

**What about our Health?  
1 Corinthians 6:12-20**

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I am sure that we need a little background for this message this morning. Back on the first Sunday of this year, I gave to you what I called a “Pastoral Challenge for 2009.” The challenge comes from Luke’s Gospel. *51 Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*

I challenged you to grow as Jesus did—in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and men. I proposed that we spend one quarter of the year focused on one of these areas. We have come to that focus on “growing in stature.”

The word here again has to do with Jesus maturing in his physical body at an appropriate rate. The application is that our physical bodies are an appropriate place for us to show spiritual maturity. Hearing this application, most of us moan. For far too many of us, we don’t want to talk about our physical bodies in relation to being a disciple of Jesus. However, it’s right here in Scripture.

**Text:**

12 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. 13 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body *is* not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14 And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make *them* members of a harlot? Certainly not! 16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body *with her*? For “*the two,*” He says, “*shall become one flesh.*”<sup>17</sup> But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*.

18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. 19 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 are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.

I don’t mind telling you that the preparation of this sermon has been difficult. It seems that Satan has worked overtime this week trying to distract me from this preaching plan. On the one hand, I kept thinking how I have miles to go in presenting myself as a picture of a totally healthy lifestyle. But, then I remembered, that I have miles to go in every area. So, I join you as a fellow disciple, making some strides, but needing to make so many more. On the other hand, I found myself thinking at times this week that this subject seems to lack real spiritual meat or depth. I mean last week was Easter and we had such powerful worship and celebration. But, there is no escaping this text—God really does care about our bodies.

Let’s consider the historical context of 1 Corinthians 6. The first thing that you will notice is that Paul simultaneously addresses two subjects in relationship to our bodies being the temple of the Lord. We will introduce both ideas and deal primarily with one. The first area is the things that we put into our

bodies like food and drink. The second thing that Paul addressed is sexual immorality. The reason that Paul could address these two ideas simultaneously is because the Corinthians had a distorted view of the body. The Corinthians, probably influenced by an idea called Docetism which viewed everything having to do with the flesh as bad. The result of this kind of thought was that everything having to do with the flesh or the body was morally indifferent. Many in Corinth would have argued that only those things that occupied the mind or the spirit were of a moral consequence. Paul responded to this faulty view of the body with the idea, "Oh no, Corinthians, 'the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.'" We cannot say that there are areas in which Christ has no control. Christ is Lord over all.

With that background in mind, let me highlight several things.

Notice first the **Theological Issues of a Healthy Lifestyle:**

**Issue of Ownership**—Our bodies are not our own. Our bodies belong to God.

**Issue of Relationship**—This whole issue of freedom in chapter 6 and 10 is an issue of how we are constantly examples to others. In addition, we owe it to our family members to be as healthy as possible.

**Issue of Stewardship**—We only get one body. We must be a steward of that one body that God gives us.

**Issue of Discipleship**—Since we are a Temple of the Holy Spirit, our health is an issue of our discipleship. We will not be mastered by anything, but the Spirit.

**Issue of Worship**—We glorify God with our bodies.

### **Practical Issues of a Healthy Lifestyle: Where Do I Start?**

**Stop comparing yourself to others.**

*Psalm 139:13-16*

*13 For You formed my inward parts;  
You covered me in my mother's womb.  
14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
Marvelous are Your works,  
And that my soul knows very well.  
15 My frame was not hidden from You,  
When I was made in secret,  
And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.  
16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed.  
And in Your book they all were written,  
The days fashioned for me,  
When as yet there were none of them.*

We have to get beyond thinking that skinny Christians equal super spiritual Christians and fat Christians equal spiritual immaturity. In Christ, there is certainly no such thing as "one size fits all."

Stop comparing yourself to other people and recognize that to some degree God made you just the way you are. That leads us quickly to the next idea.

**Start where you are.**

*Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin. James 4:17*

As with all sin, we must be willing to start where we are. We must be willing to confess our sin and repent. We must stop making excuses before the Lord. We must recognize that only by His grace will we win this battle. You must see this battle for the spiritual battle that it is. I like to say that “we don’t win spiritual battles with physical weapons.” We will not win this battle without spiritual weapons. Start where you are. Stop, today, abusing the temple of the Lord and start, today, asking for His grace to make wise choices.

**Be Sensible.**

*For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. 1 Timothy 4:8*

I want to be clear to help us to realize today that we can lose all sensibility in this area. We can be absorbed in physical fitness. Timothy reminds us that this is not what God has in mind either. That is, if you have to make a difficult decision between a physical work-out and a spiritual work-out, the Scripture directs us to choose the spiritual work-out every time.

**Conclusion:** It all comes down to another “ship.” Lordship! Who or what is going to be the LORD of your life?