

Your Body

Small Group Lesson

Therefore, I urge you brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice..." (Rom. 12:1, NASB1995). For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality" (1 Thess. 4:3).

The "will of God" is God's original intention and plan for you and the world. Sin and Satan polluted the perfect plan and the creation of God and brought death and destruction. Our goal as Men of God is to bring EVERY part of our lives back into God's divine "order"—the will of God. It is interesting that sin began with a physical temptation for food in the Garden (Gen. 3:6). The first temptation Satan brought to Christ in the wilderness was to "command that these stones become bread" (Matt. 4:3). Physical appetites were given to us by God to bring us enjoyment but within the boundaries of His perfect will. God created everything good, but Satan's intention is to bring it into "ab-use" ("abnormal use"). If we abuse our bodies, we will suffer the consequences.

1. Food

Food is a wonderful blessing! God's original intention was for Adam and Eve to eat from "the fruit of the trees of the garden" (Gen. 3:2). Daniel ate vegetables and water for ten days (Dan. 1:12) and became healthier than those eating the rich meats and sweets of the king. Our bodies should eat "living food," not just processed or high-fat and calorie diets. In 2011, MSNBC published an article called "Praise the Lard" It cited a 20-year study that showed that Christians were 50% more likely to be obese (>30% body fat) than non-believers! A good rule of healthy eating is that if it takes a paragraph to describe what is in something, don't eat it. **Question:** What do you think is the source of your "battle of the bulge" (fight with gaining weight)? What can you do to change it?

2. Exercise

Exercise (cardio and stretching) is also critical to your health. Get a consistent form of exercise that you will do for a long time, and don't try to become Arnold Schwarzenegger. Since our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, we should consider physical exercise and conditioning as "temple maintenance." The older we become, the more we will appreciate the conditioning of our younger years. **Question:** What exercise regimen have you become most comfortable with, or is that still in the future for you?

3. Rest

Rest and a rested mind is the will of God. The Bible says, “It is vain for you to rise up early, To retire late, To eat the bread of painful labors; For He gives to His beloved even in his sleep” (Psa. 127:2). High caffeine, sugars, and stimulants that are used to keep us going on a crazy, high-stress schedule are NOT the will of God for us. Someone said that God created man on the 6th day so that on the 7th day, he would not see God working but resting. God’s desire for His sons is that they be productive and have times of rest. We understand working for the Lord, but we also need to learn the principle of resting and enjoying Him. **Question:** Do you sleep well and have consistent hours of rest?

4. Normal Sexuality

Normal sexuality is the will of God (for married men).

“Do not deprive each other of sexual relations, unless you both agree to refrain from sexual intimacy for a limited time so you can give yourselves more completely to prayer. Afterward, you should come together again so that Satan won’t be able to tempt you because of your lack of self-control” (1 Cor. 7:5, NLT).

A normal sexual life comes from quality time together as a couple. Therefore, your schedule must be adjusted to do life together, not like “ships passing in the harbor.” Much of sexual and pornographic temptation comes from dissatisfaction in marriage. The body has a normal sexual rhythm and should remain balanced. Married couples having meals together, working hard, and spending evenings together have a balanced sexual rhythm. Resist intruders to that schedule and insist on prioritizing your marital relationship. For those who are not married, abstinence is the will of God, period (1 Thess. 4:3).

Question: Why are so many men falling into sexual temptation and immorality?

Application Point

If you have not read Life 01, now would be a great time to learn more about who Jesus is and what He did for you. Many men have been exposed to, and even participated in, immoral practices and need a time of cleansing. The Freedom Encounter is a great place to receive healing and deliverance from your past. Ask your B-Group Leader about attending at the end of this semester. Do you have another man with whom you are accountable? If not, would you like one, or is that a future step for you? **Leader:** Take a few minutes and lead your group in a new commitment to practice the will of God for their life. Challenge them to have an accountability partner that they can trust to encourage them through their challenges.