

Not Yours To Give // 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

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Date: 24 May 2026

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[0:00] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee. For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

! 1 Corinthians 6, verse 12. All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful.

All things are lawful for me, but I will not be enslaved by anything. Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy both one and the other.

The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.

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 prostitute? Never!

[1:05] Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For as it is written, the two will become one flesh. But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him.

Flee sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside his body, but the sexual immoral person sins against his own body.

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?

You are not your own, for you are bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Please be seated. Thank you. Several years ago, I heard a pastor say there are three things the culture is trying to teach your children.

[2:10] You've got to be true to yourself. Nobody has the right to tell you what is wrong for you. And in the end, you've got to do what makes you happy. So you've got to be true to yourself. Nobody can tell you what's wrong for you.

In the end, you've got to do what makes you happy. It's the message behind many of the movies we watch. Tired of cultural pressures and expectations? Just let it go. Let it go.

Tired of obligations weighing you down? Just hakuna matata into your happy place, where you want to be. After all, the problem could not be that you need to learn or grow or mature in some way.

Your problem is that no one sees how special you are. As the Lego movie says, the key to being special is to believe that you can be special.

After all, it makes perfect sense, right? But it's not just Disney. It's all over the place. What the culture says again and again is you have a right to choose what you think is best for you.

[3:12] That's why in our self-focused, individualistic culture, there's no value more important to us than choice. Burritos cater now to what we choose.

Coffee, too. Even if it's a tall half-capped soy latte at 120 degrees, you can order that because, after all, it's your world. Shows and movies are on demand for you to choose.

And as I was watching the other night, if you choose a commercial on some Amazon Prime, you can literally click on the item in the commercial and add it to your cart. Because, after all, it's curated.

Life is curated to what you choose. Homes, if you have enough cash, can custom, come custom the way you choose. There's no value more important to us than choice.

That's why we like to keep our options open and don't commit to many things. Commitment is a four-letter word in the world of choice. And there's no area where this value has been more pronounced the past five years than the way we think about our bodies.

[4:20] It's been a revolution. I don't think that's overstated. Many years ago, with the unquestioned acceptance of birth control and the rise of no-fault divorce, it's led to people opposing

legislation on abortion under the banner of pro-choice, saying my body equals my choice.

It's not surprising. It's just the cultural values applied to the body. It's continued more recently with the choice not to decide whether or not to have an abortion or something like that, or have a baby or whatever, but to decide if you're a male, then you may not decide you want to stay a male.

Or a female, you may decide you might not want to be a female, because my body, my rights, my life. But the troubled relationship to our body is not limited to those categories.

We all have some difficulty relating to our body. Perhaps we think of ourselves as too short or too tall, too skinny or too round, too weak, too wrinkly, too plain.

What is it that you see in the morning when you look in the mirror? What is it that you cannot not see? We need, in this ranted, individualistic, self-focused culture, a theology of the body.

[5:47] In chapters 5 and 6, Paul has been addressing this theme of sexual immorality. It's what holds together chapters 5 through 7. Paul urged the church to deal with a man that was in a sexually immoral relationship, to deal with him appropriately.

He urged the church to rightly relate to one another, as Taylor unpacked for us last week. He addresses another instance of sexual immorality in our text, but in so doing, in so many ways, he gives a theology of the Bible for the believer that's just simply astounding.

On the one hand, these verses are the conclusion of kind of the hard parts of chapters 5 to 7. This is kind of, there's some negative, corrective type stuff going on here, but yet it's utterly breathtaking if you take it in.

In our self-focused, individualistic culture, these verses urge us to realize that we belong, both body and soul, wholly to the Lord, to glorify him with our bodies.

In a word where we're going, your body is not yours to give, or not give, or whatever. For you have been united to Christ, through the Spirit, to live for the glory of God. That's a mouthful, but it's vital.

[7:00] Your body is not yours to give, for you have been united to Christ, through the Spirit, to live for the glory of God. And so this text is going to break out with three, like, truths about the body for a believer.

Firstly, your body belongs to God. God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, as the Catechism says. In his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, he does not have a body, and yet your body belongs to him.

Now, depending on your Bible, the translation you have before you, likely, verse 12, began with some parentheses. It began by saying that, essentially, these parentheses are saying, and many translators believe, these are slogans that were shared in Corinth, in the city of Corinth.

These slogans that everybody would have known, even though we can't see them there. And I think they are slogans. I think in many ways, they're repeated several times. All things are lawful for us. It's repeated twice in this verse, once again in 10.23. So these slogans are repeated, but they're also, I think they're repeated without explanation, letting us know that there's something in these slogans.

[8:10] These slogans were well known to the Corinthians, even though they are not well known to us. And so, this first slogan gets at a misunderstanding of freedom. Look there in verse 12. With me, all things are lawful for me.

I am free to do anything I want. Is there any slogan that captures our culture more than this one? And yet, this is first century Corinth, but the, you know, man changed, or the days changed, but man remains the same.

There's nothing new under the sun. And so, I am free to do anything I want. And so, there's few words that, that ring in the chest of Americans, like the word freedom.

I'm proud to be American, where at least I know I'm free. But how much more freedom for those who are in Christ? As our Lord taught, if the sun sets you free, you are free indeed.

That, that's what Eric was prophesying about, encouraging us about. Free from guilt and condemnation. Free from slavery to sin. Free from trying to gain acceptance before God through our obedience. But we must remember the Christian faith, faith sets us free, not to set us free to sin, but to set us free to not sin.

[9:26] And that's what Paul is getting at right now. This slogan must not be used as an excuse for sin.

If we're organizing our life around our preferences and our wants, it's not freedom. It's ungodliness. So Paul responds to these slogans.

It's fascinating. He doesn't unpack them all the way. This is kind of a power punch text. There's just so many things going on. One author says it's one of the hardest texts in all of Paul's epistles. So give me a break.

But, but he does it. He just, almost like a drive-by. He just hits a few things and moves on. All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful. It might be your prerogative to live on a diet of Twix's and Twinkies, but it will not be helpful.

It might be your right to binge on late night shows, but it will not likely be helpful for your soul. That's what Paul is getting at.

[10:27] You may be free to do things, but it's not always helpful. He continues, all things are lawful for me, but I will not be enslaved by anything. Freedom, taken to the extreme, often leads to slavery.

Seconds at every meal often leads to gluttony. Beer every evening leads to dependence. That's the story of addiction. All the freedom of the world contracts down to a single, repeated choice.

If you don't know addiction from the inside, you don't know completely what that means, but you do know because you're a son of Adam and a daughter of Eve. And so, the temptation is to embrace a freedom that gradually enslaves us.

Paul continues with another slogan. Look at verse 13. Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food. Now, likely, your parentheses concludes right there, but it should go, in my opinion, it should go all the way to the end of that phrase.

Food is meant for the stomach, the stomach for food, and God will destroy both the one and the other. So what does that mean? I mean, food, after all, it's meant for the stomach. It goes down to the stomach. The stomach is meant to process food, and God will destroy both one and the other.

[11:45] Well, that's a way of saying, that's a slogan there, distancing the body from the soul. As if God cares only about the soul, but the body, He's just going to destroy anyway.

It doesn't matter what I do with my body, because God only cares for the soul. And so, I don't think Paul's quoting this slogan to say thumbs up. He's quoting it because of what he's about to say.

There's a separation between the body and the soul throughout the history of the Christian church that has not always been helpful. Sometimes we like to think that the soul is the inner person, the spiritual part of us, and the body is just kind of this envelope that we're stuck in and we can't get out of it or something like that.

It's earthly, unspiritual, icky. We don't like this body. The way of thinking and the history of the church led the church at times to emphasize self-denial and fasting and prayer to the exclusion of bodily needs like food, sleep, drink, sex, relationships, referring to those things as merely unspiritual.

Quoting one of our summer reading authors, C.S. Lewis, in a quote I just love. He says, there is no good trying to be more spiritual than God.

[13:05] God never meant man to be a purely spiritual creature. That's why he uses material things like bread and wine to put the new life in us. We may think this rather crude and unspiritual.

God does not. He invented eating. He likes matter. He invented it. I love that. Don't try to be more spiritual than God.

That's why sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is go to sleep. Just go to sleep. But the reverse is the problem in Corinth. Not a dismissing and embracing of the spiritual things and a dismissing of the body, but a belief that the spiritual things are the only thing that matters and so it doesn't matter what I do with my body.

A disconnect that led to all sorts of impurity and ungodliness. They began to think it didn't matter. But Paul retorts back, the body is not meant for sexual immorality. That's what they were saying. Food is for the stomach. It's just a natural urge.

[14:11] The body is for the Lord and the Lord for the body. Contrary to what people think, the body is not earthly, unspiritual, icky. Paul says the body is for the Lord. So he's upholding what the Bible has taught everywhere that man has created an image of God, body and spirit united in one being.

It's not like our culture talks about that the real me is the inside me and I can do whatever I want to do with the arms and legs of me. That's not true biblically. God is a created, being image of God is body and soul.

But what he's saying when he says it's for the Lord, he's underlining something very important. Your body is owned by God. The Lord is the right word. He is the ruler.

He is the master. He is the owner. Paul has said again and again throughout this letter, he's been emphasizing this ownership idea. You've been sanctified in Christ Jesus.

Verse 1, 2 or chapter 1, verse 2. You are God's field, God's building, God's temple as we learn in chapter 3. You have been washed, sanctified, justified as we learn earlier in this chapter.

[15 : 23] All of those are ownership. You belong to the Lord. You are God's property. So no, for the Christian it is not your body, your choice.

You're not your own. You belong to the Lord. There's a claim over your life.

But don't miss what he's saying. What you do in the body matters. Christianity is not about what you do in the prayer closet and between 11 and 12 on a Sunday morning.

That's not merely what Christianity is about. Christianity is about a people who live for the Lord and so suddenly everything matters. Everything matters. Every cup of cold water given away matters. Every word of encouragement matters. Every denial of yourself to serve matters. Every meal prepared for someone who's grieving matters. Every dollar given away matters. Every time you stay up late to help somebody else with their project matters.

[16 : 28] Every sacrifice you make for the cause of Christ suddenly matters. Christianity is not about getting the soul part of you fixed but about you living for Christ body, soul, and spirit.

He just doubles down. I mean there's such a tight argument. He continues looking at verse 14 and God raised the Lord and will also raise us up. So when he says God will destroy the one and the other the food and the body no, no, no.

God raised the Lord Jesus Christ and you know what? God's going to raise you and it ain't just going to be your soul. It's going to be your body.

So you're going to look the same. You're going to look similar. Maybe that birthmark will be fixed but you'll be looking the same in heaven. I just love that. God does not flush everything down the commode.

God is going to raise you up. Your body's not yours to give. You belong to the Lord. Secondly, your body is a member of Christ. Your body's a member of Christ.

[17 : 30] This is very, I've said provocative eight times or something like that so I shouldn't say it anymore but it's a wonderful passage. Striking passage. Your body is a member of Christ.

Look at verse 15. He begins with that question that we sing. Sixth time we've seen this question already. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?

At this point with these questions they're not suggestions. These are rebukes. Do you not know that your body is a member of Christ? Three times the word member appears in verse 15.

Now we read the word member and we think of a voluntary association that includes membership like a country club or a gym or whatever but Paul is not talking about swiping your card to get entry. Paul is talking about something incredible that your body, your shoulders, knees and toes, ears, eyes, ears, mouth, nose, also hands, arms and feet belong to the Lord.

[18 : 27] You're a member member of Christ. What he's saying is your body is so connected to Christ that the things you do with your body are done for him and the things done against you in your body are done against him.

So your body is so connected to Christ that the things you do in your body are done for him and the things done against you in your body are against him. This is the way the apostle that wrote this When he encountered the Lord on Damascus Road, when he was struck down, he fell off his mule or his horse or whatever.

And the Lord says, Saul, Saul, that was his other name. Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? And he's like, Lord, I've been persecuting followers of the way. What are you talking about?

He's saying, when you persecuted them, you persecuted me. There's this connection between the believer and the Lord Jesus Christ, such a way that everything done against the believer is done against the Lord.

But also, everything done by the believer is done for the Lord. So we sometimes say, we are the hands and feet of Christ. I get a little worried about that phrase.

[19 : 41] But it does get at it, the things we do unto him, we do for him. But the shock happens with what he says next. So if you are Christ's hands, feet, and toes, how can you take the members of Christ and unite them with someone in immorality?

Now, in Roman culture, it was common for men to look to other women romantically because they only look to their wife for bearing children.

That's what Paul is addressing in these verses and condemning. He says, shall we take the members of Christ?

Really, the emphasis is, shall we take away the members of Christ? Your body belongs to the Lord. You are a member of Christ. And yet, when you go into immorality, you're taking the member back that was set apart to serve Jesus Christ and using it to serve sin.

Snatching the body part back to serve the Lord. Shall Christ be found in a brothel or in another woman's house?

[21:08] These verses are so striking. Because they don't merely say this immorality is bad. It awakens us to the reality of what is going on. Shall light be joined to darkness?

Shall righteousness to lawlessness? Purity to impurity. The believer to the unbeliever. And may it never be so.

You're the salt of the earth, but if salt loses its taste, how should saltiness be restored? It's no longer good for anything. It's not to be thrown out, trampled under people's feet. You're the light of the world. The idea is you've been set apart.

You're a member of Christ. You take that member and unite it in ungodliness. And shame on you. How can you?

The member of Christ. Paul doubles down with the metaphor of marriage right after this. He says in verse 16, do you not know that he who is joined to another woman becomes one body with her?

[22:25] Then he quotes, look at the back half of verse 16. He quotes Genesis 2.24, the two shall become one flesh. The two shall become one flesh.

As you likely know, Genesis 2.24 references marriage. The two shall become one flesh. Marriage math is different than seventh grade math.

I remember being invited to my first wedding after becoming a Christian. A friend of mine got married and the invitation came in the mail and it said one plus one equals two.

Now, get this in mind. I'm just barely reading the Bible. One plus one equals one. I was like, man, these people are really dumb. You know, I was like, what? What do you? It equals two.

You know? And somebody's like, that's the Bible, man. And so they helped me out. You know, one plus one does not equal two. It equals one. What's the idea there?

[23:20] It's not merely a physical union. What Paul's pointing out is this oneness is a, because you're one physically, you're one in every other way. It's a oneness that's meant to symbolize a relationship in which everything is shared.

You're one emotionally, relationally, financially, and physically, and in every other way. So Paul says, though, the person that goes to another woman becomes one body with her.

What in the world could he possibly mean? How can you become one body with someone who you're not one with in every other way? That's what he's trying to say. Unlike our hookup culture that says you can just do whatever you want with your body and you won't regret it.

Paul says something happens when you hook up that you will not soon forget. Because there's something mysterious going on. God, this was meant to be privileged and careful stuff.

And you unite in that way and it does things to you that you cannot soon forget. And so Paul continues, but you belong to the Lord.

[24:29] You are a member of Christ. Look down there with me in verse 17. Verse 17. So, for as it's written, the two shall become one flesh. But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

Now Paul is taking this metaphor of marriage, if you'll hang with me for a moment, and applying it to the Christian's relationship to the Lord. You are, yes, you become one body with a spouse, or one in every way, physically, and all these types of things.

But you become one spirit with the Lord by conversion. You're one with him. And so if a married man should not become one with another woman, how much more should the believer not become one with one who does not follow Christ?

Because they've been called out a member of Christ, filled with his spirit, set apart for him.

So Paul concludes, every other sin a person commits against his body. Every other sin a person commits is outside his body, but the person who sins sexually sins against his own body.

[25 : 38] Now, sexual immorality is not the worst sin. Not the only sin. But it is an especially damaging and defiling sin.

That's what Paul is saying. It damages and defiles the body unlike any other sin. And there's no other sin that threatens to enslave us and lead us away from Christ quite like it.

Now, all this is so striking, y'all. And, y'all, in our culture, I don't think I've ever said that in a sermon. In our culture, because our culture is so nonchalant.

Our culture is so much like Corinth. Does that matter? Who really cares?

Who cares how far you go? Some people talk about these things like it's a natural urge.

[26 : 44] Others talk about it like it's a game of capture and conquer. People who don't enjoy it early and often are mocked and ridiculed as being square and antiquated.

But it's a sham. It's a sham. It's a fool's game. Because it's doing damage all over the place.

This defiling, not limited to the believer, it's happened all over the place. And my guess is, you know firsthand the damaging and defiling nature of this sin. I became impure when I was eight or nine years old.

I was shown the first illicit image I'd ever seen. Produced to me all sorts of a combination of curiosity, excitement, guilt, and shame. It began a lust that deeply defiled me.

I'd love to take all that stuff back. What this text is holding out is that these things, you know, now you may have a fireplace in your house.

[27 : 46] In the winter months, you may start a fire and heats the house, warms everything up, provides a place for people to take refuge, take their shoes off, let the dogs free. But if you start a fire outside your fireplace, it'll burn the house down.

That's what the Apostle Paul is saying here. Sex is not the problem. Sexual immorality is. God has a fireplace for it. Marriage between one man and one woman outside of that fireplace.

It is damaging and defiling. So watch out. Watch out. Watch out. Flee sexual immorality.

Run for your life. This appears to be a reference to the story of Joseph. And you probably remember Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers.

And he was taken to Egypt. He climbed through the ranks and became an assistant to Potiphar, one of the leading officials of the land. While he was managing Potiphar's house, Potiphar's wife tried to put the moves on him. And he says, your husband has entrusted me with all of his estate.

[28 : 59] There's nothing that I'm not in control of that he doesn't entrust me to watch over for him. How can I do this? But she just continues to come at him. He says, how can I do this and commit this great wickedness and sin against God?

And then in chapter 39, she continues day after day until one day she grabs him and he left and fled out of the house. The same word in the Greek Old Testament.

Four times in that verse it says, Joseph fled out of the potter's house. And the author wants us to make clear, Joseph was really good at one thing and that was fleeing temptation.

And so these verses are meant to alert us that we should share that same virtue as Joseph to flee temptation when it comes. Because no temptation is overtaking you except what is common to man.

And God is faithful when you're tempted. Not be tempted beyond what you can bear. He will give you a way out so that you can escape. And so are you good at fleeing?

[30 : 00] Because you must be. You must be. Your body is not yours to give. It's claimed by Christ. God has united you to him.

One spirit. That's what the Lord prayed for in John 17. That we would all be one. That I and the Father are one. That all of us would be one. That's that unity that he's getting at.

Thirdly, your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. The first two points are largely sobering. But this one is a breathtaking encouragement.

Verse 19. Another, do you not know? The eighth time in the book. Do you not know?

That your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you whom you have from God. So he says your body belongs to God. Your body is a member of Christ.

[31 : 04] Christ has hands and feet through you. You are a member of Christ. He's joined himself to you. Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. All three members of the Trinity are right here in reference to this theology of your body.

And so he says your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. Now he already said this in chapter 3. He said, do you not know that you are a temple of the Holy Spirit? He was talking about the people of

God when they gathered together.

So all throughout the Old Testament, God gathered together with his people. He gathered together in the tabernacle. He gathered together in the temple. He gathered together in another temple when it was rebuilt. He gathered together with his people in their place.

And so he's saying in a way unlike any other, the body or the church is the dwelling place of God by the Spirit. It is the temple. But here he says, you personally are a temple of the Lord.

It's not the same as the church. But it's so wonderful. Two things I want us to see right here. He says, you were bought with a price.

[32 : 12] Look in verse 20. Or end of verse 19, you're not your own. Verse 20, you were bought with a price. The image is from the marketplace.

You are not your own. The Lord bought you outright. In one sense, the story of the Bible is the story of a husband chasing down his runaway wife.

And nowhere does this aspect of the story come into sharper focus than the story of Hosea. Hosea was a prophet. The Lord sends Hosea to marry a wife who's going to run.

So Hosea marries her, but she continues to run away to other people. He pleads with her to turn back. She will not listen. So much so, in chapter 2, the Lord says, be done with her.

She'll be called not my people. She'll be called no mercy. Let her go. But the next scene, the woman is being put up for sale.

[33 : 25] Slave market. She runs away again and again and again. So much so that she's put up for sale to the highest bidder.

And the Lord says, go again and buy her. And Hosea does.

He goes to the marketplace. He outbids everyone else. Can you just imagine? Five, seven, ten, twenty-five. He buys her back with silver and barley.

He covers her up. He takes her home. And he says, you will be mine forever. And the wife who has continued to run away is redeemed forever. One author says, Hosea 3 is the most beautiful chapter in the whole Bible.

And it is. And if you're a Christian, you're a Christian because the Lord bought you back. You were his, the apple of his eye.

[34 : 25] You were his everything, so to speak. But you ran away. You ran to a far country. You saw things you should not have seen. You did things you should not have done.

And you may as well have been a good sold in the marketplace. Piece of flesh offered up to the highest bidder. Because you were chasing whatever had your attention, power, control, attention, and money.

But the Lord bought you back. He redeemed you. The price was not thirty pieces of silver as he was betrayed by Judas.

The price was the highest price imaginable. He gave his life for you. He paid your ransom.

He paid your ransom. Mark 10.45 says, even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

[35 : 38] Gerhardus Vos, which by the way, ladies, is a name I haven't heard in a long time. So you could name your kid Gerhardus if you wanted to keep it going.

Wonderful, beautiful Dutch name. He says, talking about this verse. There was never in human history such an absolute concentration of life upon the single specific task as our Lord here and elsewhere ascribes to himself.

Everything else for him was swallowed up in the one great intent to accomplish this ministry.

There was nothing in human history absolutely concentrated in one single task like our Lord coming to pay the ransom for your many sins.

Many people think the cross is an aberration to the story of the gospel, like something took hold of our Lord, took it, deviated off the course. No, the cross was the destination all along.

[36 : 56] All throughout human history and the covenant made before the creation of the world, our Lord had determined to take up the curse upon himself to bear forever the wrath that sinners deserve to pay your ransom so that you would walk away scotch free.

That's what the Lord did. Hosea 3 is the most beautiful chapter in the Bible, but in so many ways, Hosea is just another glimpse of that hill called Calvary.

Where our Lord, who was rich, became poor. Our Lord, who was righteous, became sinful to bear away the wrath we deserve and to set you free.

So that is what we're celebrating this morning. We're celebrating ransom paid and freedom delivered through Christ. You come to Jesus Christ.

That is what is going on. That's what we're selling. Riches in gold I have not, but I proclaim to you the name of our Lord Jesus Christ who is able to save and to set you free from all the guilt and condemnation of slavery.

[38:06] You have a problem. The problem is not just that you sin. Sometimes you color outside the line. The problem is that you're a slave to sin. You cannot free yourself from sin. You need someone outside to rescue you from sin and set you free.

You are in the prison. You have no keys, but the Lord Jesus Christ bought your ransom and it sets you free.

So that's what's going on. He paid the price. It's amazing. And now you're set apart for him. You know, so often we celebrate freedom from, freedom of condemnation, all these things.

But the Bible never talks about freedom from without freedom to. Freedom from so that you might serve the Lord. You might glorify him with your life.

You have a new owner and you have a new resident in the house, the Holy Spirit. Coming, working.

[39:11] You're not your own. You're bought with price. Now you belong to him. You are his dwelling place. You're a temple of the Holy Spirit.

We're temples of the Holy Spirit because we're raised to new life, set free from serving dead idols to serve the living God. We're temples of the Holy Spirit because we belong to the Spirit.

When they talk about the Spirit, the Spirit is a seal of ownership. You know, you might stamp a cow. Well, the Lord stamped you with his Spirit. That you might have eyes to see him and to love him.

You might have a heart that fears him. That's the guarantee of our inheritance. The idea is heaven is not here. Heaven is our home, but it ain't right now.

The guarantee is the Holy Spirit. This is not going off a cliff. He's leading us all the way home into and through the pearly gates.

[40:14] So we belong to the Lord. We are temples of the Holy Spirit because we're being transformed. We're being made more like him. It is the Holy Spirit that is within us, making us more like Christ and loving.

We're temples of the Holy Spirit because now we live to serve him. Think about this. In Old Testament times, people went into the temple to offer sacrifices to God. Only one priest went one day of the year. And yet you, in your body, offer spiritual sacrifices to God.

Your body is a living sacrifice to God. That's how it all comes together. Your body, soul, is a living sacrifice to God. So live for him and serve him.

Your body is not yours to give. You've been united to Christ through the Spirit to live for the glory of God. Let me invite the van back up if I could.

A few things I want to say in conclusion. Today is Pentecost Sunday. And after Christ ascended on high, which we celebrated on May 14, God sent the Holy Spirit to fill them with power from on high.

[41:30] While everyone who trusts in Christ trusts in Christ by the power of the Spirit, no one can say Christ is Lord apart from the Spirit of God. The Bible encourages us to continually pray to be filled with the Spirit.

Now, what's that talking about? Are we praying to get tingle bumps or something like that? Tingles on our arms or to cry a little bit? No. We pray to be filled with the Spirit. We're praying that we be more like Christ.

That it would be said of us, Oh, man, those people have been with Jesus Christ as it was said of Peter and John. That we might love what he loves. Hate what he hates.

Might walk in holiness and obedience. That certainly might be more aware of his presence. More empowered to serve him. To live for him.

We're going to return to singing in a moment. As we do, we're going to sing a couple songs. We would love to pray for you specifically. I would much rather pray for you than eat a popsicle with you. I would love to pray for you.

[42:36] If you feel stuck in any way, I would love for God to pray. I'd love to pray with you that God would work in you by his Spirit. To help you walk after him, follow him, serve him.

If you need wisdom, help, comfort, I want to invite you to come down. I want us to conclude by praying together. If you would stand with me, I'm going to pray for us.

I actually want to ask you to raise your hand. After all, you might like it a little bit. To raise your hand. Because what we do with our bodies, we raise our hands. I'm saying with my body, what I feel in my heart.

If you don't feel desperate after that sermon, then we need to talk. We say with our bodies what we feel in our hearts. I need you, Lord. I need you to help me.

So if you would, I want to invite you to raise your hands with me and I'm going to pray for us. Father in heaven, we come to you through the power of, or through the work, finished work of Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit who has made us his own.

[43:43] Lord, we praise you. We pray that you would come now and comfort us and encourage us. Lord, we pray that you would fill us afresh with a sense of your presence that you are with us, that you have given us the down payment that we belong to you, Lord.

We pray, I pray, oh God, that you would assure us of the love of God in Jesus Christ. For you did not give us a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have given us the spirit of adoption by whom we cry, Abba, Father.

Lord, we pray that according to the riches of your glory, you would call the spirit to dwell with us in our inner man so that Christ may be with us, that we would know the height, length, and the depth of the love of God.

Lord, I pray that you would convict us of sin, unrighteousness, and judgment. You are the Holy Spirit sent to make us more like you.

We long to be like you. Lord, we pray that you would mature after the image of Christ, that by beholding him, we may become like him, loving what he loves.

[44:51] Lord, we pray that you would unite us as a people. We have been baptized into one spirit, the Holy Spirit. So we want to love you. We want to serve you.

Lord, we pray that you would fill us with joy. There'd be more joy in us than in others when their wine and grain abound because we have the Holy Spirit. We have joy and peace and righteousness and the Holy Spirit.

Lord, I pray that you would make us bold. God, the movement of Christianity is a movement of the Spirit. Oh, God, there's so much we long for in our hearts for this place, for this city.

So continue your work. Let your kingdom come. Your will be done. Lord, open the eyes of the blind.

I pray that you would use us in our weak and frail, far too often failing voices to proclaim the marvelous and the awesome gospel of Jesus Christ.

So Lord, we pray you would come by your spirit, anoint us and change us, inhabit us and direct us to our Lord Jesus Christ.

[46:00] Lift him up that all men might be drawn to him. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Let's sing. You've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.

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