



DON'T TAKE IT  
TOO FAR

S E R M O N G U I D E

**Don't Take It Too Far**

2 Corinthians 7:1

**INTRODUCTION**

As you read today's key verse, you'll see that Paul's counsel to the church then, and us now is "to cleanse ourselves of anything that might damage, distort or defile the flesh or the body." One of the things I find as a pastor is that many people's journey with God has been damaged by distorted perspectives, twisted views, and false theories about the body. Throughout the history of the Church, many well-intentioned Christians have endeavored to live their lives for Christ in a religious culture that has placed an unbiblical and unrealistic moral hedge around the body in hopes that it would prevent people from falling or being susceptible to its urges, its drives, and its proclivities. So many people are struggling in their walk with God because we have not given them a healthy, helpful, and holy way to treat and view the body that God gave us. So in today's message, we're going to look at some helpful tips in hopes that we can have a better outlook and perspective on our God-given bodies so that we can live healthier lives all around.

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**KEY POINTS**

**1. Don't Demonize The Body**

I want you to notice something about today's key text. It says, "*Let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of the body.*" It does not say that the body is defiled. It is a theological error therefore to conclude that because the body is evil... if it has thoughts, wants, needs, desires, and urges, that makes the body and the individual flawed and sinful. When the Bible says in Genesis 1:31 that "*God saw everything that he had made, and it was very good,*" included in that is the physical body. Our bodies allow us to experience the world, to experience things that God designed for us to experience, like love, pleasure, desire, and fulfillment, and those things are good. So, let's not demonize the body.

**2. Don't Idolize The Body**

While the body isn't inherently sinful, it also should not be worshipped or made into an idol either. There are very real boundaries that come with caring for and living in the body. All throughout Scripture, there is this understanding that as legitimate as the body's needs are, if taken to the extreme, they can lead to harmful outcomes. I heard one counselor say, "Any strength, overdone, leads to weakness."

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As valid and valuable as the body is, the body and its pleasure should not become the center of one's life or the focal point of one's world. This is why the Lord told Samuel when he was going to anoint the next king, "*Man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart*" (1 Samuel 16:7).

An idolization of the body is what led to some religious leaders developing a distorted and twisted view of spirituality in which they focused on looking holy, dressing holy, and sounding holy, rather than being holy. The whole point of Jesus' critique of the Pharisees in Matthew 23-27 was that they had developed an obsession with outward religious appearance, with looking holy, dressing holy, and sounding holy, but inwardly they were unclean. And that happens when people worship and idolize the exterior rather than the interior. Idolizing our bodies causes us to forget that our value comes within.

**3. Spiritualize The Body**

When I say to spiritualize your body, I mean to see your body, treat your body, and view your body the way God does. Remember what Genesis 1:27 says, "*So God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God, he created them; male and female, he created them.*" Therefore, you and I are the reflection of God. If you want to know what God looks like, He looks like you. That's why you don't have to try to be anyone other than you because God made you in His image. But not only is our body the image of God but our bodies are the Inn of God, meaning that our bodies are houses or the residence or inn of God's presence.

Our bodies have been created and designed to serve the plan of God. As vessels, they help us express love, compassion, and kindness to others. Our bodies are a spiritual canvas through which God fulfills His purpose. And so, if the world is to experience the love of God, it will experience it through your hands. If the world is the witness the joy of God, it will witness it through your voice. If the world is to see the peace of God, it will witness it through your eyes. We should always strive to honor God with our bodies because our bodies are the tools that God uses to transform the world.

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# No Limits with Pastor Delman

## **Don't Take It Too Far**

*2 Corinthians 7:1*

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. What are some inaccurate perspectives or ideas you've adopted regarding your body?
2. Have you ever demonized and/or idolized your body before? How so?
3. What is one practical step you can take this week to spiritualize your body?

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