

Prayer Points

Pray for the youth alpha for 16-18's starting this week. Pray for the leaders, people to attend and for a rich encounter with Jesus.

Pray for Louise and Peter Lynch in Bangladesh and their work with the Bangladesh Baptist Church Sangha, responding in communities where the need is greatest.

Sermon Notes



BIBLE STUDY

January 14th 2024

What God has to say about our Bodies: Identity

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

When it comes to thinking about our bodies, confusion reigns. In our secular age, there has been a loss of the body's goodness, purpose, and end. Many people, driven by a lack of self-worth and idolatry, misuse their body through harm or self-improvement. How can we renew our understanding and see our bodies the way God does?

While sin has corrupted our bodies and how we think of them, God's creation is still good. Thus, our bodies are good gifts that enable us to worship Him, love one another and express who we are. Importantly, in the Bible story, the Son took on a body to redeem our bodies, eternally. Our bodies matter.

If you would like to join a Connect Group, please contact the church office 01424 730001

'The Bible has lots to say about the body. With the coming of Jesus, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us"— flesh that was pierced and crushed for the sins of the world.'

Our bodies at times seem like both a gift and unwanted necessities. They aid and ail us in ways that are deeply moral. The neurotransmitter dopamine has been involved in every spiritually transformative moment of life, just as the stress hormone cortisol has played a role in despairing moments. Multiple physiological systems have been involved in desires, from adolescence to the intimacy of holy matrimony, the bond of close friends or times of Christian gatherings. There is no disentangling embodiment from our spiritual lives before God. A number of people seem uncomfortable with this entanglement, and as a result have been relatively silent on the topic. Because it's easier to avoid the topic than to risk blurring the lines between the moral and the medical, the implications of human embodiment remain underdeveloped.

What dangers can there be in paying too much attention to our bodies? What happens if we don't think about them in relation to who we are enough?

Having dealt at length with pride and division (chapters 1 – 4) and the Corinthians' boastful response to incest (chapter 5), Paul moves on to deal with two more issues in this chapter: suing one another and visiting prostitutes. It seems that he is working through the things he has heard about, probably through a verbal report from Chloe's household (1:11).

Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

1. In dealing with sexual ethics and the way people were using their bodies, Paul tackles first not the act but the thinking. What did some in the church think, v12 and 13? Why is important to address the thought processes when we sin?

2. What does Paul tell us about the purpose of our bodies in v13? In coming back to address the issue in v19-20, Paul says **You are not your own. You were bought with a price.** How would these words relate to secular thinking about our bodies and freedom today? Do you ever think of your body belonging to the Lord?
3. In v15 what does Paul say that joins together our body and who we are? How does being united with Christ impact the way we see ourselves and others?
4. Sexual relationships are more than just physical expressions of bodily desires. Two becoming one is a full union of bonding. What then could be Paul's issue with uniting with a prostitute or temple prostitute? Does this apply to sex outside of marriage too? Matthew 5:27-30. Contrast the difference between having a sexual relationship with a prostitute and the Christian's spiritual relationship with Christ in v16-17.
5. What does Paul mean in v18? How does Genesis 39:6b-12 and v19 shed light on his thinking about the body and sexual immorality?
6. Do you ever think of your body being a sacred place for the Holy Spirit to dwell? If we are more aware of God's presence in us, how would this help us to honour our bodies? Does honouring our bodies mean self-care or something more?