

# KOINONIA KONNECTION

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## **THE BODY AS AN INSTRUMENT OF WORSHIP**

*"For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body." 1 Corinthians 6:20*  
This is not an article which concerns itself with so-called "liturgical dance." Nor is it a discussion of physical posture in worship. This essay has little to do with such things. Rather, it is my desire to speak with you concerning some thoughts I have had lately dealing with the body as an agent of Christian devotion. I would have you consider the truth or falsity of the following proposal: To the same degree that the spirit is to be fully devoted to the service of God, so is the body likewise to be devoted.

When we speak on a subject like "Christian devotion," we most often place emphasis upon the intangible, or spiritual aspect of that subject. Rarely do we consider the implications of God's ownership over our physical body. Unless, of course, we're talking about sexuality. Sexuality is very much a realm in which we must consider the outworkings of Christian devotion for the body (and we shall touch upon that very issue). But does Christ's ownership of our bodies speak to more than that? Does our understanding of the body as an agent of worship run deep enough?

If you are familiar with the context of the above quotation, you will be quick to note that it is indeed sexuality which is on the Apostle's mind when he says, "Glorify God in your body." If we have been bought with a price (v.20), and as a result of that purchase the very Spirit of God has taken up residence in our body (v.19), then we have no right to indulge in sexual immorality (v.18). The Apostle first presents the application: "Flee sexual immorality!" Immediately after,

he tells us why: "Your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost!" How can we dare make the Temple of God united with a harlot? (v.16) Such a thing is the ultimate desecration.

But again, is sexuality the only legitimate realm of application for this principle?

### **THE CHEMICALLY DEPENDENT TEMPLE OF GOD**

One issue which we might seriously address under the "Body-as-Temple" principle is physical addiction. The body, as the Temple of the Holy Ghost, is one means by which we communicate God's glory and worship to others. With a body free of addictions, we present ourselves as a being liberated from worldly enslavement. We proclaim that the body, as well as the soul, is purchased by God for one express purpose: the honor of Christ. But what if that same body suffers from chemical dependency? God's message of liberation is compromised. With our heart we may desire to serve the Lord; but with our bodies we are enslaved to something else entirely. With our mouth we declare, "I serve the Lord, and Him alone." With our bodies we are saying, "I serve nicotine," or "I serve caffeine," or "I serve heroine."

Think about this carefully. What we have become, if we are an addict, is an embodiment of idolatry. Aside from Jesus Christ, there is another god who holds sway over us. He is a god who interrupts wonderful conversations concerning Jesus Christ with thoughts of going outside to have a cigarette. He is a god who won't permit us to go to God's Word in the morning until we stimulate our bodies with that first cup of coffee. And in more awful scenarios, he is a god who destroys our very capacity for spiritual usefulness by clouding our minds,

*eating away at our organs, and compromising our very sanity through a needle or a crack pipe.*

*Not only does addiction interfere with our own pursuit of Jesus Christ, but it compromises the message that our whole life is called to communicate: a full devotion to God as the heart of the Gospel.*

#### **THE UNDISCIPLINED TEMPLE OF GOD**

*Let us examine our principle from another direction, that of physical fitness as it relates to worship of God. I'm convinced that physical fitness is as much an issue of Christian principle as our efforts to speak in a godly way, or to think godly thoughts. Physical fitness is related to two important areas of devotion: discipline and stewardship. In concern to the matter of discipline, physical fitness requires the application of prudence and self control in what we eat and how much we eat. Also, it calls for a great deal of personal commitment, character strength, and just plain grit. And when we add the issue of stewardship, physical fitness, I believe, ceases to be a mere option and becomes a duty. Just as we must care for the soul that God has given us, so are we to care for the body. How sad that men and women should put so much sweat and polish into making automobile engines purr and antique silverware gleam, while giving so little time toward creating a body reflective of our immortal future in heaven.*

*It is behind the Pulpit that this particular weakness is most keenly felt. So often are subjects related to Christian discipline addressed in sermons. And too, how regularly the sins of gluttony, sloth, and weakness of character are exposed. And add how frequently men of the ministry are called to preach on the power of God, the majesty of God, the vehemence of God. Yet how often do these, with their mouths, sermonize on such matters, while with the girth of their bellies they preach a very different message?*

*Some, it is true, are genetically predisposed to obesity. Others, due to weakness of health,*

*cannot be as aggressive in physical training. But as far as providence will permit, the Christian ought to proclaim with his body a message of temperance, thankfulness, and iron stewardship. Our God is never lax with that which is His. Why do we who worship Him feel we have the right to be?*

#### **THE EROTIC TEMPLE OF GOD**

*And turning our attention to another physical matter, how are we to worship God with our bodies in the realm of sensuality? The answer is very, very simple. Sensuality becomes worship when it is expressed in the right way (heterosexual in nature and respectful of the divine image), with the right person (our spouse), and in the right place (in private). Any deviation from these Biblical principles, and sensuality ceases to be worship and becomes filth. Note how ferociously contemporary paganism has attacked each of these specific categories: 1) Modern sexuality encourages homosexual "intimacy" and delights in sexual expression which is variously perverse and even violent, 2) it considers infidelity and marital trysts as healthy if practiced "properly," and 3) has even come to delight in public sexuality or voyeurism.*

*I do not expect that most people in the context of our conservative evangelicalism practice such things (though, anybody may be duped into unspeakable sin; e.g. David). But Christians can, none the less, fail to worship their God with their bodies when they push the envelope in one or more of the above-mentioned principles. A Christian married couple may offend God by bringing perverse practices into the confines of sexual intimacy, practices which degrade the dignity of God's image in one or both of them. Or, a Christian couple may sin by using pornographic materials (which naturally involve other people) to stimulate arousal. And lastly, we misuse our bodies when we bring sensuality out of its proper, private place into the public realm. Note, beloved, that an area commonly overlooked in regard to this final principle is that of public dance. Such dancing generally involves*

heavy, pulsating music filled with erotic lyrics. To this atmosphere is added the suggestive movements of female bodies, an increased metabolism, and extensive and titillating physical contact.

Anyone who would seriously argue that dance, as it is currently practiced in our culture, is a neutral or harmless matter, is either a fool or is very immature spiritually. What husbands and wives may do privately in the matter of dance I am not ready or really able to address. But what young, unmarried folk who claim to be Christians do in public is another matter entirely. The dance of today's culture is a temptation to evil thoughts and actions. That very fact makes it something for God's young people to shun.

#### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

My goal in this article has not been, primarily, to address the three issues mentioned under each section (though, any benefit you may glean from them is certainly a plus). Rather, my central argument is that we have created a false separation between living a holy life and what we do with our physical bodies. The body truly is the "Temple of the Holy Ghost." Naturally, this has implications for how we use it, as the Apostle's admonition concerning sexual morality proves. Consider carefully how you may be neglecting God's ownership of your body. In what ways may you better apply your body as an instrument of worship? These are important considerations. The Lord doesn't simply want your soul...He wants all of you.  
-by Pastor Ludt

# **FAMILIES IN FOCUS**

## **THE EDUCATION OF OUR CHILDREN - PART 6**



One of the most repeated objections raised against home schooling is the contention that parents are not qualified to teach their children academics. This is a serious objection, no doubt about it. If parents compromise the education of their children, it certainly will bear life long fruit. Every reasonable parent desires the best education for their children, even when they can't afford every possible or available option.

So are parents properly qualified to teach their children at home? We think so. There are several reasons to support this assertion. First, it is the manner of our gracious God to supply all our needs in the things that He commands us. He has laid the responsibility of bringing up our children in the fear and nurture of the Lord, squarely upon the shoulders of the fathers together with the mothers. God, in His gracious covenantal provisions, gives us precisely what we need, the gift of the Holy Spirit. "... and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and your children, ..." Acts 2:38-39 Note that covenant blessings are not automatically communicated to our children by their genetic relationship to their parents. It is

God Himself who communicates His covenant blessing to our children through their relationship with its attendant interaction with us. It is a false presupposition that parents or teachers can be a blessing to children, apart from the blessing of God. We need to humbly realize our utter dependence on the Lord.

This brings us to a second matter. What does it mean to be a qualified teacher, or what is it that parents lack that would make them unsuitable to be teachers, at least in general? And who determines those who are qualified? I fear that for too long the church has succumbed to the thinking of the world, that system that opposes all that is Gods. We have not only let the world shape our 'curriculum requirements' but worse, we have allowed their goals to be our goals. We want a good living for our kids and have been distracted from the goal of raising a godly seed who are worshippers and servers in the kingdom of Christ (see Matthew 6:33). I have discussed this further in a previous article and only raise it now as a reminder that it is essential to keep the goal of education constantly in mind. From a biblical point of view, this means the supposed

experts have led us astray in what they think are the essential ingredients of an education. But a parent who follows the scriptures in educating his children is shaping his children by the wisdom of God. And that is the qualification that we need. Please note that I am not saying that there are no good and godly teachers who have the same goals as do the parents; I am not.

But the objection may still be raised, that although the parents might be involved in their children's lives and education, not every parent is equipped to teach algebra, calculus and English literature. First, the duty of parents is to see to it that whatever the children learn has to be seen in the context of living unto God. Algebra, calculus and English literature are useful pursuits only when they equip our children to live to the glory of God and to serve our fellow men. Accumulation of knowledge as an end in itself is a waste of time. However, I am not saying that learning is a waste of time. It is just that the Bible clearly teaches that to whom much is given, of them much will be required (Luke 12:48). We and our children are accountable to God for what we know and even perhaps for what we ought to know (Mark 4:24). Be ever learning, but know that God holds you accountable for your knowledge.

But secondly, I fear that too much respect for the 'experts' has resulted in parents believing that they are unable to teach their children anything academic. They are led to believe that even the most elementary learning will be compromised if it is not handed over to the 'trained professionals'. This is most unfortunate. One of the words used in scripture for the educating of children is the word 'train' (Proverbs 22:6). It includes the idea of an apprentice model, of one learning, along side one who is teaching, communicating, passing knowledge and skill on to the one learning. And learning is a lifestyle of learning as it is envisaged in Deuteronomy 6. This is exactly suited to family life, parents passing on to their children the knowledge that will prepare them for life. Even though a parent may not have degrees to his credit, he has the knowledge that he has gained

in his life of learning and years of life experiences. Certainly such parents have much to pass on to their children that are useful and not isolated bits of information that might be unconnected to the child's life. Then there is the obvious, but often overlooked concept that the parent and child can work through study together. What does this mean practically? I am sure that nearly all parents can make a beginning in academic training of their children and I am also convinced that they could teach further and longer than they originally imagine. Some encouragement and support from family and church would go a long way to helping parents educate their own children. It requires effort and discipline, but the Lord requires that of us in every area of our lives, of parenting, and of working. Laziness is never acceptable but help and encouragement would enable many parents to do far more educating than they ever thought they could.

There does come a time when in the development of the child's knowledge and skill that someone with more knowledge and skill than that parent needs to continue the teaching work. Parents ought to be able to make use of such resources. But this ought to come at a time when the child has already been trained and taught by its parents in the fear of the Lord so that he is seeking to train for and live out the calling of God upon his own life. A parent seeks to raise their children to become independent of their parents, though always dependent on the Lord, and to develop its gifts to serve the Lord and its fellow men. And parents should not be bound to an arbitrary time schedule for the accumulation of certain knowledge but ought to pursue a biblical goal for the education of their children with persistence.

God has given to parents the task of raising their children to serve Him, and He has all the resources that they need. The more parental involvement in the formative years of the child's life, the better for the child's direction, particularly from a Christian world and life view.

-by Bill Kroesbergen

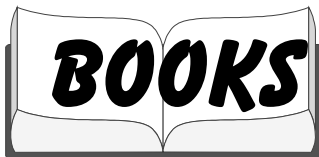
# YOUTH'S CORNER

*Not all Bible people lived in houses. Match these people with the place they lived.*

Lot	temple
Noah	among tombstones
Man with unclean spirits	palace
Moses	garden
Adam and Eve	tent
John the Baptist	outside a rich man's gate
Lazarus	desert
Samuel	large boat

*People rode on animals and other things in Bible times. Match these riders with the vehicle they used.*

Abraham's servant	bed
Balaam	horses and chariots
Jesus	camel
Elijah	basket and rope
Paul	donkey
Noah	colt
Moses	fiery chariot
The paralytic	ark
Pharaoh's army	baskets of bulrushes



## BOOKS IN REVIEW

*For those of us who are new to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and know little of her beginnings and history this book serves as a good introduction to God's grace in her remarkable history. The OPC came into being out of a struggle in mainline Protestantism against modernism and theological liberalism. The OPC's identity is bound up in her origins and therefore it would be good for all her present members to read this book as means to encourage them to continue the good fight of faith of the founders of the OPC. The founders were giants in the faith and suffered much as they fought the good fight of defending Biblical historical reformed faith. This book is a very easy read without going into the minute detail of the controversies that surrounded her beginnings. This book can be purchased from the OPC office at following address: The Committee for the Historian, The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Box P, Willow Grove, PA 19090-0920. The price is regularly \$11.95 but it is currently available at a special sale price of \$5.00.*

*Fighting the Good Fight*

*by  
D. G. Hart  
and  
John Meuther*

*-by Cope Jonkman*



# MISSION SPOTLIGHT

## THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL IN ISRAEL

Have you ever tasted a nice, cool, refreshing Coke?

Congratulations! So have hundreds of millions of other people all around the world. And it's all Robert Woodruff's fault.

Well, not all his fault. But he's largely to blame.

You see, Woodruff, while president of Coca-Cola, had the audacity to state during World War II that "We will see that every man in uniform gets a bottle of Coca-Cola for five cents wherever he is and whatever it costs."

When the war ended, he went on to say that in his lifetime he wanted everyone in the world to have a taste of Coca-Cola. Talk about vision!

With careful planning and a lot of persistence, Woodruff and his colleagues reached their generation around the globe for Coke.

Say, how big is your vision? Have you ever thought about what God could do through you to influence our own generation?

I'm not kidding. Neither was the Lord Jesus Christ kidding when He called His disciples to gain a vision of impacting the world for His name.

The Twelve (minus Judas) listened intently as Christ sought to prepare them for His imminent betrayal and subsequent death.

"No matter what happens," He told them, "believe in Me. I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. I am in the Father and He is in Me. We work in unity. If you can't believe My words alone, at least believe Me because of the miracles you have seen."

Then the Lord startled the apostles by saying:

*I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in Me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in My name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask Me for anything in My name, and I will do it. If you love Me, you will obey what I command (John 14:12-15).*

Don't underestimate those words. Read them again. Here in capsule form Christ challenges His disciples--and that now includes you and me--to dream great dreams, plan great plans, pray great prayers, and obey His great commands.

### DREAMING GREAT DREAMS

In the disciples' minds, time was fast running out. For more than three years they had hoped that Christ would be the one who would redeem Israel and reign as Messiah. But now He was saying that one of them would betray Him and deliver Him up to the Jewish leaders to be crucified.

They couldn't accept what He was telling them. "I will be with you only a little longer.... I am going to the Father.... I am leaving you."

Everything within them screamed, "No! This can't be true!"

So imagine what the Twelve thought when Christ went on to promise, "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing" (John 14:12a).

Around the upper room table sat Peter, who had almost drowned trying to walk on water. And Philip, who waved his arms in exclamation when stating the impossibility of buying enough bread to feed the multitude. And Andrew, who with a number of the other disciples could not even heal a boy who was demon-possessed.

To each disciple Christ said, "You can continue the work I have been doing." And His promise is the same to you and me. He calls us to dream great dreams of what we can do to impact the world for His glory. How is this possible? The key is two-fold.

First, because Christ was going to the Father, He assured the disciples that He would send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, to indwell all believers. Christ would now continue His work through us!

Second, Christ qualified His promise with a condition. Notice that He said, "Anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing." The Lord challenges us to have faith--not necessarily more faith, but to have faith in Him. It is an on-going faith.

### RENEWING YOUR VISION

Have you stopped seeing great things happen in your life? Perhaps you have stopped believing that God can work in a mighty way in our generation. But what limits the work of God here on earth?

Is God somehow incapable of renewing the churches in America? Of turning the hearts of multiplied thousands to Himself? Of causing the fires of revival to spread throughout this country and beyond? Of course not! Yet God has chosen to limit His works, at least in some measure, to those things we trust Him to do through us.

*Why is it that so few Christians ever accomplish great things for Christ? I believe it is because we lose the ability to dream great dreams. You see it happening all the time.*

*New believers are notorious for their enthusiasm and almost childlike trust in God. Accounts of such heroes of faith as Hudson Taylor, Corrie ten Boom, and Dawson Trotman inspire them to step out and attempt what others consider presumptuous.*

*But as time goes by, hardening of the spiritual arteries sets in and we become cynical. We lose the joy and thrill of the Christian life. We hear of something wonderful happening and say, "Oh?" as if it were nothing. How nonchalant we become about God's work around the world!*

*In order for God to use us again, we need to confess our unbelief and say: "Lord Jesus, renew my vision of Your power. Renew my confidence in Your abilities. Renew my trust in Your resources." Then begin to dream again!*

*Christ Himself never limited His disciples' vision. Even though He restricted His own public ministry to Palestine, He came and lived and died for all mankind. And after His resurrection, He commissioned His followers to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19) and sent them first to Jerusalem, then to all Judea and Samaria, and ultimately to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).*

*But the early church did what we all do--they hesitated to dream about what God wanted to do in their own generation. It finally took the stoning of Stephen and subsequent conversion of Saul to shake them out of their complacency.*

*While other believers scattered throughout Palestine, the Apostle Paul took Christ's great commission seriously and devoted the latter half of his life to traveling and proclaiming the Gospel to the Gentiles.*

*In Romans 15 Paul records a summary of his first missionary journey. He had already given detailed oral reports to the church in Antioch (see Acts 14:27) and to the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:12). But here he simply states, "From Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the Gospel of Christ" (Romans 15:19).*

*Now, the distance from Jerusalem to Illyricum is some 750 miles over land. Yet Paul could look back on that trip and say, "Mission accomplished. I have fully proclaimed the Gospel in that entire area." Paul didn't stop, however, and assume there wasn't anything left to do. Instead, he was already dreaming of the mission fields beyond.*

#### **IMPACTING OUR GENERATION**

*Where have your own dreams stopped? Have they been lost somewhere between your living room and the house next door? If your dreams aren't greater than finishing your education, paying your bills, or raising your children, then*

*your vision isn't divine. Maybe it's time to consider how God could use you to make a difference in the lives of others.*

*Opportunities to serve Christ abound throughout the world. Let me take you on a quick tour.*

*In Asia, religions such as Buddhism, Islam, and other traditional beliefs flourish. Missions experts estimate that only a small percentage of the Asian population could be called Christian. The Church there faces many obstacles and needs our help and encouragement.*

*In Latin America, traditional religion has flourished for centuries. In recent years, many Latin Americans have come to know Jesus Christ personally after hearing the Gospel proclaimed in mass crusades and broadcasts by radio and television.*

*During the last couple of decades I have been thrilled to see the tremendous growth of the evangelical church in Central and South America. I strongly believe that several nations could become 51 percent born-again believers within 10 or 15 years.*

*In Africa, Christianity is growing at an incredible speed. Mission strategists say that some 16,400 people are committing their lives to Christ throughout this continent each day! The fields are ready for harvest, but Bible teachers are needed to teach these Africans about their new-found faith and how to share it with still others.*

*In Europe, secularism and humanism prevail. The very nations that once sent missionaries throughout the world are now vast mission fields.*

*A BBC newsmen in London once asked me why I was wasting my time trying to preach the Gospel in a "post-Christian" society. "Aren't you just flogging a dead horse?" he wondered out loud.*

*"There is no such thing as a 'post-Christian' society," I replied. "One generation may reject the Gospel for itself, but it can't reject it for future generations. And furthermore," I gladly added, "Jesus Christ specializes in raising the dead."*

*The Church in North America has been assisted by the growth of evangelical movements, Bible colleges, and Christian broadcasting. But we are still in danger of losing the vision that sparked this growth. If we drop the baton the previous generation entrusted to us, then we could become another spiritually dry Europe.*

*So the opportunities are great throughout the globe. But how can we impact our generation for Christ? Is it really possible to "preach the Gospel to all nations"?*

*I believe it is possible by taking God at His word and making plans to accomplish great things by His power working in us.*

### **PLAN GREAT PLANS**

*Do you have dreams and plans of what God might do through your life? Or are you just busy with life's routine, ordinary tasks? Have you become bored--or boring?*

*The Lord Jesus Christ challenges us to abandon our complacency when He says, "You can do even greater things than I have done through my Spirit who indwells you." He doesn't intend for us to sit idly by and simply dream of what could happen for His glory. He wants us to plan great plans so that those dreams can come true.*

*William Carey upset the status quo of the church in his day when he proposed sending missionaries from Britain to evangelize other parts of the world. Older Christians told him to give up his preposterous ideas. Carey countered their boredom and doubt by writing, "Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God."*

*That statement became the creed of the modern missions movement as men and women followed Carey's example and went to the ends of the earth with the saving message of Christ's Gospel. Like Carey, God wants us to attempt great things for Him to reach our generation.*

*Over the years, God has stretched my own vision. At first, God burdened by heart for the city of Cordoba where I lived as a young man, then neighboring areas, then all of Argentina. Finally I dreamed of preaching the Gospel throughout all of Latin America.*

*But God wasn't through with me yet. Today, in faith, my co-workers and I want to let the whole world hear the voice of God. With that dream, we are planning massive crusades, multiplied by radio and television, to reach large segments of the world's population. And by God's grace, as partners in evangelism with other Christians and their churches and organizations, we are seeing hundreds of thousands of lives changed.*

*What about you? Are you expecting great things from God? Or are you letting the opportunities pass you by? If it's true that the Lord wants the Gospel preached worldwide, than we can't remain passive. Whatever our gifts or abilities or resources, we need to work together as faithful stewards of what God has bestowed on us.*

*Dream a little. Envision the 4 billion people who have not accepted the Gospel in this generation. Many have never even heard it explained to them. What are you going to do about it?*

*Start doing something by making specific plans of action. Determine how God could use you to share Christ at work, at school, in your neighborhood--and beyond. Remember, God wants to use you. Let Him!*

*Are you willing to gain a vision of what God could do through you to win others to Himself? After all, God doesn't have a Plan A, a Plan B, and a Plan C for evangelizing the world. He only has one plan--and that's you and me.*

*-by Luis Palau*

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