21st Century Temples – Part 3

# Honoring God with Your Body

## (1 Corinthians 6:12-20)

Today’s message is about real freedom—not the shallow kind the world advertises, but the kind that comes only from honoring God with your body. The world’s version of freedom says, “Do whatever feels good, chase whatever desire you have, follow your heart.” But that kind of freedom always leaves you emptier than before. God’s freedom is different. His freedom heals the broken places in your life, restores what was stolen, and brings lasting change. True freedom is not doing whatever you want; it is being set free from the very things that once controlled you.

As we continue in our series 21st Century Temples, I want you to know this: Jesus is here to set you free. Last week, we saw how He entered the temple in Jerusalem and drove out what didn’t belong so that the house could once again be filled with God’s presence. That same Jesus is here right now to cleanse your temple—your heart, your body, your mind. Freedom is not just a spiritual idea; it is a present reality, available here and now.

The Spirit of God speaks powerfully through Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 6:

“‘Everything is permissible for me’—but not everything is beneficial. ‘Everything is permissible for me’—but I will not be mastered by anything” (1 Corinthians 6:12).

“Food for the stomach and the stomach for food—but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body” (1 Corinthians 6:13).

“By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also” (1 Corinthians 6:14).

Paul is reminding us of something profound—that your body has a divine purpose. It was never created to be wasted in sin; it was created for the Lord. Your body is not a playground for the flesh; it is a temple for the Spirit of God.

Consider this: the same power that reached into a sealed tomb, the same power that raised Jesus from death to life, is the very power that claims your body. Not for destruction. Not for decay. But for resurrection life.

“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 through his Spirit, who lives in you” (Romans 8:11).

This means every believer carries resurrection potential. What feels dead in you—your purity, your discipline, your sense of worth—can live again through the Spirit of God. What you thought was beyond repair, what shame told you was ruined, is not final, because resurrection power still works in you. The cross paid for your forgiveness, but the resurrection guarantees your freedom.

And then Paul presses this truth even deeper with a piercing question:

“Do 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!” (1 Corinthians 6:15).

Paul is saying that if Christ lives in you, then your body is not your own—it is joined to Him. Wherever your body goes, you are carrying the presence of Jesus. Whatever you join yourself to, you are dragging the name of Christ into it. This is why Paul speaks with such urgency. To unite yourself with sin is to treat lightly the very body that God has destined for resurrection and filled with His Spirit.

“Do 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.’ But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit” (1 Corinthians 6:16–17).

Paul’s words are meant to jolt us awake. He is saying something shocking—that your body is literally connected to Christ. If you belong to Him, then your body is His body. Wherever you go, Christ goes. Whatever you join yourself to, you are dragging Christ into it with you. That means sin is not just a private act—it is a spiritual betrayal. It takes what is holy and ties it to what is unholy.

That is why Paul refuses to soften his words. He doesn’t say try harder to resist it, manage it, or make excuses for it. He doesn’t leave room for negotiation. He gives one of the clearest, strongest commands in all of Scripture:

“Flee from sexual immorality” (1 Corinthians 6:18).

Flee doesn’t mean hesitate. It doesn’t mean test your limits. It doesn’t mean reason with temptation. It means run—get out before it grips you. Don’t linger at the edge. Don’t play with fire and expect not to get burned. Don’t fool yourself into thinking you’re strong enough to handle it. The only way to win against sexual sin is not to stand and fight—it is to flee.

Yet here’s the truth: too many of us keep walking into situations that we already know will pull us down. We keep entertaining the very things God has told us to run from. We hold on to relationships, habits, or secret patterns of behavior, convincing ourselves we can manage them, when in reality they are managing us. Paul’s words cut through all of that: if you belong to Christ, then your body is His temple, His dwelling place. And what belongs to Him cannot be given over to sin.

Paul explains why this is so serious:

“All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually sins against their own body” (1 Corinthians 6:18).

Sexual sin is not like other sins. It cuts deeper. It is not only an act but an invasion into the very core of who you are. It wounds your body, corrupts your thoughts, twists your emotions, and leaves scars on your spirit. It doesn’t just affect what you do; it affects who you become. It strikes at the soul, distorting how you see yourself and how you relate to others. That’s why its grip feels heavier and harder to shake, because it touches every level of your being.

And that’s why Paul doesn’t stop with the warning. He anchors it in a powerful truth:

“Do 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; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies” (1 Corinthians 6:19–20).

Think about this: your body is not ordinary. It is a temple, a holy dwelling place. The presence of the living God does not live in buildings made by human hands; He lives in you. The Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead has taken up residence in your mortal body. That means your body is sacred. It doesn’t belong to the world. It doesn’t belong to your past. It doesn’t even belong to you. It belongs to Jesus.

He paid for it with His own blood. He sealed it with His Spirit. And now He calls you His temple, His sanctuary, His chosen vessel set apart for His glory. When you walk into a room, you carry His presence. When you face temptation, you carry His power. When shame tries to whisper that you are dirty, broken, or worthless, you can answer back: “No, I am bought with a price, I am filled with His Spirit, I am a temple of the living God.”

I want to talk to you about honoring God with your body, because it does not belong to you—it belongs to Jesus. He purchased you at the highest cost, not with silver or gold, but with His own blood shed on the cross. He did not stop there—He filled you with His Spirit, placing His very presence within you. And now He calls you His dwelling place, His temple, set apart for His glory, holy in His sight, and free from the chains of sin.

Your body is not ordinary. It is not disposable. It is not to be used, abused, or wasted. Your body was designed as a vessel of God’s presence, a carrier of His Spirit, a temple where heaven touches earth. When you walk, you walk as one who bears His name. When you speak, you speak as one who carries His authority. When you live surrendered, your very life becomes an offering, declaring to the world that you are not your own—you are His.

This means your body is more than flesh and bone. It is a sacred trust, set apart with divine purpose. What you do with it matters because it was made to glorify Jesus.

That is why we live differently. If we belong to Jesus, then every part of our lives belongs to Him—including our sexuality. To honor God is not just about what happens on Sunday; it’s about what happens in the secret places of your heart, in your thoughts, in your habits, and in your relationships. Many of you truly want this. Deep down, you want to live in a way that pleases God and honors Him with your body, but sometimes you’re not sure where to start or how to make it a reality.

Honoring God means surrendering every appetite, every desire, every habit, and every choice to His Lordship. It means inviting Him to rule over what you watch, what you listen to, where your eyes wander, and the relationships you keep. It means pausing long enough to ask, “Does this lead me closer to Jesus, or does it pull me farther away?” That one question becomes a compass, helping you navigate the daily decisions that shape your future.

And so, even if you feel trapped or have struggled for years, I declare that you can walk in purity. You can live in freedom. You do not have to be ruled by your desires. In the name of Jesus Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, you can take back control of your body and your choices.

Paul said it best when he said to the church in Philippi:

“I can do everything through him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13).

Not through willpower. Not by trying harder. But by calling on Jesus, who strengthens you from the inside out. And that same power that raised Jesus from the grave is alive in you. His power is strong enough to help you live a holy life in a sinful world and gentle enough to heal the places in you that sin has bruised.

Paul continued in verse fifteen:

“Do 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! Do 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’” (1 Corinthians 6:15-16).

Here is the weight of that truth. If you belong to Jesus, your body is joined to Him. Wherever your body goes, you carry Christ’s name and presence. Union with Christ is not a theory; it is a living bond. That is why your choices with your body are worship. They either agree with your union with Christ, or they work against it.

You see, sexual intimacy is never just physical. It touches your body, your mind, your emotions, and your spirit. Many refer to this as a soul tie, a bond formed at the deepest level of the heart. When a soul tie is established, a person becomes more attached, more hurt, and more confused than before, because the level of intimacy does not match the level of covenant.

The Bible gives us a picture of healthy soul ties, like David and Jonathan:

“The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself” (1 Samuel 18:1).

That was God-given, marked by loyalty and love. Godly soul ties show up in marriage, in true friendship, and in a healthy church family. They strengthen obedience, protect purity, and point you to Jesus. Ungodly soul ties, especially through sexual sin, do the opposite. They drain your strength, cloud your judgment, and pull your heart away from God.

Paul warns, “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers” (2 Corinthians 6:14). A yoke ties two lives to the same direction and pace. If one pulls toward Christ and the other pulls away, the yoke creates strain, pain, and compromise. Deep bonds with those outside of Christ often become the very cords that drag you from Him.

Sexual intimacy creates a “one flesh” bond that God designed only for marriage. Within marriage, it is safe, holy, and life-giving, because the covenant holds the weight of that bond. Outside of marriage, those ties become destructive, leaving behind baggage, shame, and lingering influence that refuses to let go.

Think of a cardboard box glued together. When you pull it apart, pieces of each side remain stuck. That is what happens with sexual soul ties. Parts of each person cling to the other. The more ties, the more fragmented and confused the heart becomes. With pornography, the counterfeit bonds multiply in the imagination, training the heart to attach where there are no boundaries, no covenant, and no love.

But here is the good news. Jesus came to break every tie that did not come from Him. He declared in the synagogue:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (Luke 4:18-19).

And then He said, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:21).

That means you do not have to stay tied to your past. In Christ, freedom is not only possible, it is promised. Our culture pushes ungodly ties. Some begin with small boundary crossings. Others linger long after a relationship ends. They can even follow you into marriage, showing up in thoughts, reactions, and habits. What the enemy used to bind you, Jesus came to break.

So what do you do? Be honest before God. Admit where you are not free. Remove reminders that keep your heart stuck in yesterday. And sometimes that is enough. However, we often need help walking in power and freedom within the faith community. That is why God gave us the church, brothers and sisters, to pray with you, to stand with you, and to walk with you. The Bible says,

“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed” (James 5:16).

This is a renouncing of ungodly connections, confessing those sins, and laying them at the cross where Jesus shed his blood. Then, with sincerity and repentance giving your life entirely to Jesus. Trusting him and not your feelings, not other people, or the story of your past.

Your freedom comes from Jesus. When He sets you free, you are free indeed (John 8:36). Free to be who God created you to be. Free to walk in purity. Free to live holy. Free to follow His calling. Free to break every curse, because Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, has set you free.

If you believe it, lift your hands and declare with faith, “I am free indeed.”

Right now, the Spirit of God is moving in this place. Chains that have held you for years are snapping under the weight of His presence. Burdens you thought you would carry forever are lifting off your shoulders. Jesus is reaching into the deepest places of your life—into the memories that haunt you, into the wounds that never seem to heal, into the shame that whispers you’ll never be whole—and He is wiping them away. He is handing you not just a second chance, but a brand-new beginning.

The Bible declares: “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17). The past has no authority to define you anymore.

“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord” (Acts 3:19). God isn’t just removing sin—He is refreshing your soul, washing over you with His Spirit, and filling you with new joy, new clarity, and new strength.

Shame has lost its power. Condemnation has lost its power. Every curse, every addiction, every ungodly tie is broken in the name of Jesus. What once controlled you no longer holds authority over you.

You are not stuck. You are not beyond repair. You are not defined by your failures. But you are who God says you are—redeemed, restored, and free.

I wish somebody in this place would lift their hands and declare with boldness: “I receive freedom in Jesus’ name.”

Church, your identity is not tied to your past but to His promise. You were made on purpose, for a purpose—to honor God with your body, to carry His Spirit, and to display His glory. Say it over yourself until it sinks deep into your soul:

“I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well” (Psalm 139:14).

You are not ordinary—you are chosen. You are not forgotten—you are a royal priesthood. You are not defeated—you are holy, set apart, belonging to God. And the Scripture says, “The Spirit of glory and of God rests on you” (1 Peter 4:14). His glory rests on you like a mantle, His Spirit fills you like a river, and His presence surrounds you like a shield.

Let’s take this opportunity to open our mouths and declare it. As the worship team comes to lead us, let’s not just sing a song, but let us release a shout of victory. Lift your voice, lift your hands, pour out your heart in praise to the One who broke your chains, because if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed (John 8:36).

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