

## **I Corinthians 1 - 7 - Glorifying God with The Body: Paul's Theology of Marriage and Sex**

We're back in first Corinthians chapter six. I'm sure you all remember the sermon on I Cor 6:1-11! It was only five weeks ago. I took a break for Christmas, but I do want to read the last part of our last passage. So tonight, we're looking at I Cor 6: 12-20. But to understand it, we have to remember what Paul just said. If you turn your Bibles, I'll give you a heads up. So what I do first is mistaken ideas about the body, about human sexuality, and then correction of those mistaken ideas. And then third, we'll talk about glorifying God in the body in general, not just in our sexuality. So this is what Paul says at the end of the previous passage in 10 and 11. He says,

...you need to know who's going to inherit the kingdom of God. Verse 9 - And it's not drunkards, reviled or swindlers. Those are not the ones who will inherit the kingdom of God. That's verse 10. And then he says about drunkards and revile and swindlers and such...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. Just a quick comment before I go further. Most of the time we read in the Bible justification comes first and then sanctification. But this church has so many sins that he mentions sanctification first. It's like he's saying, just I want to get it out there. You got to be sanctified, and you're also justified. This is the one time he puts sanctified first because he has to deal with serious sins, misconceptions, bad theology leads to bad deeds. And this is what he says in verse 12. Now you notice that in most translations the first line is in quotation marks, and people agree that this is a statement that the church made to Paul, and he's then going to answer it next. So their statement is all things are lawful for me and Paul answers, but not all things are helpful or profitable. Again, all things are lawful for me. So say the Corinthians. Paul replies, but I will not be enslaved by anything. Food, they say, is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food. And Paul replies, And God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? So I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute. Never would you not know that he was joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her, for as it is written, the two will become one flesh. But he who is joined the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price, so glorify God in your body.

Let's pray for a moment.

Lord, give us ears to hear these, teachings. For a church that was deeply confused because of what was happening in our culture, we know that our culture is also deeply confused. Even if the culture of this church is not. We live in an age of deep confusion. So teach us and make us teachers of others and help us know how to glorify God in our bodies. We pray in Jesus name, Amen.

I don't know about you, but I'm a man of a certain age, and so I pay attention to literature about the body and what people are saying about taking care of your body. And I have to tell you that a lot of literature is discouraging. I found out recently that 75% of all food that is sold in America can be considered highly processed or ultra processed. But yikes. I thought those blueberries were safe, but somehow they're not because of our sedentary lifestyle. More agreement on this one. We exercise too little. Way too much. We're not strong enough. We have related problems. We can't sleep sometimes because we don't push our bodies enough. And of course, we have sexual problems in our society. If you look at the way things are described in the entertainment world, it goes kind of like this. Usually I've seen it in any number of programs. First two people meet each other and they decide they're attractive, and then they go to bed. And then after a while, they say, I love you. And then a while after that, they start living together. And a while after that they get engaged, and a while after that they get married. That's the normal cycle among secular people today. One of the consequences is that 40% of all babies are born out of wedlock. Wedlock now, not first babies, 40% of all babies, actually 41%. And marriage rates are dropping and people just cohabit at random. And we're in a deep state of confusion, even if you ignore, brief flings, the structure of our society now has cohabitation and experimentation way to the forefront.

Now, Paul, in addressing the Corinthians, is actually addressing culture that was remarkably like ours in some ways 2000 years ago. The Corinthian church was so, known or infamous really for sexual immorality, that other Greeks and the Romans were hardly paragons of virtue. Other Greeks coined the term two Corinthian eyes for people who are sexually promiscuous, or people who went to visit prostitutes. Why does Paul talk about prostitution so much? Well, it's because the church there was in a city called Corinth, which is still around to this day, and is located on Isthmus. And there's a land mass. It comes down like this and, and it's, you know, 100 or 200 miles across. And then it comes down on this tiny little Isthmus. It's about three miles or two miles of land separating two bodies of water, two seas. And then it goes out again. And so people brought their ships in both sides to have a much safer, much shorter inland overland crossing for their goods. And what that meant was it was a port city and a trade city. People had been off at sea and unmarried men had been off at sea for months. And so prostitution became a feature of the country. And somehow or other the region came to decide that it wasn't just an aberration. But it's fine. It's a perfectly good way to live and to have, an income. The church, in other words, was infected by its popular culture, which is something we're familiar with.

And they said to Paul, all things are lawful for me. I can do whatever I want. Now, of course, this was Christians. Now there's a sense in which all things are lawful for us. That is to say, we don't have to follow the law in order to be saved. That's true. And we have a lot of freedom as Christians.

We can stay single, or we can get married and we can have this job or that job. And so the statement all things are lawful for me is one of those remarks that that, that could barely almost be true if you gave it a positive spin, you might say one person said, it's the kind of thing Paul could possibly say under certain circumstances if he went on to qualify extensively, but they offered as a statement of freedom, sexual freedom to do whatever they desire to live according to the culture.

Paul could certainly not endorse it. And so he says, all things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. Not all things edify, not all things are beneficial. What are you going to do is tell us that there are corrections here. The first correction is needed, comes to them because they view when they say, some things about the belly, you know, the belly be done away.

What they're saying is, sexual appetites are a lot like food appetites. And we have a stomach. And when we're hungry, we eat. And when we have sexual desires, we should express that. And all things are lawful for me. So I can do it more or less anywhere. Like sexual desires, like any other bodily appetite, like the appetite for a beverage when your throat is dry, the appetite for sleep.

And you just have to, do what your body tells you to do. Because number one, number two, what we do with our body hardly matters. The Greeks at that time believed that the body was the prison house of the soul. And when you die, the body's done away with. It's over. So it doesn't really matter. It's kind of like, you know, if you have a box of tissues, you don't take great care of it because they're going to be used up and thrown away and the body's like that.

So it doesn't matter how we use it. And so the Corinthians came to the conclusion, astonishing as it may seem, that they had so much freedom that they could even visit prostitutes as Christians. Now, this does come from the culture. Culture. Greek culture was promiscuous to some degree, Corinthian culture more so port city prostitution even more so. But some Greeks, actively advocated a sex ethic that is shocking to us, including a man named Demosthenes. And he made it. This statement. I'm going to read it to you. Made a statement at a wedding. It was a wedding speech. And at this wedding speech, he gave good advice about husbands and wives getting together and getting along and so forth. But then he thought in the middle, I've got to just make sure everybody understands that this is a wedding of a prominent man he's going to have mistresses. So this is what he said. He said, mistresses we keep for the sake of pleasure. These are the brides, right? They're mistresses we keep for the sake of pleasure, concubines we keep for the daily care of our persons. But wives bear us legitimate children and are the faithful guardians of our household. It's a public teaching in a wedding you didn't know this man is going to have a wife and mistresses and concubines, and they have different roles.

And so the Corinthians are infected by this, and they say all things are lawful for me. And Paul says, yes, but they're not all helpful. He says again they reply, all things are lawful for me. And he says, I will not be dominated by anything. No, Paul likes to use play on words. Everybody does to some degree, and there's a play on words here that is, that gets, close to going something like this. All things are under my power. And Paul says, yeah, but I don't want to be overpowered by anything. It may be lawful, it may be under your power, but you don't be overpowered by something that will take control of you. That's his reply. He also says it may be true in some limited sense, that all things are lawful, but I got to tell you, not everything is beneficial.

If you want to ask what works and what doesn't work. Promiscuity, Paul says, just doesn't work. And besides, the idea that all things are lawful only works is only true for people who know God, love God, love his ways. Augustine said this. Commenting on this passage, you said, you know it's true that we can love God and do what we please.

Perhaps you've heard that love God and do what you please. It's been quoted many times over the years, but he goes on to say that this statement is for the soul trained in love to God, for the soul that will do nothing to offend the one who is the beloved. So love God and do as you please. Is has got a fragment of truth to it, an element of truth.

Believers do have certain freedoms. They can eat meat. They can abstain from me and so forth. But I don't want to be controlled or dominated by anything. All things are in my power, but I want to be overpowered by anything. Now that's a good general statement about our age, our day, our day, any day

today. We have a lot of studies of addiction, and we know that one of the features of addiction is once you get hooked by something, whether it be alcohol or drugs or gambling or thrill seeking, you know, daredevil behavior, pornography, whatever it might be.

Once, once you're addicted to something, it's very hard to break with that. It comes to hold power over you so that you would like to stop, but you find that you can't. Maybe especially true with addiction to things like nicotine and opioids, which changes biologically change the body that consumes it. But then there are other matters. Indulgences like gambling or sleeping all the time, or.

I'll let you fill in the rest of the blank that get a hold on us, even though they aren't literally addictive in a physiological sense. Now Paul has to deal with their thought. Their thought in verse 13 is food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food. Now I have to bring out my Greek again today, because there are two different words for the stomach in the New Testament, and one is the word *gusto*, from which we get words like gastroenterologist and that's the *gusto*.

Or is your physical stomach that takes in food? We all have one, and the word that Paul uses here is not the word for the physical entity of the stomach that takes in and digest food. The word he uses is *qualia*, which gets translated in various places. New Testament could be translated this way here belly. And the word belly does not mean the organ.

It means the seat of desires. The word *qualia* is used of the desire for food, its use of desire for drink, its use of a desire for sex, its use of all strong or excessive or disordered desires. So food for the stomach may be true, but food for the belly, that is to say, your limitless desire to take things in pleasure, pleasure, and pleasure.

That is not true. Paul says this in Philippians chapter three verse 19 of unbelievers, their God is their belly coyly the same word, not their God as their stomach, but their God is their desire. They follow their desires around and over. In Romans chapter 16:17-18, very near the end, Paul says, those who oppose sound doctrine serve their own.

It gets translated ESV appetites. But the word again is belly. You serve your belly, you serve your desires. Whatever it is that you want. Now, it's important to realize that the church doesn't you know, the church. I don't want to say this, you know, we have very high standards that we state, but we don't live up to them by any means.

One of the saddest things that we have to deal with in the church today is pastors and ministry leaders who commit sexual sins that are found out, and it causes a public scandal because secular people say, oh, you have all these high standards. You go around condemning people that sin sexually. You do the same thing yourself. And the truth of the matter is that in secular circles, godless circles, one of the things you read on sites in which people complain about Christians is, you know, Christians are all against, physical pleasures, like sexual pleasures, but a lot of them overeat, a lot of them over drink.

I mean, selective obedience. So we have to watch ourselves against following our belly around, not talking about the physical size, what size our waste is, but food and drink and sex and drugs and even sleeping excessively. Okay, so the disciples in Corinth are using the belly and food as an analogy. If I'm hungry, I eat. I have a sexual desire. I have to find a sexual partner. If I'm not married, I can go to anyone I

wish. And if prostitutes all available, then I'm going to go to a prostitute. So they say it doesn't matter what I do with my body because the body is transitory. It'll be nullified. It'll be destroyed. Our text says if it's going to be destroyed, who cares?

What difference does it make? Now the translation that we have? Again, I don't like to do this as much as I've been doing it lately, but the translation we have says that the stomach will be destroyed. Verse 13, but the word destroyed actually has a slightly different nuance to the nuance. The word usually means nullified. So what?

We don't think Paul is not saying the stomach as the digestive instrument will be destroyed. When we have a new body in the new heavens and new earth, we will have stomachs, right? Because we're going to go to the marriage feast of the lamb. I don't know about you, but every time I've gone to a feast, there's been food involved, right?

So if we're going to have a marriage feast of the lamb, which I take literally, and we're going to have resurrection bodies, and we'll no longer have mortal bodies, but we'll have spiritual bodies. Paul says in first Corinthians 15, there's no question we'll have bodies. And if we're having feasting, we will feast in the house of Zion.

If we're going to have feasting, you ought to have a stomach. But what you don't have to have is a belly, because the stomach is what digests food. In the belly is our appetite. The I want, I want, I want another place. The Bible compares that desire to leeches, that want and want and want. And so the ceaseless desire to indulge myself, to just take what I want.

That is what will be done away with in the future. Plato said the body is the prison house of the soul, so it doesn't matter. We're going to be in it for 50, 60, 70, 80 years and you're going to die. It's over. Doesn't don't indulge your body. Doesn't matter. The Corinthians said. The belly is for foods. We should we should take it in.

So Plato body is a prison house of the soul. The Neoplatonism followers of Plato said, no, the body is the house of the soul. So treat it well. Enjoy the pleasures it can give you. And the Corinthians were influenced by this. And they said, food for the belly and the belly for foods. We would say that is barely half true.

All right, so let's look at what Paul has to say to correct these false ideas. First of all, in verse 13, the second half, the body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body. Now again, I'm going to just point out, you know, our translations are wonderful and I have never been on a translation committee, but I, I know a lot of people that are and I get pulled in occasionally and the committees sometimes wrestle.

How do you which way shall we say this? So in Greek, like a lot of other languages, the verb is often left out. The words like become or is are left out and you're supposed to supply them. Maybe you've studied a language like that at some point when you were in high school or college, and so that that verse can very easily be translated and commentators say, this is the meaning of it.

The body is not for immorality, but is for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. Now you have to hear that the Lord is for the body. The Lord is pro body. He's for your body. How do we know he's for the body? First of all, he created bodies right? So if he created bodies, he must be in favor of them. And then

when Adam and Eve failed, you didn't say, okay, you're all disembodied now because you sin with your bodies. No, no, the Lord is for the body. And the body is not just a material thing. God made it for a purpose. He made it for a reason. And beyond that, beyond that, we get resurrection bodies. And Jesus took a body. He had a resurrection body, and we'll all have resurrection bodies. So we know that the Lord is for the body. The body does count. The body does matter. And when they say, I can go indulge myself with a prostitute, doesn't matter. Indulge myself sexually. Paul says it. No, it does matter because the Lord is for the body. He cares about what you do with your body.

He cares about everything you do with your body as he made it, and he restores. There's a little there's a theology of the body in the book of Romans. You know, Romans chapter one, we hear that the body was an instrument for sin. That's Romans one verse 24, and pagan people show their sinfulness and their bodies do shameful things with their bodies.

Romans 6 says, now we glorify God with our bodies, and our bodies are instruments of righteousness. Mean you see this in the way Jesus talks about his body. I'm going to ask you, if you will, if you have a Bible right there, I'm going to ask you to turn with me to Matthew 26. See something for yourself, and it's in verses 6 to 13.

But the key verse is verse 12, verse 12, Matthew chapter 26, verses 6 to 13, but especially verse 12, and it goes like this. Jesus is going to be, put to death. He knows this. He's going to be crucified. And a woman comes and anoints Jesus with an alabaster flask, very expensive ointment. And he he's reclining at table, the disciples, and, you know, she pours out this expensive perfume and they object to it because it seems wasteful to them.

And Jesus says, you know what she's doing here is pointing this is now verse 12, and pouring this ointment on my body. She has done it to prepare me for burial. What's so special about that? What he's saying is, Jesus says, my body is me. When she anointed my body, she prepared me for burial. My body is me. My body is not some immaterial things floating out there doesn't really matter. She pours oil on his head. Jesus says, it's not just my head. She anointed my body and she prepared me. My body is me. That's all. We talk. We know it's true. We don't walk around saying, hey, how are you doing? Well, my body is sick today, but I'm fine.

We say I'm sick right? Because my body is me. When my body isn't healthy, I'm not healthy. Well, as Paul says in Romans chapter 12, he says, present your bodies as living sacrifices. We would expect them to say, present your soul or your heart or your mind, your life, or something like that. If we're spiritually using our body life, but Jesus says, no, I want your body to go over to me now when he says, the body, our body is the Lord's.

The Lord is for the body, and our bodies belong to the Lord. He's telling us first that our body counts to him, and second, he's telling us you don't simply own your own body. Now, again, this is a part of the ideology of our age. You know, we teach children because we're worried about them being mistreated one way or another. Don't let people touch your body. It's your body. Don't let people infringe on your body. And there's real wisdom in that. I'm not saying that that's a bad idea, but we say when we're talking about those things, your body is yours, nobody else's. And that's just not true. My body also belongs to my wife, right? She's sitting right over there.

If you don't know who she is, she's sitting right over there. My bloody body belongs to her. And my body also belongs to my children. When they were little, especially, they still need hugs from me. And we still hug and love each other. And they need contact with their dad, even though they're fully grown and my grandchildren kind of own.

My body was just with my grandchild, you know, my youngest one who's 17 months old, you think my name is uppy because every time she sees me, she goes up, up, up and up, up we go. And I carry around until my arms are about to fall off. And I gotta keep my arms strong because of uppy. Because my body belongs to my grandchildren and my children and my wife. Truth. The matter is, my body belongs to my friends in certain ways. If I don't take care of my body, I can't necessarily join my friends the way I would like. Truth of matter is, my body belongs to you in certain ways. It's my responsibility as pastor of this church to take care of my body if I don't sleep right, for example, don't take care of myself when I'm sick. I can't do my job. But above all, our body is the Lord. So that's what we're saying right now. So we take care of our bodies and present our bodies to the Lord. The Lord is for the body, and we should be for the Lord in his concern for our bodies. Verse 14 says, then the Lord is for the body, and the proof is the reason why we can't just do whatever we want with our bodies, sexually or in other ways is the verse, chapter six, verse 14.

Now God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. If if the Lord cared enough to create a body for us, and Jesus took a body for us, and his body was raised for our justification for us, then clearly God cares about bodies. And in fact, Romans chapter eight says that Jesus, when he saved us, had in mind, quote, the redemption of our bodies elsewhere.

He calls it our mortal bodies. He's not denying that our bodies fail. Our bodies are mortal, but he redeems our bodies and our mortal bodies. The body is the locus of sin, and it's the locus of redemption. It's where sin takes place. It's where redemption takes place in the body of Christ who died in the cross and rose again.

And in our bodies we feel the restorative work of Christ. And that's why Paul says, looking at this extreme case, your body is not just yours to do whatever you do. The most extreme case is go visit prostitute. It's Paul says it's crazy. Verse 15, do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? So they then take the members of Christ and make them the members of a prostitute.

Our bodies are united to Christ. It's not just our souls are united to Christ. The whole person is united to Christ. The redeemed person is united to Christ, body and soul. And therefore we love God with body and soul. And we use it as he says. And we don't say crazy things like what we do with our body doesn't matter, our bodies.

A man named Alan Johnson said it this way our physical bodies participate in Christ. They express his presence in the world. Our physical tenderness expresses his tenderness. Jesus took babies in his arms and blessed them. And we, when we take babies and children in our arms and bless them, we're expressing the tenderness of Christ. When you look somebody in the eye, when you're having a spiritual conversation with them, when you give them your eyes, which is part of your body, when you give them your eyes, you're giving them the eyes of Christ.

When you listen to somebody who's troubled and give them your full attention, then it's as if Mr. Johnson says, and I think he's right. It's as if Christ is looking at them and attending to them. And when

you're comforting someone who's grieving by giving them a hug in the context of Christian faith and brotherhood and sisterhood, you're also showing the warmth of Christ to that person.

Our bodies belong to Christ. They are participating. Christ. Paul says. They're members of Christ.

Third argument Paul gives us in verse 16, verse 16 says, or do you not know that the one who has joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? It's not a transaction. It's not a quick a quick event in which, you know, you exchange favors and pleasures. Paul says, no, the two become one flesh. Now, people have said for a long time that, there is on the one hand and on the other hand, there is not such a thing as casual sex. Some people say there is, some people say there isn't. The Bible says there is not. This thing is casual sex. One person said it this way no two people can go to bed in the bedroom and park their souls at the door. The body, the self, the whole person is in the act, the whole person. You give your whole self, your whole body to somebody. Not some little portion. Another man named Lewis Smead said sexual union with someone is not your spouse is always deceptive. It's always a lie because it is a life uniting act. Without a life uniting intent, a life uniting act. You pledged yourself to somebody with your heart, with your mind, with your soul, with your will. You say, I am marrying you and I'll stick with you. And I seal that with my body. So it's a life uniting act and say temporary, just for here's some money without a life uniting intent. So it's always intrinsically deceptive. To try to have casual sexual interchange or, say, personal self-giving, along with the physical self-giving. Paul says it this way in verse 17 he was joined, the Lord becomes one spirit with him. And so if we become one spirit when we're with the Lord, sexual immorality is total nonsense. Why would you want to unite your body to a prostitute while your body is also united to Christ? Now, the solution that Paul offers for us is the practical counsel he gives. And that's the third part, practical counsel about how we glorify God with our body is when you are sexually tempted, ready for this run, run.

Look what it says. It says flee from sexual immorality. That word flee means run away. Run away from sexual immorality. Run away from sexual temptation. The word he uses for sexual immorality is the broadest possible word for every kind of sexual activity outside of marriage. Run from all of it. Now listen, friends, there's a time to face temptation, to stand firm in the face of a temptation that will go on and on and on.

For example, you might have a boss who's cruel and mean and you're the only person who can bring a corrective or rebuke who has this cruel person's ear. And so everybody's getting the brunt, but you're getting the brunt more than anybody else, and you wish you could leave, but you're protecting your people. And so you have to face the fact you're going to be tempted to get angry or despair or quit, and you're going to save people from this terrible boss.

There's a time to face temptation. And the Bible says there is a time to run away from temptation. The Bible says, flee immorality. In this passage, another place, it says free flee idolatry. The Bible tells us to run. There is a time to run when the Roman armies are coming down to destroy Jerusalem and destroy the temple. Jesus did not say, stand and fight.

He said, get out of there. Run, run, run to the hills. And that's certainly true with regard to sexual temptation. We're not supposed to handle it. We're not supposed to resist it. We're supposed to flee



from it. Paul says the same thing over in Second Timothy chapter two, verse 22. He says, flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace.

Youthful passions. What are they? While youthful passions include things like ambition and pride and vainglory, and also physical desires flee from it. In fact, the Greek again, it actually reads this way line by line youthful passions flee, pursue righteousness. They're juxtaposed. Passions flee. Pursue righteousness. Run from passions, run toward righteousness. Now, let's just be really candid. If, if alcohol tempt you the way you handle it, if you're tempted to get drunk every time you drink and I'm, you know, truth matters in a church the size or people of alcohol problems if, if alcohol tempts you, what you want to do is flee. Don't take a little. Take none. Tell your friends I have a problem with alcohol. Do you mind if alcohol is served when we're together? Do you mind just being my guy? And we'll make eye contact. And you don't drink a beer, alcohol or any of any kind. And I'll know we're brothers. Okay, run. You might leave the building.

If you were hooked on tobacco at some point, somebody lights something up that gives that aroma that you used to love. You might just want to run. Flee the temptation. Flee from sexual temptation. Now, of course, fleeing sexual temptation isn't always the easiest thing. When you're maybe working with somebody you find attractive, somebody, not your husband or not your wife.

So what do you do? Paul says a little bit later. I make no provision for the lust of the flesh. That is to say, don't. Don't provide for the temptation by spending time with that person that you find personally attractive, not your husband or your wife. Don't provide for that. Don't go on a business trip with them. Don't have meals together. Don't, you know, don't get rooms on the same floor. Don't provide for that. If you're tempted to anger, you might say, when people are getting angry, I'm going to flee. I'm going to run. I'm going to disappear. I'm just going to go away. I'm going to resist. By going away now, people sometimes talk about, something called the Billy Graham rule.

Have you heard of the Billy Graham rule? Never be a Christian leader. Never be alone with a woman in a room with the door closed. Some versions say never be, never, never should. A man who's in ministry ever talk solo to a woman. I think that's cutting down on a lot of ministry opportunities. It kind of implies that Jesus was wrong, and having Mary and Martha as friends.

But I will say this if you are together with somebody who's vaguely your age and kind of attractive in some sense or other, don't sit side by side, sit at the other end of the room. Don't have your hands on the same document. Flee sexual immorality. Paul says every other cinema commit is outside our body. This one is different.

This one changes our body. People say, well, there are other things we can do with our bodies that are inside our body, like drinking too much or overeating. But we understand the point. It's hyperbole. It's exaggeration. This this is a sin that brings unique dishonor and disgrace and harm to us and our physical body. Not this mean we're against sexuality?

You know, I Timothy 4 says that whatever we do, whatever we receive, marriage and food receive with thanksgiving and with prayer. So we're not against sexuality, we're against sexual sin. And Paul also says, you need to remember that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and you were bought with a price. Bought with a price means the spirit dwells in you. God's concerned with what you do in your body is concerned with you as a whole. You are not your own. Verse 1920 says, you were bought with a price, so

glorify God in your body. But the price means what the Bible calls the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Jesus didn't pay money to buy us, but we were something like slaves to sin. You were bought with the price. That means picture yourself in a marketplace and you're not buying stuff. You are that which is bought because you're a slave. Jesus comes around and says, this person is enslaved to sin and I buy them out of that. And that's a gift of grace. And we respond to God's good grace by glorifying God with our bodies, which means we give our bodies again all the proper care. We eat well, we drink well, we sleep well, not to excess. We give our bodies to our spouse. We remember that our bodies also belong to other people. They belong to the Lord. They belong to our children, to our neighbors, to our friends, to the people around us. We care for our bodies. Jesus takes care, takes interest globally in our bodies.

Heidelberg Catechism says to the Lord, body and soul in life and death glorify God with your body. How do you do that? John Chrysostom, one of the great preachers of the ancient church, said it this way. He said let the I look on no evil thing. Let the tongue say nothing filthy. Let the hand do that which is good. The hand must do alms. The mouth must, must bless, even bless those who curse in the ears. Must take time to listen to the reading of God's Word. He goes through the body. That way the truth matters.

Every good thing we do, we do with our body. Even good thoughts occur with the help of our brain. So take care of your body. Treat it well. I'm going to close with, or almost close with the most frightening thing that ever happened to me with my body. And it goes like this I started working in this passage.

I hate to tell you this, but people sometimes ask, how long do you work on a sermon? The answer is sometimes five years or so. So I actually started studying this passage 15 months ago. Now. I didn't do all the work at the time, but I started sketching something out. I was studying for various reasons, and it was right about the time of my 70th birthday.

And so we had a birthday party at my house for my birthday, and I had grandchildren. And one of them at that moment was three years old. Now, I don't know how many of you remember what three years old is, but three years old is and is often a very difficult age. They've got a lot of juice and they've got the ability to run and talk and they've got the ability to disobey.

And this little girl at that time would run away. When you called her, she would run away. And so we were in the front of the house, just the two of us. Everybody else is out back. I don't know why I was out there, but I'm watching her by default, and she's standing there on the sidewalk and she starts running downhill toward a very busy street speed limit, 35 miles an hour. But there's a curve right there. Cars can't see around the curve, and people routinely go 45 miles an hour on that road. And she's running toward that road, and she's going and she's, you know, there's runners in her family and she's going pretty fast for a three year old. And I say, Frankie, stop. And she looks at me and accelerates and I'm standing, you know, I was some distance away from her and she's running toward this road. And as I pointed out, I'm 70 years old. And I exercise, I still run. And so I ran and I caught her about ten feet before the road. I caught her and a very big SUV went right by. At that moment, I'm not saying it would hit her, but there would have been a really good chance that she could have died that day. But my body saved her life. I wonder what would have been like if I didn't exercise? What would have happened? Would she still be here in this world? I think it's my responsibility to take care of my body so I can play with my grandchildren and hug my children and love my wife, but you never know. Take care of your body, glorify God with your body.

Make it an instrument that can do good in this world. God has purchased you body and soul, soul and body. Glorify God with your body. We, our hearts belong to God. Our mind belongs to God. Our will belongs to God. We're so good at talking about that. In this church, but our bodies participate in Christ Himself. Our bodies are temple, Holy Spirit, so take care of it.

Our bodies manifest God's presence in this world. They do. Hugs we give in the name of Christ is a hug. It comes from Christ. The eye contact we give because we care to listen to somebody is the eye contact. It comes in important ways from the Lord himself. We use our legs, our hands, our mouth or energy. All these things reflect and are part of God's global redemption of his people, of us.

Let's pray. Heavenly father, I pray that we would glorify you with our bodies and lay aside the follies of our culture and hear what you say, that we are going to have bodies forever and ever. They're yours. You redeemed us, body and soul, and you want us to live like the whole person belongs. You. We're members of you, Lord Jesus, Holy Spirit, you dwell within us, help us, instruct us, guide us to glorify you with our bodies.

We pray in Jesus name. Amen.