

LESSON 12



GUARDING THE PHYSICAL BODY

Scripture Texts: 1 Corinthians 6:15-20; 3:17; Romans 12:1-2

How much does one's bodily appearance affect one's witness for Christ? Cleanliness, neatness, modesty, dignity, and inconspicuous attire reflect upon our spiritual well-being and home teaching. The way one respects his own body has much to say about how God and other people feel about an individual.

Our bodies are in our care to house the Holy Spirit and to do service to God. We must yield them to Him for these and keep them free from pollution. We are stewards of this great treasure, the body. If we properly care for all God has allowed us to handle for Him, our lives will be influenced to righteousness.

MEMORY VERSE: *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

1 Corinthians 6:20

We Are Not Our Own

1 Corinthians 6:15 The first fact to realize as we begin this lesson is that our bodies belong to Christ. Our entire being belongs to Jesus Christ. He has all rights of ownership, first, because He created us; second, because He bought us with His blood. This truth is basic for the guarding of the physical body. There is a greater meaning here. Not only does He own us, but when He saves us, He makes us part of Himself. This is the normal and intended position of every person. If then we **take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot**, we are taking part of the holy and glorious Christ and polluting it with the blackest filth there is.

Fornication Is Degrading

1 Corinthians 6:16-18 The particular sin of fornication is named here. This is taking one's body from the pure Christ and making it a part of a corrupt harlot. It is exchanging spiritual union with Christ for physical union with a harlot. The bond belonging to marriage only is entered outside of marriage. When God said **two . . . shall be one flesh**, He put in force a law to bless marriage and the home. To violate this law outside of marriage is to bring oneself sorrow and suffering now and damnation finally. It is sin **against** one's **own body** and that of another. Read Hebrews 13:4.

The Body Has Divine Purpose

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 **Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost.** The body is for more than to satisfy appetites, to move about, and to accumulate possessions. When first made, it was filled with the breath of God. It was made for a home for the Holy Spirit, but sin has hindered God's plan. God will not share room with evil lusts and works of the flesh. Through salvation and the setting aside of ourselves, both body and spirit, the Holy Spirit moves into the body as His temple (John 14:17). Then, and only then, does the physical body fulfill its purpose as **the temple of the Holy Ghost.**

Defilement Brings Destruction

1 Corinthians 3:17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy. Any sin against the body defiles it. Sexual sins defile. Use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs defiles it. Anything which makes the body a less suitable home for the Spirit is defilement. Can we partake of these things and still glorify Christ? No! Injuries, sorrows, diseases, and death are directly caused, many times, by sins against the body. Along with this comes eternal destruction. There are those who do not respect the sacredness of the body—**fornicators . . . adulterers . . . effeminate . . . abusers of themselves with mankind . . . drunkards . . .** They shall not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

Does not reverence for Christ include respect for that which He entrusts to us? One with a proper sense of stewardship will respect not only his body but the body of another. Only a depraved person would encourage another to use that which will harm his body, such as tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or a number of other things. Only such a one would lead another into immoral acts and steal that which can never be restored. To do any of these for money only magnifies the evil. Read Romans 6:12-13.

All cannot wear the best of clothing, but it can be kept reasonably clean. Some faces are better featured than others, but all can be made more beautiful with soap and water. There is nothing wrong with controlling offensive odors with a pleasing deodorant. An old saying is, "cleanliness is next to godliness." This may not be altogether correct, but it has merit. God expects each of us to wear the best he has for the occasion, whether it be to work, school, or church. Shine the shoes, press the clothing, brush the teeth, and comb the hair. This should be standard procedure for anyone having respect for his or her body and for those around them.

No person keeping guard on the body will allow himself to be put into a situation or position which will put him or another into temptation. Young ladies should be taught how to sit properly. A good guide is to sit with both feet flat on the floor.

The Divine Pattern

Romans 12:1-2 We are made pure in Christ by an inner, unseen operation in the heart. To communicate that purity to the outside requires the exercise of body members. Christ puts it in; we work it out. It takes our will and a desire to do this. The people to whom this Epistle was addressed were accustomed to dead sacrifices, bodies of slain animals offered up in sacrifices for sins. Christ, a living Sacrifice, died on the Cross to bring about man's forgiveness. We are to follow that example. There is no testimony, no passing on of the Gospel, no good deed, no Christian expression of any kind without use of body members. God asks that our bodies be sacrificed to Him. Not dead sacrifices, but living to produce daily service to the Lord of all Creation.

Let no Christian say that he does not know how to conduct himself in the social circles in which he lives. There is a divine pattern laid down. **Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God . . . And be not conformed . . . but be ye transformed . . .** Upright living is purchased at the cost of sacrifice. It never was, and it never will be, easy to live a good life in a wicked world. Have times changed? Yes! Has human nature changed? No! Has God or His Word changed? No!

JUST A THOUGHT

**A sound Christian life needs the support of
Christian environment.**