

1 Corinthians 6:12-20 (NIV)

**12** “I have the right to do anything,” you say—but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but I will not be mastered by anything.

**13** You say, “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both.” The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

**14** By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also.

**15** Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never!

**16** Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, “The two will become one flesh.”

**17** But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit

**18** Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body.

**19** Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;

**20** you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

Good Morning, my Brothers and Sisters in Christ. I greet you this morning with one of Paul's standard greetings. "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ." We are in an interesting season, we have spent some time talking about our personal temples, our bodies, as reflected in OT scripture and now we move to NT with the same general theme, taking care of our bodies and keeping them holy for God.

We will have 3, possibly 4 lessons during July from Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth.

The letter was written c. 55 toward the close of Paul's three-year residency in Ephesus (see [16:5-9](#); [Ac 20:31](#)). Corinth was a thriving city; it was at the time the chief city of Greece both commercially and politically and had been since the early 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

Like any large commercial city, Corinth was a center for open and unbridled immorality. The worship of Aphrodite (the goddess of love) fostered prostitution in the name of religion. At one time 1,000 sacred (priestess) prostitutes served her temple. So widely known was the immorality of Corinth that the Greek verb "to Corinthianize" came to mean "to practice sexual immorality." In a setting like this it is no wonder that the Corinthian church was plagued with numerous problems.

It is clear that, although the church was gifted (see [1:4-7](#)), it was (also) immature and unspiritual ([3:1-4](#)). **Paul's purposes for writing were:**

- (1) to instruct and restore the church in its areas of weakness, correcting erroneous practices such as divisions ([1:10](#) -- [4:21](#)), immorality (ch. [5](#); [6:12-20](#)), litigation in pagan courts ([6:1-8](#)) and abuse of the Lord's Supper ([11:17-34](#));
- (2) to correct false teaching concerning the resurrection (ch. [15](#)); and
- (3) to answer questions addressed to Paul in the letter that had been brought to him.

This letter continues to be timely for the church today, both to instruct and to inspire. Christians are still powerfully influenced by their cultural environment, and most of the questions and problems that confronted the church at Corinth are still very much with us -- problems like immaturity, instability, divisions, jealousy and envy, lawsuits, marital difficulties, sexual immorality and misuse of spiritual gifts. Yet in spite of this concentration on problems, Paul's letter contains some of the most familiar and beloved chapters in the entire Bible -- e.g., ch. [13](#) (on love) and ch. [15](#) (on resurrection).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.biblestudytools.com/1-corinthians/>

Today I am going to focus on vv. 19-20 from the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter.

*<sup>19</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; <sup>20</sup> you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.*

As I was researching this sermon I saw the words "I want \$3 worth of God"<sup>2</sup> and it make me think about those days when \$3 worth of anything would make a difference. As I considered the idea it became clear that I might be able to teach a message on sexual immorality and taking care of our bodies by using a car as an example. You know, when we could pull into a gas station and an attendant would come out and we could ask for \$3 worth of gas and it would get us somewhere. Therefore I ask you to pray with me and for me as I work with this theme:

### **HOW MUCH GOD DO YOU WANT IN YOUR TANK?**

SHALL WE PRAY!

Father God we are your children and we get caught up in the sins of our world just like the new Christians in Corinth. We come now, seeking a Word that will help us to renew our commitment to you. We were born into a sinful world, and sometimes we are guilty of finding comfort in the thought that all of us have sinned and fallen short of your Word. But Father, I ask that you help each of us to review our actions and attitudes, and according to your word work to be pleasing to you. Help us to understand that you wish to fill our entire bodies with the gift of the Holy Spirit. We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus the Christ. AMEN and AMEN.

### **HOW MUCH GOD DO YOU WANT IN YOUR TANK?**

Does anyone remember when you first learned to drive? Maybe it was in driver's education class, maybe a friend or neighbor worked with you or

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.sermoncentral.com/print\\_friendly.asp?SermonID=100486](http://www.sermoncentral.com/print_friendly.asp?SermonID=100486)

maybe your parents took a deep breath, prayed a simple prayer for patience and courage and began the task of teaching you how to drive. Finally the day came where you knew you were ready. You made the journey to the Department of Motor Vehicles to take the test. You were successful and left the office as a legal, licensed driver. If you were like many of us those first months/years of driving were in someone else's car.

With the license and the borrowed car came responsibility. There were rules you had to obey that had been outlined in the *Rules of the Road* and there were rules outlined by the owner of the car. Since I can't possibly know all of the rules you were given I will share a few of mine.

**Don't let anyone else drive the car**

**Don't pick up strangers, hitch hikers**

**Do tell me where you are going and the route you will take**

**Do walk around the car when you return and check for damage**

**Do return the car with gas**

**Do tell me the truth about what happen**

I imagine there are a few other rules you might be able to add from your own experiences, but I think these might be enough to make the point of this scripture. Now remember to get the most of what I am attempting to teach you need to think of your bodies as a car and the fuel/gasoline, as the Holy Spirit or Word of God.

**Do not let anyone else drive the car!**

This is not a rule in the *Rules of the Road* book. But this may the rule of the owner of the car. There are many reasons not to let someone else drive the car; among them are the insurances implications, weather they have a license and weather of not they are a good driver.

**Do not pick up strangers or hitchhikers!**

Illinois is reported to be a state that is very hard on hitchhikers. Although the law says you may not stand where motor vehicles operate to ask for a ride if you are asking for rides in a parking lot or a restaurant you are not operating against the laws of IL. But when you pick up strangers you are in danger of putting yourself in danger. Strangers and hitchhikers have been known to become thieves, carjackers and murderers.

**Do tell me where you are going and the route you will take!**

This was my father's rule and as a result I have a very good sense of direction. It was designed to help me make correct decisions regarding parking, location of the nearest gas station and relieve some of his anxiety about where I was going. My father also maintained the right to know where his car was going!

**Do walk around the car when you return and check for damage**

When you park on the street or in a parking garage there is always the possibility of the car being hit, vandalized, or in some other way tampered with. The first question the owner of the car will ask is where did this happen. Why? Because that is the first question the insurance company will ask.

**Do check the gas tank and return the car with gas**

In other words return the car in the same condition it was when you borrowed it.

**Do tell the truth about what happen**

As much as you tried to remember the rules of driving and taking care of a borrowed car sometimes you forget a step, made a poor decision, or let someone talk you into something. My father's rules were simple – tell me the truth about what happened.

Well, Paul writes to the church at Corinth and reminds them that their bodies are not their own.

*<sup>19</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit,  
who is in you, whom you have received from God?*

*You are not your own;  
<sup>20</sup> you were bought at a price.*

### **Don't let anyone else drive the car – Don't let anyone else drive your body!**

Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. The blood of Jesus redeemed your body. Your body is not your own it belongs to the Creator and the Redeemer. If you are not going to let anyone else drive your car, why would you let someone or something else drive your body?

### **Don't pick up strangers and hitchhikers – Don't let your body pick-up strange habits!**

As we have said before the bad habits of those around us can influence us. We don't want to be an outsider, so we go places we really don't want to go. We smoke and drink things we would not want everyone to know about. We exercise our freedom to pick and choose our friends and our habits with very little thought to the outcome. If a stranger can't ride in your car, why do you give them permission to ride on your back, in your mind or inside your body?

### **Do tell me where you are going and the route you will take!**

I am not sure, but I wonder if I said "Father God I am taking this body that your Son died for ...."

out drinking and I can get drunk because we have a designated  
driver  
to the video gaming place and if I lose that's ok I get paid next  
week  
out looking for what I can't get at home

Would that change my destination?

**Do walk around the car when you return and check for damage!  
Do tell me the truth about what happen**

What would happen and how would you behave if you knew that every time, not some of the time, but every time you returned with God's body, from doing what you wanted to do - you had to stand naked in front of a full body mirror and explain to God, the owner of the body, where you had taken it and what you had allowed to happen to it.

**Do return the car with gas!**

When you professed a hope in Christ. When you declared in this place that you wish to be in relationship with other believers. When you said I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back, no turning back. God the Father said welcome home. God the Son promised to intercede on your behalf and the Holy Spirit came to dwell within you.

But when you decide to act as you wish to act and the way you wish to act has nothing to do with how God wishes for you to act - you will run out of gas - the Holy Spirit cannot dwell in evil and sin.

*<sup>17</sup> But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit*

If I let my gas tank get empty it takes at least \$60 to fill it. It makes no sense to drive to the gas station and pump \$3 worth of gas - that is less than a gallon and will get me about 10 miles.

My sisters and brothers, my Kingdom Seekers and friends I pray that you begin to understand that \$3 worth of God will not get you very far, either. \$3 worth of God might make you feel good but it won't transform you. \$3 worth of God leaves enough room in your tank for something else to fill the empty spaces. \$3 worth of God is not enough God for you to share with anyone else. \$3 worth of God will run out before the week is over and you can get back to church. \$3 worth of God will let you put social

networking, texting and entertainment in front of God. \$3 worth of God will make you think you know the word and the will of God because you have always been in church – not because you study and pray to understand His word and His will. \$3 worth of God will keep you from speaking to other Christians because they disagree with you. \$3 worth of God will leave you like the church at Corinth:

immature, unstable, jealous, marital difficulties,  
sexual immoral and misusing the gifts God has given.

**HOW MUCH GOD DO YOU WANT IN YOUR TANK?**

I pray it is enough to allow you to honor God with your bodies.