

Our Body, a Living Sacrifice

Intro_

The human body is not just your average “thing.” All around the world, the human body is treated with the utmost respect in life, and even in death. In the United States, laws differ from state to state, but in the majority of states, one cannot simply transport a corpse without proper authorization. Numerous laws are written to ensure those handling a corpse must do so with respect, and not mistreat in any manner. The human body is valued in society, even in death. Great care is taken to ensure that it remains as it was before death. But how do we, as Christians treat our body while we are alive? How much respect do we show to our own physical nature? What is this vessel that carries our souls and what is its importance? What does the Bible say about how we should treat our body and the value that we should place on it? This evening we will discuss this issue.

Keeping our Body

The OT law has restrictions on what the Israelites were allowed to do their body. They were restricted from marking or cutting their body, especially when it came as a sign of mourning. [Lev. 19:28](#). While this commandment in itself is enough for them to hear and follow, Deuteronomy elaborates on why the Lord demanded this from Israel. [Deut. 14:1](#). God described the Israelites as the children of God. This is an important distinction between them and the rest of the world. This distinction should have been visible on their outward bodies. The same is true for the Christian. [2 Cor. 6: 17](#) commands us “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you.” When the world looks upon our bodies, they should see something holy, something set apart from the rest of society. [Rom. 12:1-2](#). So in looking to this commandment, we can look back on the things that were pleasing to God in the OT, and see the example he has set for the holy, sanctified body to be cared for and how to appear. We do not mark our bodies with tattoos or any other disfiguring things, especially those that would identify us with a certain non-Christian sector of society. Though it may not be specifically strictly forbidden in the scriptures, we do not dress or style our hair or pierce our body in a certain manner that would give the world the impression that we associate or approve of a certain sector of society that is not Christian in character.

A Sober-Minded Individual

[Rom. 12: 3-5](#). The Christian here is commanded to think soberly. This means that we, as Christians, refuse to pollute our bodies and our minds with things like drugs or alcohol or anything that, not only destroys our body by permanently damaging and defiling it, but also distorts our judgment. [Rom. 13:13](#) “Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.” 1Co 6:10 also advises that drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God. [Prov. 20:1](#). A mocker is someone that makes one look foolish, and that is exactly what alcohol does to a person. A perfect depiction of this is found in [Prov. 23:29-35](#). Alcohol does nothing but make a fool out of us, all drugs do. This is why the Christian is not to put these things into his body. If it alters our mind, our body or our behavior, it is not for us. [Prov. 31:4](#). The same applies to us Christians.

Vessels for God's Honor

Verses three and four of Rom. 12 illustrate an interesting point. It points out that we Christians are members of a greater body, the Church, which is the body of Christ. **1 Cor. 3: 16** records "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

1Co 12:27 "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." We should consider our bodies as but a member of Christ's body. We are members, and vessels of the Church that make up a greater body. The vessels of the tabernacle and temple in the OT were not for common use. They were sanctified for the use in worshiping God and were not to be abused in any manner. Belshazzar found this out when the Lord visited him with a prophesying hand that appeared and wrote on his wall the demise of his kingdom when he drank out of the sacred vessels while honoring his own gods (Dan.5:1-6). Considering all these things, we realize that we should not abuse our body, that is the vessel of God sanctified for his worship, nor should we present it in a manner that would give the world reason to see a mar or a blemish on Christ. Just as ancient Israel had to present a lamb without blemish at Passover to sacrifice to God, so should we, present a perfect body of Christ to God.

A Sin against our own Body

1 Cor. 6: 13-20. This context deals with the sin of fornication. Within the context of this examination of the Christian body, fornication is a sin against our own body. In keeping with his statement to the Romans, calling us members of the greater body of Christ, here Paul comes right out and says "ye are not your own." In short words he says, "It is not your body and you will not do with it what you want." This particular notion applies to all aspects of our lives, including the sin of fornication. If we would not treat the body of Christ in such a manner, we should not do the same to our own body. We are bought with a price! Our souls and our bodies belong to God. Paul describes the sin of fornication as a sin against one's own body. This is true. One's body should not be something that is lightly esteemed and given over to inordinate desires. It belongs to God, and in another sense, it belongs to our spouse, but least of all, it belongs to us. I know it sounds so counterintuitive and illogical, but that's the truth.

Let us remember that we are bought with a price and that we owe it to God to not sin against our own bodies. We are members of a greater body and we must always show that body respect. What holds you back, O sinner, from presenting your body as a living sacrifice to God? **1 Cor. 12: 22** "Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary." Think not that you have nothing to offer unto God. You do. Every member is necessary and you are needed. Come and take your place in the body of Christ. Confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God and be baptized for the remission of your sins.