

## 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6v12-20: Concerning our bodies; the sanctity of the believer's body

Paul gives 4 distinct lines of argument against the practice of such as sin as fornication.

- **v12-14: Holding our bodies for the Lord**
- **v15-17: Holding our bodies as members of Christ**
- **v18-19: Holding our bodies as temple of the Holy Spirit**
- **v19-20: Holding our bodies for the glory of God exclusively**

NT teaching relating to the believer's body:

Rom 12v1: **The sacrificial service of the believer's body; "present your bodies a living sacrifice..."**

1<sup>st</sup> Cor 6v12-20: **The sanctity of the believer's body; "your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost".**

1<sup>st</sup> Cor 9v24-27: **The subjection of the believer's body; "I keep under (buffet) my body, and bring it into subjection".**

1<sup>st</sup> Cor 15v42-44: **The sowing of the believer's body; "it is sown in corruption / dishonour / weakness / a natural body; it is raised in incorruption / glory / power / a spiritual body".**

2<sup>nd</sup> Cor 4v10: **The sufferings of the believer's body; "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body".**

- Gal 6v17: **"for I bear in my body the marks (brandmarks) of the Lord Jesus".**
- Phil 1v20: **"Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death".**

2<sup>nd</sup> Cor 5v10: **The stewardship of the believer's body; "that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad".**

### 1. v12-14: Holding our bodies for the Lord

v12: General principles governing what we as believers should be doing with our bodies.

**"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient"**; our liberty as Christians must be of a Christian character, we should do those things that are profitable for self & others.

**"all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any"**; avoid anything that we could become enslaved by, such that they are governing our lives, and we are in subjection or even addicted to them.

v13: The wrong of equating satisfying the body with food to the committing of fornication.

Food is presently necessary for sustaining bodily life, **"but God shall destroy** (i.e. bring to nought) **both it and them"**; meats and the belly are transient & temporary. But **"the body is not for fornication"**; the believer's body will not be brought to nought, it is not of passing use only, and it is not simply for the indulgence of the flesh.

All 3 divine Persons, Christ the Lord (v13-17), the Holy Spirit of God (v19) and God the Father (v20), are each grieved in very specific ways by such a sinful act as fornication.

Our bodies presently are **"for the Lord; and the Lord for the body"**; as we submit to His sovereign Lordship, the members of our bodies are intended to be for Him, at His disposal & available for His service (see Rom 6v12-13).

v14: God has a great future purpose for our bodies, to manifest His power & glory, in relation to resurrection & bodily redemption, **"And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by His own power"**.

## 2. v15-17: Holding our bodies as members of Christ

v15: Our bodies as “**members of Christ**” are intended to be vehicles for the visible expression of our Lord Jesus Christ here in this world. The sin of fornication would greatly grieve the One to whom we are spiritually united. Paul establishes for believers the total incompatibility of harlotry, and such an unlawful physical union, with believers as being the members of Christ by a spiritual union.

v16: The expression “**one body**” is used for the most serious unlawful & immoral physical union which takes place outside of the marriage union; a debasing & unholy temporary physical union produced only out of the gratification of sinful lust & the desire to indulge the sinful flesh.

Quotation from Gen 2v24, “**for two, saith He, shall be one flesh**”; i.e. exclusive to the bond of marriage, enjoyed by those that God has joined together in a permanent, holy & indissoluble union.

As was established in Eden, the man who leaves father and mother, and cleaves to his wife; the 2 are then joined together by God in that intimate “**one flesh**” union which alone sanctions the most intimate physical relations.

v17: “**But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit**”; i.e. the spiritual union of a believer with the Lord Jesus, which also cannot be broken, for it is maintained by the indwelling Spirit of God.

## 3. v18-19: Holding our bodies as temple of the Holy Spirit

v18: We are to “**Flee fornication**”, i.e. shun it altogether; Joseph “**fled, and got him out**” (Gen 39v12).

The sin of fornication is not external to the body, but the whole body is instrumental to the sin, so the whole person becomes violated.

v19: Our bodies are “**the (inner) temple of the Holy Ghost**”, the sacred enclosure of the indwelling Holy Spirit, “**which is in you**”, necessitating sacred consecration & holiness (see also 1<sup>st</sup> Cor 3v16, Eph 2v21 re divine temple). Fornication, and other bodily abuses, would be a terribly serious desecration of that divine temple.

The Spirit was given to us at conversion, “**which ye have of (from) God**”, as a permanent possession indwelling every believer (see also John 7v38-39, Rom 8v9, Eph 1v13, 1<sup>st</sup> John 2v20, v27).

So wherever we may go in this world as believers, we take the Spirit of God with us; this basic truth will therefore regulate our lives, as we are sensitive to the presence of this divine Person indwelling within us.

Eph 4v30 “**And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption**”.

## 4. v19-20: Holding our bodies for the glory of God exclusively

The believer is to use their body positively as a vessel for God, and exclusively for His glory.

v19-20: Our body belongs to God based on the truth of purchase, i.e. a change in ownership, “**ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price**”; the price paid was the precious blood of Christ.

Such a grievous sin as fornication is therefore a clear denial of this divine ownership of our bodies.

We lost the right of proprietorship to our bodies at our conversion.

We are now to use our bodies exclusively for the glory of God who bought us, “**therefore glorify God in your body**”; we have such an opportunity & privilege now to live for the glory of God whilst here in this wicked world.