

Series: A New You in the New Year

Honor God with YOUR Body #3

I Corinthians 6:12-20; Romans 8:11, 12:1

Introduction: Life is made up of a series of decisions and you can only make two kinds: wise decisions and foolish decisions. God is the source of all wisdom, and He has given us the Bible. It contains wise principles that if applied to the most important areas of our life will help us to live smarter, make better decisions, minimize regrets, and maximize God's blessings.

Last week we talked about three key areas that have the most impact on the decisions we make: managing our time, using our money, and handling temptation.

Two thousand years ago, John, a disciple of Jesus, wrote a letter called "3 John" to a man by the name of Gaius. He said, ***'Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.'*** (3 John 1: 2, ESV)

The book of Proverbs is a letter that the wisest man who ever lived wrote to his son to help him live intelligently. He said this: ***'Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.'*** (Proverbs 3:7-8, NIV)

He repeated himself in chapter 4, verses, 20-22 ***'My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to my words. Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to one's whole body.'*** (Proverbs 4:20-22, NIV)

He's saying, Spiritual wisdom contributes to physical health.

The fact that God created us with a body tells us that God values our body. In fact, our bodies are so important, that God is going to resurrect them.

We're in a series called, **A New You in the New Year.**
My message today is: Honor God With Your Body.

People tend to go to two extremes with their body. Some people don't think their body is as important as God does. Other people think their body is more important than God does.

Some people ignore their body. Other people adore their body. Some people focus on the spiritual side of life and neglect the physical side, but most people focus much more attention on the physical side and neglect the spiritual side. **God is interested in both, and God has a word for both.**

STORY: It was right after Christmas, a man got on his bathroom scale and sucked in his stomach as hard as he could. His wife saw what he was doing and started laughing. She said, "Honey, sucking in your stomach won't help." He said, "Sure it does. It is the only way I can see the numbers."

Taking care of our body is a multi-billion-dollar business. You and I are constantly being reminded that our bodies aren't what they could be. And because we look at ourselves often, we often buy what they're selling.

Dolly Parton said, 'If I see something sagging, dragging, or bagging, I get it sucked, tucked, or plucked. It takes a lot of money to look as cheap as I do.'

How you see your body will determine how you treat your body.

Whether you ignore your body or adore your body is not a physical issue, but a spiritual issue.

Some may ask: "Isn't God just after our eternal soul, and not our temporary body? After all, the Bible says my body was made of dust and it'll return to dust so it must not be all that significant, right?"

The Apostle Paul addresses those questions in our text today because the Corinthian Christians were getting it wrong. They did not have a high view of their physical body. They had bought the lie that said you can separate the physical from the spiritual. They claimed the soul was good and the body was evil. So, if you surrendered your heart to Christ, it didn't matter what you did with your body.

So, gluttony was okay, sexual promiscuity was okay, and satisfying whatever bodily appetite someone had was okay because it wasn't connected to your spirit. Your body wasn't going to last forever, so do with it and do it whatever you want. They were misunderstanding their freedom in Christ as a freedom **to sin** rather than a freedom **from sin**.

In 1 Cor. 6, verses 12-20, Paul reminds them that God sent His Son to die physically on a cross atone for their sin not just to save their immortal soul; but Christ also rose bodily from the dead redeem their mortal body as well.

Key Thought: When you become a believer, there is the REBIRTH of your spirit; and there is also the REPURPOSING of your body.

In other words, God wants all of you...for Him. **1 Cor. 6:12-20 (READ)**

1 Corinthians 6 12-20; "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything. 13You say, "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both."

The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also.

15Do 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! 16Do 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." 17But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit.18Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body.

19Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit,

who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies. (NIV) Let's Pray

That last verse says it all. The value of something is determined by what someone is willing to pay for it. Paul says your value to God is beyond understanding because He bought you with the blood of His own Son. That's what you're worth to Him. So, Paul says the only appropriate response to this tremendous truth is to glorify God. Some of your bibles say 'honor' God. It's the word *doxazo*, where we get our word 'doxology.' It means to honor, glorify, exalt, or praise. In other words, our body is to be a walking, living, breathing, doxology of praise, honor, and glory to God in everything we do.

Illustration: In the heart of Kentucky is a facility dedicated to housing hundreds of bars of pure gold --- Fort Knox. Over the years - in addition to gold - the vault at Ft. Knox has also protected the gold reserves of several other countries; the English crown jewels; the Magna Carta; the Gutenberg Bible. And back in the early 1940's it also held the original U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence (Uncle John Salutes the Armed Forces, pp 363-366)

The vault itself is built to be impenetrable - it's constructed of granite, steel, and concrete. The vault door alone weighs more than 20 tons. The vault is made of steel plates, steel beams, and steel cylinders. To open the door, several staffers at the depository must individually dial in separate combinations known only to them. And EVEN the president of the United States doesn't have the combination to the vault.

We know Fort. Knox as a place that holds items of great value. And that's the kind of imagery that God uses to describe YOU – **“you are God's temple and... God's Spirit dwells in you”**

Wherever WE are, not just in church, but at work, school, the gym, shopping, wherever we are, that's where the HOLY PLACE IS.

In these 9 verses, Paul gives 5 reasons we should honor God with our bodies.
We should honor God with our bodies because...

1. OUR BODIES ARE FOR THE LORD.

One misuse of the body the Corinthians were really struggling with was sex. When it came to sex in the ancient world, there were two major mindsets concerning sex. Party-poopers and Pagans. The Party-poopers taught that it was always vile and dirty and should be avoided at all costs. The pagans said it's normal and natural so go for it anytime you feel like it.

Paul deals biblically with both views, because there have always been pagans and party-poopers. In these verses, he sets the pagans straight. And in the next chapter, he sets the party-poopers straight. God isn't keeping sex from us. He's keeping sex for us. Sex was God's idea. Sex is neither to be vilified nor deified.

In V13, he condemns the pagan philosophy that all sex is just sex, and it's ok. ***You say, "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both." The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body."***

The Corinthian Christians were buying into this to rationalize sexual immorality. They had the attitude that sex is just another bodily appetite. So, when your body needs food, you eat. When your body needs sex, you have sex. So, whether it's the urge to eat or the urge to merge...it's all the same.

You hear people say similar things today: 'It's just biological; it's no big deal. If you have a problem with my sexual activity, blame God. I can't help it. He created me this way!'

But Paul says God did not make your body for the purpose of 'sexual immorality'. The word is '*pornea*'. It refers to any sex outside of marriage. He's saying God didn't give you your body to be used for sinful, selfish gratification.

God made your body for the Lord, so it's to be used for Him. Every part of us belongs to Him. We are to glorify Him with hands and feet, eyes and ears, mouths and tongues, minds and hearts, and every other part of the anatomy!

That's why Paul reiterates in verse 19, '***You are not your own.***' You weren't made for you. You were made for Jesus. You don't belong to you. You belong to Jesus.

So, use all of you to glorify all of Him.

Romans 12:1 gives clarity to this. ***"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God-this is your true and proper worship."***

Offer God what? Your body. Why didn't God say, "Offer your spirit?" Because you really can't do anything on this planet without your body.

Sometimes people say, **'I won't be at church next Sunday. But I will be with you in spirit.'** Do you know what that means? Absolutely nothing. It's not possible. **Your spirit can only be where your body is.**

Try calling your boss tomorrow morning and say "I won't be coming in to work today but go ahead and pay me because I will be with you in spirit." He will probably tell you that he will be with you in spirit as you take your body and go find another job.

Paul says we are to offer our bodies to God as what? ***Living sacrifices.*** Usually when you think about a sacrifice you think about the dead body of an animal. God says I don't want the dead body of an animal; I want the living body of my son or my daughter.

Think about the word **'sacrifice.'** When you sacrifice something, you give up all ownership. You give up all rights. You give up all possession. In the Old Testament there was no such thing as a partial sacrifice. It was all or nothing.

Some Christians argue that women have the right to abort an unborn baby because it's her body. Since it's her body; it's her choice. That's not what God says. If she is a Christian, forgiven through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, her body is not her own. Her body is the Lord's. She is to use it for His glory.

Worship is giving all that you are to all that God is. That is honoring God with your body.

A second reason we should honor God with our bodies is because...

2. OUR BODIES WILL BE RESURRECTED.

V14, "**By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also.**"

God didn't just resurrect the spirit of Jesus, but His body as well. If the body of Jesus was ever found, biblical Christianity wouldn't exist.

The bible says after his resurrection Jesus ate food with His body. He said, 'Touch My hands, feet, and side'. He had a real, physical body. When your body dies, your spirit goes to be with the Lord. The bible says, "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." But at the return of Christ, your mortal body will be resurrected, transformed, and reunited with your spirit.

In Romans 8:11, Paul says, "**And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.**" (NIV)

When you draw your last breath, you're not saying, "Goodbye" to your body, you're saying, "See you later." Maybe you're thinking, 'I don't want this ole body back. It's given me so much trouble.' You're going to get the updated version of your body. Your spirit will be united with your new, state of the art, glorified body; the same kind of body that Jesus has.

Philippians 3:20-21 says, '**For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.**' (NIV)

Our updated body version will be perfect and eternal. What Paul is clarifying is the body will never lose its importance. Jesus died for your soul and body. It may decay for a season in the grave. But it will be raised and restored. Your body has a purpose now and in eternity. Your body is for the Lord now and forever. It matters to Jesus what you do with it; it should also matter to you.

Paul's third reason we should honor God with our bodies is because...
3. OUR BODIES ARE MEMBERS OF CHRIST.

V15-17, '**Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! 16Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute**

is one body with her? For He says, "THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH." 17But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.'

The word '**members**' refers to hands, limbs, legs, arms of our body. Collectively connected, Christians are the full body of Christ. He's saying that because we belong to Christ and Christ now lives in us, our hands are His hands. Our arms are His arms. Our legs are His legs. Jesus Christ manifests Himself visibly to the world through us. We are one with Him. The invisible God makes Himself visible through us. Whatever we involve ourselves with, we in a sense, are involving God as well.

So, when we become physically one in the context of marriage, it honors Him. When it's outside of marriage it dishonors Him. Some argue, 'Well, in this passage he's just talking about prostitution.' No, in verse 18 he uses the word 'pornea' which refers to all sex outside of the marriage covenant.

Any time you are engaging in sexual intimacy outside of marriage you are prostituting yourself. Any time you engage in activities with your body unbecoming of a child of God, you are prostituting yourself.

You don't want to do anything with your body that would bring Him into contact with that which is unholy. You don't want to join His body, which is your body, with anything that is sinful.

So, what should we do when we're tempted to stray sexually? V18, '**Flee sexual immorality.**' Not flirt with it. Not fall to it. Flee from it.

"Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his whole body."

He's not saying sexual sin is the worst of all sins; he's just saying it's the most unique. Sex isn't just physical. It's mental, emotional, relational, and even spiritual. There is no such thing as casual sex, inconsequential sex, or recreational sex. God has created the gift of sexual intimacy to involve and affect the whole person. This is true whether they realize it or not. He's saying because sexual sin touches, hurts, contaminates every part of the person... flee from it.

Here's the fourth reason we should honor God with our bodies because...

4. OUR BODIES ARE TEMPLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

V19, *"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you're not your own?"*

Temple has always been recognized as a place of worship. Temple is the recognized location where God is accessible to man. In the Old Testament, God had a temple for His people. But beginning in the New Testament, God has a people for His temple. Our spirits dwell within our bodies and now the Holy Spirit dwells within our spirits!

Within the Temple of our physical body is where we meet God, worship God, and commune with God.

It's interesting to me there are two words in the Bible that are translated "temple". One word describes the entire Temple. The other word describes the innermost part, the Holy of Holies. That's the word used here. Our body where we meet and commune with God is now the most sacred part of the Temple, the Holy of Holies.

It used to be that people went to the temple to worship God. Now God comes to us and within us and promises to never leave us or forsake us.

Your body is a place of worship, because it is a Temple of the Holy Spirit. So why come to a building every Sunday to worship? Because God calls us to both individual worship and corporate worship. We need a balance of both. Three of the saddest days in the history of Israel were those times when the temple was desecrated and destroyed.

- First by Nebuchadnezzar in the sixth century.

- Then three hundred years later by Antiochus Epiphanies.

- And then it was destroyed again in 70 A.D. by the Roman General Titus.

But how much more sorrowful are the temples of flesh, where God has come to dwell by His Spirit because of Jesus' redemptive work, are desecrated and destroyed carelessly and thoughtlessly by indulging in the desires of the flesh.

Paul says how can you do that when the Holy Spirit *'is in you'*?

1 Thess. 4:4-5: ***"...each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God."***

Christians tend to go to two extremes. Most ignore their body, while a few adore their body. Some don't think their body is as important as God does. While others believe their body is more important than God does. We must be careful not to fall into either extreme. This passage sets both of those lifestyles straight. Don't ignore your body, but don't adore it either. Realize what it is, thank God for what you have, and honor God with all of it.

Finally, we should honor God with our bodies because...

5. OUR BODIES ARE BOUGHT BY JESUS.

V20, ***"For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."*** We were once slaves to sin, but we were bought by a new owner. Our new owner is gracious, kind, compassionate, merciful, and forgiving. And He didn't purchase us with something as cheap as silver and gold. We were purchased with very blood of the Son of God. He exchanged His life for ours.

God holds the title deed to your body. The bill of sale was signed at the cross of Jesus Christ. God owns every part of me, every ounce, every pound, every sinew, every fiber, every muscle, every nerve and every corpuscle belongs to Him.

Illustration: At one of our men's ministry meetings years ago, one man said to another, "Your wife is worth her weight in gold for all she does at church."

To which he replied, "I'm going to go home and weigh her and see how much I've got."

If I'm living in a body created by God, paid for by God, and filled with God's presence, that has implications for my sexual, social, and my spiritual life.

I can't say, 'Well, they're my lungs I'll poison them if I want to.' I can't say, 'It's my stomach. I'll eat what I want to.' I can't say, 'These are my eyes. I'll look at what I want to.' I'll say what I want to say, I'll listen to what I want to, I'll go where I want to.' No, I've have been bought with a price, the blood of Jesus.

All of me is for Him. This leads perfectly to our Vision Sunday Theme next week which is ALL IN.

So today whether your body is old or young, healthy or diseased, white or black, strong or weak God today is saying, "I paid for you with the blood of My own Son. I have forgiven you of all your sins and brought you into My own family. You are Mine. I love you, and I want to use you for My glory.

How are you doing with God's Temple? Has the Spirit convicted you of any areas of your body and His Temple that He's not pleased with?

- Are you desecrating it with sin?
- Are you ignoring it with a lack of discipline?
- Are you focused on making the Temple look good, but not on the God who dwells within it?

Here's the Application, here's what you should do with this message, two things. Since Your Body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit, You Should...

I. Do What Is Holy with Your 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." (1 Corinthians 6:19)

When you look at your body you see flesh and bones, hair and teeth, eyes and ears, feet, and hands. When God looks at your body, He sees a temple where His Spirit resides.

There is a reason why our body is called 'a temple.' In the Bible, the temple was a place of worship. That means your body, if you are a follower of Jesus is a place of worship. Since the Holy Spirit lives in our temple 24 hours a day, every waking moment of our body is to be a place where God is worshipped.

Keep in mind that just like the temple, the body is a place of worship; it is not an object of worship. We worship *in* this building; we don't worship *this* building. However, because it is God's building, we respect it, keep it clean and honor it when we are in it. Likewise, we are to respect and take care of this physical temple.

Since my body is a temple where the Holy Spirit lives then it stands to reason that I am to do whatever is holy with my body. You make up your mind that whether it is in a physical way, or a spiritual way, or an emotional way you never subject your body to anything that might be unholy. That naturally leads to the second statement.

II. Do What Is Healthy for Your Body

A. **DIET**

Let me ask you this question, "How would my physical habits change if I began to see my body as a temple that belongs to God?"

A man went to see his doctor and after a very thorough exam he said to him, "I am recommending a bypass." John's eyes got big. Then the doctor said, 'You need to bypass the pizza, the nachos, the cookies, and the hamburgers.'

Over 750,000 people a year have heart bypasses in America. Do you know what is amazing? They must change their diet, stop smoking, and start exercising. In fact, the doctors say, 'Change or die.'

You would think that a near death experience would forever grab the attention of those patients. You would think they would change. But on average, ninety percent of people who have bypass surgery don't change.

I am not going to stand up here and tell you what you should and shouldn't eat. I am asking you considering your body being God's temple should you reconsider what you are eating and how you are eating?

B. **EXERCISE**

Another area to think about is exercise. Paul said this in 1 Timothy, *'For while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and for the life to come.'* (1 Timothy 4:8,)

This verse does not say that exercise is unimportant. It simply prioritizes exercise correctly by saying that *'Godliness should come first.'* A part of being holy is being healthy as much as you can control your health. If your body is a temple, you owe it to God to make it the healthiest temple it can be.

When we take care of our bodies, we will be more energized in our personal life, our family life, and our spiritual life.

C. **REST**

Another area we need to pay attention to is rest. Rest is important to God, and it is important to your body. That is why God made us to get sleepy. We need to rest weekly and that is why God tells us to set aside a day a week to rest. We need to rest monthly. That is why God gave us the weekends. We need to rest yearly. That is why we need to take vacations. Again, all of this is so that we can maximize our efficiency in God's service.

D. **CHURCH**

Did you know one of the healthiest things you can do for your temple is to bring that temple to church? Regular churchgoers on average have blood pressure 5% lower than those who don't go to church. In fact, people who attend church weekly live an average of 7 years longer than people who don't.

E. **GRATITUDE**

You know one of the most healthful things you can do for your body is to be thankful. Medical researchers are discovering that gratitude is the one emotional trait most likely to benefit physical health and to quicken recovery from illness. Grateful people tend to be happier, more satisfied with their lives. As followers of Jesus, we should be grateful every day not only that God has given

us a body, but that Jesus gave His body for our body, our soul, and our spirit. He died on a cross and was raised from the dead so that He could send His Holy Spirit to live in my body and to make it a holy, and healthy.

Health is not just a physical issue, but a moral issue and a spiritual issue. Your body is His body. Someday this body will die, but it will be raised to live with the One who gave His body for us forever.

Key Take Away: Living healthy is a part of living holy.