

Introduction

This week I did a search to find the most common scriptures that are taken out of context. There are numerous websites that give their top five, seven, or ten most common scriptures that are taken out of context. One of the scriptures that made it on nearly every list that I read was Matthew 7:1, which says, “Do not judge so that you will not be judged.” Many people take the first phrase, and stop there: “Judge not!” At <https://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com>, they have this passage ranked first. The author, Jack Wellman, said, “*Jesus is not telling listeners not to judge, but to judge others after you have repented of your own faults and sins...Jesus is saying that the person should first judge themselves to make sure that they’re not committing the same or a worse sin. Only when they take the speck out of their own eye do they have any right to correct a brother or sister. Clearly Jesus is saying “take it out” of your own eye first and get your own house in order.*”¹

We saw in 1 Corinthians 5 that Paul rebuked the Corinthians for not judging those inside the church, and told them to remove the wicked man from their midst. It was an issue in the early church, and it is still an issue today in many churches.

(1 Cor 5:12–13) “For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? {13} But those who are outside, God judges. REMOVE THE WICKED MAN FROM AMONG YOURSELVES.”

Our passage today begins with, “All things are lawful for me...” Paul had taught this principle many times, and it pertained to food. He had taught that they were free to eat any food that was set before them. However, the Corinthians took it out of context and misapplied what Paul had taught them about food to justify their sexual immorality. In the Greek culture, they saw sex as simply a physical desire, like hunger, and there was nothing moral or immoral about it. Since Paul had taught them that all things were lawful, and they could eat anything they wanted, and since sex was just another physical need like food, they thought that it was also lawful for them to have sex at anytime with anybody and that it was not sinful. I hear that same Corinthian argument today in the world. The world teaches our children and youth that sexual activity outside of marriage is normal and acceptable, as these sexual desires are common to all animals. However, precautions should be taken against pregnancy and disease.

(1 Cor 6:12a) “All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable...”

(1 Cor 10:23–25) “All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify. {24} Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor. {25} Eat anything that is sold in the meat market without asking questions for conscience’ sake;”

In our passage today Paul gives five reasons why we are to glorify God with our bodies. It is a correction to their wrong understanding of the spiritual principle that all things are lawful. Paul said that our bodies are to be used profitably for the Lord. Second, our bodies are members of Christ. Third, our bodies will be raised up. Fourth, our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. Fifth, our bodies belong to God. Because of all these things, he concludes, “Therefore glorify God in your body.” It is a relevant word in the church today, as our culture embraces the same false teachings as the Corinthians.

¹ <https://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/top-6-bible-verses-often-taken-out-of-context/>

Five Reasons We Should Glorify God with Our Bodies

1. Our bodies are for the Lord
2. Our bodies are members of Christ
3. Our bodies will be raised up
4. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit
5. Our bodies belong to God (they have been bought with a price)

(1 Cor 6:12–20) “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.”

1. **Our bodies are for the Lord** (1 Cor 6:12-13)

Paul begins by saying, “All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable.” Paul had taught the Corinthians and other churches that all things were lawful, but the context was very different. They were okay to eat all food. They were not under the “Law” and were free to eat any meat served to them. Paul made it clear that even though some things were lawful, they were not necessarily profitable. Paul taught and encouraged believers to seek the good of his neighbor, to glorify God. In 1 Corinthians 10:23-31, Paul goes into a more detailed explanation of this statement as it pertains to eating and drinking. The Corinthians took the first part of that statement, that all things were lawful, and applied this to sexual activity.

(1 Cor 6:12) “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.”

(1 Cor 10:23–33) “All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify. {24} Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor. {25} Eat anything that is sold in the meat market without asking questions for conscience’ sake....{31} Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. {32} Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God; {33} just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit but the profit of the many, so that they may be saved.”

Most scholars say that Paul is responding to their letter to him when he makes this statement and argument. In 1 Cor 5:9, he mentioned a previous letter that he had written to them about not associating with immoral people. Scholars believe that the Corinthians had responded to Paul with a letter, probably brought and delivered to him by Chloe’s people. They believe that in that letter to Paul they had asked questions about their sexual freedom. This letter is in response to the report that Chloe’s people gave, and the letter from the Corinthians to Paul asking him to clarify some of his instructions.

The Greek culture did not see sex as a moral or amoral issue; it was just a physical need that could be satisfied at anytime with anyone. In the pagan worship, there were over a thousand temple prostitutes, and sexual activity was part of their pagan worship. The Greek culture was so immoral that the term, corinthianize, meant to have sex with a prostitute. This was the culture and mindset that the Corinthians were brought up in, and they brought these mindsets and practices into the church. When Paul said that all things were lawful, they jumped on that statement and justified their immoral practices.

(1 Cor 5:9–10) “I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; {10} I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world.”

Paul’s first point is that our bodies belong to God. In verse thirteen, Paul said that the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. Our lives are to be consecrated to God and set apart for Him. All entire body belongs to the Lord and is to be used for His glory and honor. Since our bodies are for the Lord, Paul gives two principles to help us use our bodies for the Lord. The first principle is that we should use our bodies for things that are profitable. The Greek word that is translated as profitable is symphero (Strong’s G4851), which means to bear together, bring together for good or profit. The prefix, sun, means to join together, and it implies the bringing of things together for good. Whether food, sex, or any other thing that we do, we need to consider if this is profitable for everyone. We cannot just seek what is good or profitable for us; we must consider what is profitable and good for everyone. Sexual immorality is not good or profitable for anyone. Lives and marriages are destroyed through sexual immorality.

(1 Cor 6:12-13) “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.”

When considering what is good or profitable, we need to look from God’s perspective. The world may see that sex outside of a marriage between a man and woman as good, but God says that any sexual activity outside of a marriage between a man and a woman is sin. God sees fornication, adultery, homosexuality, and bestiality as perversions and sinful. We need to recalibrate our thinking about what is profitable and good to what God tells us in His word. Leviticus 18 is a chapter devoted to teaching us about sexual immorality, and the things that are not acceptable and are an abomination to Him.

Paul makes an important distinction between food and sex. He said that food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them. Paul was confronting their view that food and sex were on par with one another. While food is for the stomach, and our stomach for food, our bodies are for the Lord, and the Lord is for our body. We were made for God. Our bodies need to be used for what is profitable for God and His kingdom. In 1 Corinthians 10:33, when addressing food, Paul said that he did not seek his own profit, but the profit of many, so that they may be saved. Paul used his freedom to try and win people to Christ, to bring them into the kingdom. Paul sought what was profitable for God.

(1 Cor 10:33) “just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit but the profit of the many, so that they may be saved.”

The second principle Paul shares is that we are not to be mastered or controlled by anything. Our sexual desires are not to control us; we need to have self-control. There are many different vices that can control us, including alcohol, drugs, sex, pornography, etc. In Romans 6:16, Paul tells us that when we present ourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, we are slaves to the one we obey. God wants us freed from the slavery of sin, and free to become slaves of righteousness. The sexual immorality in Corinth was causing many people to be in bondage; they were being controlled and mastered by their sexual appetites. Paul exhorted the Romans (and all of us) to present our members to God. Our bodies belong to God so we should present our members to Him for what He deems is good and profitable.

(Rom 6:12–18) “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, {13} and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. {14} For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace. {15} What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! {16} Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? {17} But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, {18} and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”

2. **Our bodies will be raised up** (1 Cor 6:14)

We are to glorify God with our bodies, because they belong to God. They should be used for what is profitable and good. They should not be mastered or controlled by anything, but they need to be dedicated to God. The second reason that we should glorify God with our bodies is that they will be raised up with Him.

(1 Cor 6:14) “Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power.”

Food was for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God was going to do away with both of these. Our bodies, on the other hand, are going to be raised up through His power. When Christ returns, we will be raised up with Christ. In 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul wrote about this resurrection. Just as Jesus died and rose again, we will be raised up with Him. In verse fifteen, those who are alive when the Lord comes again will not precede or come before those who have fallen asleep. He will be bringing with Him those who have fallen asleep.

(1 Thess 4:13–18) “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. {14} For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. {15} For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. {16} For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. {17} Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. {18} Therefore comfort one another with these words.”

There is something about our bodies, and the use of our bodies, that impacts our future. Our bodies are going to be glorified with Christ, and they need to be used now in ways that glorify God. We don't begin glorifying God later; we glorify God with our lives right now. We need to pursue things that are eternal, and have an impact on eternity. Food will be done away with, but our bodies belong to God and will be raised up when Christ returns.

3. **Our bodies are members of Christ** (1 Cor 6:15-18)

The third reason that we are to glorify God with our bodies is that they are members of Christ. Paul asked, "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?" Since our bodies are members of Christ, his next question is, "Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute?" The obvious answer is, "May it never be!" Paul then asked another "do you not know" question. He is asking a question, but at the same time, he is saying that they should already know this. Paul has probably given them instruction about this in the past, and he expects them to know this. He said, "Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? Then, Paul quotes Genesis 2:24, about how a man and wife become one flesh.

(1 Cor 6:15–16) "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."

(Gen 2:24) "For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh."

The Greek word for joined is kollao, which means to glue. When a man and a woman are joined together sexually, they are glued together. Sexual intimacy creates soul ties; it glues the souls of people together. One of the reasons that divorces are especially difficult is that there is a tearing apart of something that was glued together. God intended for a man to be glued to his wife and for the two to become one. Our bodies are members of Christ, and we are not to be joined or glued to a prostitute. "May it never be!" When we become a Christian, we are joined to Christ. We are one spirit with Christ, and we are not to be joined to a prostitute.

Paul tells us to flee immorality. We are to run from immorality. We are not to get close to it. We are not to hang around the temptation. We are not to make any provision for the flesh. We are not to give it a second thought; we are to flee immorality.

(1 Cor 6:18) "Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body."

In Proverbs 5, Solomon gave a lot of instructions about how to stay away from the adulteress. In the first few verses he speaks about the lure of temptations; the lips of an adulteress drip honey. Solomon then tells the results; "But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold of Sheol." Then, Solomon warns us listen to him and not depart from the words of his mouth. He warns to keep our way far from her, and not to go near the door of her house.

(Pr 5:1–8) “My son, give attention to my wisdom, incline your ear to my understanding... {3} For the lips of an adulteress drip honey and smoother than oil is her speech; {4} But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. {5} Her feet go down to death, Her steps take hold of Sheol... {7} Now then, my sons, listen to me and do not depart from the words of my mouth. {8} Keep your way far from her And do not go near the door of her house.”

God created these desires in us, but He provided a natural way for these desires to be met, and that is in marriage. In verses eighteen and nineteen, he tells us to let our fountain be blessed and to rejoice in the wife of our youth. We are to be exhilarated with her love. God created sex and He also designed how it was to be fulfilled. We are to flee immorality, and if we have sexual desires, they should be fulfilled in our marriages. Christians are joined to the Lord, and are members of Christ. Therefore, they are not to be joined to prostitutes or be involved in any kind of sexual immorality.

(Pr 5:15-20) “Drink water from your own cistern and fresh water from your own well.... {18} Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth. {19} As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; Be exhilarated always with her love. {20} For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress and embrace the bosom of a foreigner?”

4. **Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit** (1 Cor 6:19)

Fourth, we are to glorify God with our bodies because they are temples of the Holy Spirit. Paul wrote that every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Sexual immorality is a sin against our own body. Fornication is a desecration of the temple of the Holy Spirit. Paul asks another “do you not know” question. “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you?” When someone is involved in sexual immorality, it is a sin against the temple or dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. It defiles the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit.

(1 Cor 6:18-19) “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?”

God wants us to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Paul wrote in Ephesians 5 that we were not to be drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but we are to be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts, and giving thanks for all things. These are positive things to do so that our temple will be filled with the Holy Spirit. On the negative side, sexual immorality destroys the temple of the Holy Spirit, and it is a sin against our own body.

(Eph 5:18–20) “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, {19} speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; {20} always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;”

This is the second time in Paul’s letter that he has asked the question, do you not know that you are a temple of the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, Paul asked the same question. He was

dealing with jealousy, strife and division, not sexual immorality. He had addressed the divisions over leadership. People were boasting in Paul; others in Apollos or Cephas. Division and strife defile the temple just as sexual immorality does. Paul told them, “If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.” Now, Paul is reminding them again that they are temples of the Holy Spirit, and they are not to defile it with immorality. Instead, they are to flee immorality, and glorify God with their bodies.

(1 Cor 3:16–17) “Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? {17} If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.”

(1 Cor 6:18–20) “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.

5. **Our bodies belong to God** (they have been bought with a price) (1 Cor 6:20)

The fifth reason that we are to glorify God with our bodies is that they have been bought with a price. Our bodies belong to God. He purchased our bodies. In 1 Peter 1:18-19, we see that we “were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold.... but with the precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.” Jesus paid a premium price for our lives, and we belong to Him. Our bodies belong to Him. Therefore, we are to glorify God in our bodies.

(Cor 6:20) “For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.”

(1 Pet 1:18–19) “knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, {19} but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.”

We used to own a small farm in Acworth, Georgia. When we were led to move to Albuquerque, New Mexico to help my parents, we put our property up for sale. One man came over and walked the property. Then, he told me that every place that his foot walked belonged to him. He was taking a quote from Genesis 13, where God told Abraham to walk around the land, and that He was going to give it all to him. The man that looked at our property was claiming that this land belonged to him. I told the man that I had purchased the land and it belonged to me. If he would pay me for the land, it could become his, but until he paid for it, the land did not belong to him. You and I have been purchased by God. He paid the price for us. God can do with us whatever He wants because we belong to Him. We are not the owners, and it is not up to us how we are to use our bodies. God wants us to use our bodies in a way that glorifies Him, who is the owner of our bodies. Our prayers should be, “Lord, I belong to You. Thank You for purchasing me and freeing me from the bondage of sin. How do You want to use me today? I present myself, my life, and my members to You today. May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be pleasing to You. May all the things that I do today bring glory and honor to You.

(Gen 13:17) “Arise, walk about the land through its length and breadth; for I will give it to you.”

The truth is that the world belongs to God and everything in it. He created the worlds and everything in it, so it belongs to Him. However, because all of us sinned, we were separated from God, and were under the power of the evil one. God purchased us with His own precious blood, and no longer lie under the power of the evil one. We belong to God and we are stewards of our lives. We are stewards of our time, our bodies, our talents, our gifts, our abilities, our finances, and our bodies. We are to be good stewards and glorify God with our bodies.

(Ps 24:1–2) “The earth is the LORD’S, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it. {2} For He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.”

(1 Jn 5:19) “We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.”

Some people make an application that we are to eat vegetables or have a healthy diet because we must take care of our temples. I believe that this is an acceptable application. We should eat healthy and exercise, and be good stewards of our bodies. At the same time, Paul was not writing to them about diet and exercise; he was writing them about the strife, division, jealousy, and sexual immorality. These sins were what was defiling their temples. We are to live holy lives that glorify God.

Conclusion and Applications

We are to glorify God with our bodies. Our bodies belong to the Lord. Therefore, we are to use our bodies for things that are profitable. We are not to be controlled by anything. We are not to use our body for immorality, but for the Lord. Our bodies are members of Christ, and we have been joined to Christ. Therefore, we are not to join our members to prostitutes. Our bodies are different than the foods we eat, as they are going to be raised up with Christ. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, so we are to live holy lives. Finally, our lives belong to God. Paul summed up all these truths about our body, saying, “Therefore glorify God in your body.”

1. Our bodies are for the Lord
2. Our bodies are members of Christ
3. Our bodies will be raised up
4. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit
5. Our bodies belong to God (they have been bought with a price)

(1 Cor 6:20b) “therefore glorify God in your body.”

Prayer

Father God, we acknowledge this morning that we belong to You. We have been bought with a price and we belong to You. We are a part of the body of Christ, and as individual members we want to glorify You. As a corporate body, we want to glorify You. We do not want greed, strife, or immorality even named among us. Holy Spirit, we ask You to fill us up with Your presence and Your power. We want clean temples where You love to dwell. Lord, help us to glorify You with our lives. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Introduction (Matt 7:1, 1 Cor 5:12-13, 1 Cor 6:12a, 10:23-25, 6:12-20)

1. **Our bodies are for the Lord** (1 Cor 6:12-13, 1 Cor 10:23–33, 5:9-10, 1 Cor 10:33, Rom 6:12–18)

2. **Our bodies will be raised up** (1 Cor 6:14, 1 Thess 4:13–18)

3. **Our bodies are members of Christ** (1 Cor 6:15-18, Gen 2:24, Pr 5:1–8, 5:15-20)

4. **Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit** (1 Cor 6:18-20, Eph 5:18-20, 1 Cor 3:16-17)

5. **Our bodies belong to God** (they have been bought with a price) (1 Cor 6:20, 1 Pet 1:18–19, Ps 24:1-2, 1 Jn 5:19)

Conclusion and Applications (1 Cor 6:20b) “therefore glorify God in your body.”