



grow groups



## Week 3: Your BODY Is On Loan

### 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

#### GOAL:

To recognize that our bodies are gifts from God and to discover how to honor God with our bodies.

#### CHECKLIST

- Invest in your own spiritual life by participating in the daily Growth Guide readings. (This will also prepare you to lead the question about it in your group again this week.)
- Reach out individually to anyone who did not attend last week. Let them know that you missed them and would love to see them this week.
- Prepare for your group meeting by praying for yourself and your group (feel free to use the prayer below) and reading through this Leader's Guide.
- If you haven't already, plan your Grow Group Pair-Up by connecting with the leaders of your paired group.
- Take attendance in Planning Center, including guests/new members (please include their names and contact info in the meeting notes section). Help new members register for your group using the QR code in your room or at [vrbc.net/grow](http://vrbc.net/grow).

#### PREPARING THROUGH PRAYER:

*Heavenly Father, thank you for creating our bodies with purpose and for redeeming us through the precious blood of Jesus. We acknowledge that our bodies are not our own—they belong to you. You have made them a temple of your Holy Spirit, and we want to honor you in how we live. Lord, help us to flee from anything that dishonors you. May we not be mastered by anything but live in the freedom you have given us. Fill us with your Spirit so that we may reflect your love and holiness, steward our bodies well, and glorify you in all that we do. For those who are struggling, Lord, bring healing, hope, and community. Give us the courage to bring our struggles into the light and to support one another in love and truth. May we be a people who encourage, uplift, and strengthen one another as we seek to follow you. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

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*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25*

## CONNECT & COORDINATE

We will maintain the same rhythm each week this semester:

1. Welcome your group. Repeat introductions if there are any new people.
2. Coordinate any logistics (group socials, snacks, Grow Group Pair-Up, etc).
3. Check in with your group and gather prayer requests. Consider using the following questions:
  - Where did you see God at work this week?
  - Where do you need God in the week ahead?
4. Pray for the requests shared and for God to lead your time together today.

## DISCUSS

- Is there anything that stood out to you from the Growth Guide readings this week?

**Leader's Note:** *We continue to hear from church members what a helpful resource the Growth Guide has been, to get the most out of the sermon and Grow Group discussions each week. By asking about it regularly in our groups, we want to remind our Grow Group members about what a great tool it can be, and give an opportunity to share what the Holy Spirit has taught us from these readings.*

*As a reminder, here are some of the key Scriptures we studied this week:*

- *John 8:10-11 (Monday) Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."*
- *1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 (Tuesday) It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control your own body[a] in a way that is holy and honorable,*
- *Galatians 5:16-17 (Wednesday) So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.*
- *Romans 12:1 (Thursday) Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.*

### **Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20.**

- In his sermon, John talked about 3 distorted views of our bodies. What were they? Which one might you fall into?

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**Leader's Note:** *This passage outlines three distorted views of the body.*

1. *My Body Is My Master – The body is in charge, and its desires must be satisfied. Culture reinforces this idea by promoting personal indulgence, encouraging people to “have it your way.”*
2. *My Body Doesn't Matter – This view dismisses the body's significance, focusing instead on the mind or soul. Since the body is seen as temporary, there's no need to restrain its desires, which ironically leads to the same outcome as the first view—giving in to whatever the body wants.*
3. *My Body Is My Body – This belief assumes that our bodies belong to us, leading to the conclusion that one can use it however they please. Again, this results in the same outcome: unrestricted indulgence.*

*Despite appearing different, all three views ultimately justify the same behavior—using the body however one wants.*

- In verse 12 we see a phrase quoted twice by Paul, “I have the right to do anything.” Why does Paul quote this? Then, how does he challenge this statement?

**Leader's Note:** *Paul is likely quoting a popular phrase used in Corinth based on a false view of Christian freedom. The Corinthians had been heavily influenced by their culture and would have used this saying to justify their behavior.*

*This mindset could have stemmed from a misunderstanding of Paul's own teachings on freedom in Christ (e.g., Galatians 5:1) but was being twisted to justify immoral choices, particularly in the area of sexual ethics (Garland, 1 Corinthians, 2003).*

*They misunderstood Christian liberty, thinking that grace allowed them to indulge without consequences. Paul was using this phrase to catch the attention of the Corinthians to make his next point.*

*Paul challenged their statement of so-called freedom in two ways:*

1. *“Not everything is beneficial”:* *Just because something is allowed or possible for us to do doesn't make it good for us. This echoes Jesus' teachings that true freedom comes in serving God, not indulging the flesh (John 8:34-36).*
2. *“I will not be mastered by anything”:* *Paul knew what the Corinthians were doing was turning their freedom into a new kind of bondage. This applies especially to sin patterns like sexual immorality, addiction, or selfish indulgence.*

*As a follow-up question if time allows, you might ask your group, “How can we discern whether something is beneficial rather than dangerous?”*

- What does it mean that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (vs 19)? What does it look like to honor God with our bodies (vs 20)?

**Leader's Note:** Remember what Pastor John shared: your body doesn't actually belong to you—it belongs to God. He purchased it at a great price—the precious blood of Jesus. God not only created your physical body, but when sin corrupted it, he redeemed it through Christ's sacrifice. This is the clear view Pastor John talked about: our bodies are not our own; they belong to God.

Because of that, we can recognize that our bodies are a gift from God, given to us to steward well for God's purposes and God's glory. Stewardship of our bodies involves three things:

1. Accept the bodies we are given as a good gift from God, even if we might wish for something different.
2. Care for our bodies with good nutrition, exercise, sleep, and avoiding harmful substances.
3. Use our bodies for God's glory, not to serve ourselves but in service of God and others, joining God in the wonderful things he's doing.

Remember how Pastor John put it?

- We use our feet to take us to people who need his love.
- We get on our knees to pray that his name would be hallowed and that his kingdom would come.
- We use our shoulders to bear the burdens of others.
- We use our hands to serve those who are in need.
- We use our eyes to truly see the people around us.
- We use our ears to listen with compassion to the hurting.
- We use our mouths to praise God and to bless and encourage others.

When we do these things, we experience God's blessing and the fullness of God's joy.

- While there are many ways that we can have a distorted view of our bodies, why does Paul emphasize fleeing from sexual immorality (vs 15-18)? How does sexual sin uniquely affect our bodies?

**Leader's Note:** Paul reminds the Corinthians that their bodies are members of Christ (v.15), meaning that believers are spiritually united with Christ. Engaging in sexual immorality (Greek: *porneia*, referring broadly to any sexual activity outside of God's design) defiles that union. David Garland writes, "Sexual immorality is not just a personal choice; it is a rejection of God's design for the body and a denial of his ownership over us" (1 Corinthians, 2003).

Unlike other temptations, Paul does not say to resist or endure—he says to flee (*pheugō* in Greek, meaning to escape immediately and decisively). As Pastor John pointed out, this echoes Joseph's response in Genesis 39:12 when he fled from Potiphar's wife rather than entertain temptation. Paul's urgency suggests that sexual sin has a uniquely powerful grip, and the best response is not to rationalize but to run away.

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*Sexual sin can lead to damaging consequences physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The reference to being “one flesh” (v.16) comes from Genesis 2:24, reinforcing that sex is not just physical but deeply spiritual. Sexual sin is not just about breaking a rule—it’s about misusing something sacred.*

*Remember how Pastor John put it? He said, “Sex is more powerful than we think. When misused, it’s more dangerous than we think, but when we submit our sexuality to God and commit to honoring him with our bodies, it’s more beautiful than we think.”*

- As you think about your own life and stewarding your body well, what do you need to flee from and what do you need to walk toward?

**Leader’s Notes:** *Remember, Paul’s instructions in 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 emphasize both what believers should flee from (sexual immorality and sin that misuses the body) and what they should pursue (a life that honors God with their bodies). This principle applies beyond just sexual purity—it extends to how we steward our bodies in all aspects of life.*

*Beyond sexual sin, we may also need to flee from:*

1. *Addictive behaviors – Overeating, substance abuse, or any habit that masters us (v.12).*
2. *Laziness or neglect – Failing to care for our physical health can be a form of poor stewardship.*
3. *Cultural messages that distort body image.*
4. *Guilt and shame – Some may need to flee from a mindset of self-condemnation and embrace the grace of Christ, who redeems and restores (Romans 8:1).*

*Gordon Fee notes that “fleeing is not simply about avoiding sin, but about recognizing that certain temptations hold a uniquely strong grip, requiring decisive action to escape” (The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 1987).*

*By contrast, honoring God with our bodies means actively pursuing a lifestyle that reflects God’s presence within us. This might mean intentionally moving toward:*

1. *Holiness in sexual purity – Living in obedience to God’s design for relationships and sexuality (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5).*
2. *Healthy stewardship – Caring for our bodies through good habits like rest, exercise, and nourishment (1 Timothy 4:8).*
3. *Using our bodies for service and worship – Romans 12:1 calls believers to “offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.”*
4. *Spiritual disciplines – Prayer, fasting, and self-control help align our physical actions with our spiritual calling (Galatians 5:22-23).*

*Anthony Thiselton points out that honoring God with our bodies is not just about what we avoid but about actively living in a way that reflects God’s ownership over us (The First Epistle to the Corinthians: NIGTC, 2000). Take time to affirm your group in the commitments they’ve shared and encourage them as they seek to increasingly honor God with their bodies this week.*

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## DISCUSS & PRAY

**Leader's Notes:** For this final question and prayer time, consider dividing into smaller groups of 3-5 people of the same gender. We don't want to pressure anyone to share if they don't want to, but you may also remind your group that temptation and sin grows best when stays hidden in the dark. If they are willing to bring it into the light and share, they can find encouragement and support from the group as they seek to take a next step of obedience to God.

- At the end of the sermon, Pastor John encouraged us to make a commitment to one specific way that you will honor God with your body (sexual purity, healthy eating, exercise, sleep, etc.). Would you be willing to share your commitment with the group so we can affirm you and pray for you?

**Leader's Notes:** Remember (and if you split into smaller groups, remind the groups), how you respond when someone risks vulnerability to share is important. Listen attentively and without judgment. Affirm their courage in bringing their struggle or commitment into the light. Avoid offering immediate advice or trying to "fix" their situation—this time is about encouragement and support, not problem-solving. The pastoral staff will be sharing resources this week by email for anyone who does need tools to help address some of these specific areas. If someone shares a struggle, remind them of God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit to transform and strengthen them (2 Corinthians 12:9).

After everyone has had a chance to share (if they are willing), encourage the group to check in with one another in the coming weeks for accountability and prayer. Close this time by praying for each person's commitment, asking God to give them strength and perseverance in their desire to honor Him with their body.

Remind the group that this is not about perfection but about progress in obedience—God is patient and faithful to help us grow (Philippians 1:6).