1) Recognize that sex in marriage is biblical and best (Prov. 5). If you have been sexually active, pursue secondary virginity. You cannot go back but you can go forward. It is never too late or the wrong time to say no to premarital sex and yes to purity for God.
 - 2) Guard your thought life (Prov. 23:7).
 - 3) Guard your eyes (Job 31:1)
 - 4) Avoid potentially dangerous situations (Never alone with someone of the opposite sex).
 - 5) No heavy petting, deep kissing or any other questionable activity.
 - 6) Pray on dates.
 - 7) Double date/date in groups.
 - 8) Remember God wants to maximize your sexual protection, pleasure, partnership and purity.
 - 9) Resist the pressure to give away a valuable gift that belongs only to your mate. Anyone who would ask is nothing less than “a scum-sucking dog!”
 - 10) Run to Jesus as fast as you can and look around and see who is running with you!

IV. God has possession of my body. 6:19

- Here Paul invokes the theology of conversion and Spirit- indwelling. Two truths are affirmed.
- 1) I am important to God.
 - 3rd “Do you not know”
 - Temple (*naos*) holy place of God
 - God who could live anywhere chose to live in you and in me! Amazing! Incredible.
- 2) I am indwelt by God.
 - The Holy Spirit who is in you. Indwelt by a person not a power, a person not an impersonal force or principle.
 - This is not “the force be with you.” This is God in you.” The result: you are not your own, you are His!

V. God has paid for my body. 6:20

- Paul concludes his argument with an appeal to the atonement, utilizing an analogy from the slave-market.
- 1) God is the owner of my body.
 - Paul develops the thought begun at the end of v. 19.
 - Bought (*agorazo*)-to buy at the marketplace, to purchase a slave. In the New Testament it is usually to buy to set free. Here it is to buy for the purpose of being a slave to God. We are bought by

God to serve Him. He is our owner, we are His servants. He is our Master, we are His slaves.

2) I am to honor God with my body.

- “Glorify” (*doxazo*, aor. imp.) – to cause one to have a good opinion of someone. Peterson in *The Message* says, “Let people see God in and through you body.”
- Here is the positive counterpart to “the flee” in v. 18. I will flee sexual immorality in order that I may honor God with my body that now belongs to Him.

Conclusion:

1) Everyone is a slave to someone or something. The question is: whose slave are you? The Bible says my body belongs to God. I will gladly choose to be His slave, and in the process, enjoy the wonder of being His child.

2) Letter to Josh McDowell:

When I was only 14 year of age, I dated an 18-year-old boy. I really needed his love and if the conditions to keep that love were to have sex with him, I felt I had no choice.

I felt so guilty afterwards. I can remember sobbing in my bed at night, after I’d come home from being with my boyfriend. I wanted so much to have my virginity back, and yet, it was gone – forever. I began to feel so lonely inside, but there was no one I could turn to. Certainly not my father, who would really “hate” me if he ever knew what an awful thing I had done.

After two years, I broke up with my boyfriend, but soon had another, and went through the same cycle with him. And then with another. Isn’t that ironic? The very thing I searched for – unconditional love – was being offered to me conditionally... “If you love me, you’ll let me.”

I’m 27 now, and about six months ago I wrote in my journal to the Lord, these very words...

“I felt lonely tonight – intense loneliness. And I realized that what I was lonely for was a ‘daddy,’ to be able to call him up when I hurt and hear him say he understands and to listen to me. But, I never had that with my dad. And so I am lonely without that link to my past.

“There’s a song by Steve and Annie Chapman that says, ‘Daddy, you’re the man in your little girl’s dreams, you are the one she longs to please. There’s a place in her heart that can only be filled with her daddy’s love. But if you don’t give her the love she desires, she’ll try someone else, but they won’t satisfy her... Don’t send her away to another man’s door. Nobody else can do what you do. She just needs her daddy’s love.’”

- When you give your body to God not only do you get a Savior you also get a Father! Tell your heart to that Father. Give your body to that Father. I promise you, there will be no regrets.