

## The Church of the Servant King

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### Survey of the Bible Series – Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians

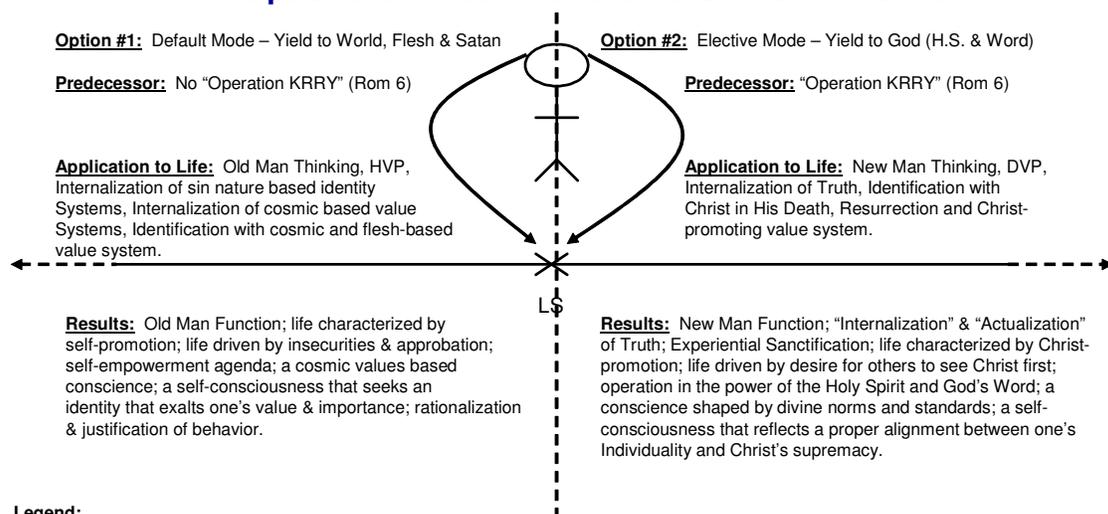
(SB\_1Cor6B\_The Body is the Lord’s)

#### THE BODY IS THE LORD’S (6:12-20)

12 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything. 13 Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. 14 Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power. 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! 16 Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, "THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH." 17 But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. 18 Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

This is one of the more important passages in Scripture that addresses the divine viewpoint perspective of the human body. It also discloses another example of “old-man thinking” or human viewpoint that resulted from the Corinthian believers having rationalized and having attempted to justify their “old-man function” or carnal (fleshly-based) behavior.

#### Two Options for Phase 2 of the Believer’s Existence



#### Legend:

LS – Life Situation; a decision point in life regarding how one will respond with thought and action in relation to other people, circumstances, etc.

HVP – Human ViewPoint.

DVP – Divine ViewPoint.

KRRY – the concept of “knowing,” “reckoning” ourselves as having died with Christ, “reckoning” ourselves as having been resurrected with Christ, and “yielding” to the Holy Spirit and Truth. Obtained from Romans 6 (esp. 6:6, 11, 13) and terms used in the KJV. This acronym captures the essence of Paul’s instruction regarding the process or mechanics of the believer “working out” his or her salvation in Phase 2 – i.e. the “spiritual” life or walk of faith.

Internalization – a term used to describe the resulting effects upon the believer’s soul of having applied Operation KRRY. Internalization is defined as follows - “to make internal, personal or subjective ... to take in and make an integral part of one’s belief. *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*, retrieved July 20, 2008 from Dictionary.com website – [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com).

Actualization - a term used to describe the visible effects in the believer’s life of having applied Operation KRRY. Actualization is defined as follows – “to realize in action or make real” and “to describe or portray realistically.” *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*, retrieved July 20, 2008 from Dictionary.com website – [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com).

*What is the backdrop for Paul's exhortations in this passage?* Apparently, some of the believers in Corinth were visiting prostitutes (perhaps the prostitutes associated with the Temple of Aphrodite). They had *rationalized* their behavior and were attempting to *justify* their actions – even arguing their right to do so. They had taken advantage of Paul's teaching on Christian liberty – freedom from the constraints and rules imposed by the Mosaic Law. Their rationale would have likely progressed along the following line of logic.

- Rationalization:
  - We (i.e. Corinthian believers) are people born anew of the Holy Spirit.
  - Since we have been born anew of the Holy Spirit, we have been placed in the realm of the Spirit.
  - Our physical bodies will perish away.
  - Precedent and example is found in the intake of food for the body.
  - Since the physical activity of eating and digesting food (“food for the stomach and the stomach for food”) does not have any bearing upon our “spirituality,” other types of promiscuous and sensual activities involving the body have no effect upon our “spirituality.”
- Justification of Behavior:
  - What we do with our physical bodies has no relation to our spiritual nature.
  - Sex outside of marriage has no effect upon our “spirituality.”

In this passage, Paul is attacking their rationale by which they have attempted to justify their behavior. Paul realized that the Gospel was at stake in the city of Corinth and throughout the world if this activity went unchecked.

The Corinthians' false understanding of their liberty and freedom and their false dichotomy between the spiritual and the body (God was going to destroy the body anyway, so anything done in the flesh didn't matter) led them to rationalize their false norms and standards. They had not changed their thinking (“repented”) from old man thinking to new man thinking and had clung to the false norms and standards of the cosmos and the flesh. They had rationalized and justified their thinking and behavior to the point that their conscience (norms and standards) was not at variance with their actions even though their conscience was completely misaligned with DVP norms and standards.

Paul denies the argument of a parallel between eating and digesting food as a natural process and practicing sexual immorality as a natural process. Paul was not a prude. As we shall see, he promotes sex in marriage – and even encourages it (7:3-5; cf. also Heb 13:4).

3 The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. 4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5 Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. (1 Cor 7:3-5)

4 Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge. (Heb 13:4)

He portrays it as holy and when practiced by a Christian man and woman in marriage to be a picture of the union between Christ and the Body of Christ (Eph 5:22-33). Paul's picture of Christian marriage and sex in marriage is anything but prudish.

22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 26 so that He

might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. 28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; 29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, 30 because we are members of His body. 31 FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. 32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband. (Eph 5:22-33)

The Bible's view of sex in marriage is uplifting and presented in an honorable way. Consider the *Song of Solomon* which certain religious types in Church history debated as to whether it should be included in the Canon of Scripture or not due to its vivid descriptions of sexual desire between a man (Solomon) and the woman who was the object of his desire for a wife (the Shulamite woman).

The DVP is that the body is part of what the Lord saved and sanctified. As Paul later elaborates more fully in his letter to the believers of Rome, we are to "know" that our "old man" (i.e. our sin nature and its desires) has been crucified (i.e. put to death) with Christ in order "that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin." We are to "consider" (i.e. "reckon" in the KJV) ourselves (including our bodies) to have been dead to sin and made alive to God in Christ Jesus. Sex outside of marriage is viewed without exception in Scripture as contrary to God's desire for man – thus, sin.

Paul also reminds his readers that the Lord has not only a Phase 2 purpose for our bodies, but He has a Phase 3 purpose for our bodies (1 Cor 6:14 – "*Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power*") – the resurrection, at which time our temporal bodies are transformed into eternal bodies capable of residence in the midst of the God-human, Jesus Christ as well as all other holy created beings (i.e. angels). (Some in Corinth had difficulties with the doctrine of the resurrection and Paul will address this doctrine in detail in chapter 15).

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! 16 Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, "THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH." 17 But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. 18 Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. (1 Cor 6:15-18)

Paul's spiritual logic is that since we are members of Christ's body, so our bodies are members of Him and belong to Him. When a Christian has sexual relations with a prostitute, he or she takes what belongs to God and gives it to someone else. This is effectively stealing from God.

This does not occur in marriage since God has designed Christian marriage to be symbolic of Christ's relationship and union with His Body, the Church Age body of believers. The divine perspective of sexual union within marriage between two believers is that it is to be understood by the two partners to be not just an act to satisfy one's own sensual desires, but it has much higher significance. The physical, emotional and soul-ish bond between Christian marriage partners that occurs in association with sexual relations is directly related to each person's (and the couple's) spiritual dimension. The two believers are submitting to each other during sex. The authority of the husband in the home and marriage is suspended and is not a

part of the time of sexual intimacy. Two will become one and thus reflect the believer in perfect submission to Christ as the head of the Church universal – just as Christ was in perfect submission to the Father’s will during His time on earth. This is what is in view in the reference to two people becoming "one flesh" in Genesis 2:24.

19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body. (1 Cor 6:19-20)

The reason that fornication and adultery are viewed in the Bible as more destructive to the individual is that the sin affects the souls of at least two people and it distorts God’s greater purpose in it. Abstinence may correct the effects of gluttony or drunkenness, but the effects of sexual sins are comparable to baggage in the soul – not to mention the distortion of the spiritual dimensions of sex. Sex outside of marriage involves placing the body, which is the Lord’s (vv. 19-20), under the control of another illegitimate partner (cf. 7:4 – *“The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does”*).

In verse 19, Paul asks another rhetorical question. Previously Paul taught his readers that the Corinthian church was a temple (*naos*; 1 Cor 3:16 – “Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”). The believer’s body is also a temple (v. 19 – *“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you”*).

The Holy Spirit is indwelling each of these temples – bodies of believers (Rom. 8:9 – “However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him”). He is a gift to us from God (cf. 1 Thess 4:8 – “So, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you”). Furthermore, God has purchased (Gr. *agorazo*) every Christian with a great price, the blood of Jesus Christ (Rom 3:24-25; Eph 1:7; et al.). We belong to Him for a second reason.

Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; 25 whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed. (Rom 3:24-25)

7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace. (Eph 1:7)

In view of this we should glorify God in our bodies rather than degrading Him (cf. Rom 12:1-2).

1Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies** a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (Rom 12:1-2)

Usually the New Testament emphasis is on redemption leading to freedom from sin – i.e. the results of our identification with Christ in His death (e.g., Gal. 3:13; 4:5; Rev. 5:9; 14:3); however, here it is on redemption leading to faithfulness to God – i.e. the results of our identification with Christ in His resurrection. Even our physical bodies are to be faithful to the Lord with whom we are joined.

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us--for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"-- (Gal 3:13)

5so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. (Gal 4:5)

9And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. (Rev 5:9)

3And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth. (Rev 14:3)

### **CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER 6**

What Paul seems to be doing in this passage is to begin his instruction from their own theological starting point, namely, that they are 'spiritual' because they have the Spirit and that the body doesn't matter. He then redirects that line of logic to lead them to see that the body is part of God's program and plan and the Holy Spirit indwells the body as God's temple. Therefore, the body is not for destruction, but it is meant to be a vehicle by which God is glorified in the believer's life.