

Rhythms: Body

In view of God's mercy, and in light of the example of Jesus, we can learn to present our bodies as living sacrifices through practical daily rhythms of grace.

Text – Romans 11:36-12:1

11: 36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Teaching

1. The Body in God's Redemptive Story

- A. _____ - God made us body and soul (Genesis 2:7)
- B. _____ - Sin ruined us body and soul (Genesis 3:16)
- C. _____ - Jesus became like us in the body (John 1:14)
- D. _____ - Jesus saved us body and soul (2 Cor. 5:17)
- E. _____ - We'll be glorified body and soul (1 Cor. 15:42-44)

2. Looking to Jesus

- A. Physical _____
- B. Physical _____
 - _____
 - _____
- C. _____ in _____

3. Present Your Bodies

Practices	Unhealthy Extremes	
Consuming	Overindulgence	Hyper Control
Moving	Idolatry of Fitness	Neglect of the Body
Aging	Chasing the Fountain of Youth	"I'm as good as gone"
Suffering	Avoid it	Defined by it
Pleasing	Desires are king	Desires are my enemy
Working	Identity	Lazy

Deeper Dive

*Part of the grace filled rhythm of offering our bodies as living sacrifices is being willing to take an honest look. And before you start diagnosing what parts of your body you'd like to be different, begin with God's **invitation** to steward what he's given each of us. A steward is entrusted with caring for resources that are owned by another. As followers of Christ, we are "not our own, we were bought with a price" and so we joyfully enter into the stewardship of our physical bodies. This means we invite God to direct our thoughts and impressions, our expectations about what I want to look like, how much I want to weigh, what my work life should look like, even how I spend leisure time!*

James writes about a way we ought to live (knowing that we're not in control of our todays or tomorrows): James 4:13-16 "13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"—14 yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. 15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that."

But something curious happens when it comes to our bodies. We will often seek the Lord's wisdom for decisions about our future, yet when it comes to how we treat, use, or think about our physical bodies, we tend to rely on whatever we feel or want.....rarely pausing to ask God to speak into this part of our lives.

*God...what do **YOU** want for my physical body?*

Reflection & Discussion

- Which row or category on the chart stood out to you the most, and why?
- When you think about your body, what "**voices**" tend to shape your thoughts
 - God's voice
 - Your own expectations
 - Cultural images
 - Past experiences / Future hopes
- Where do you sense the Lord inviting you to stewardship rather than self-criticism or self-reliance?
- How can we pray for each other as we learn to offer our bodies to God with honesty, humility, and hope?

Spiritual Practice / Rhythm:

Choose ONE grace-filled practice this week to live out Romans 12:1-2. "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice...". Options are listed, but feel free to make your own!

- **Consuming:** Eat an intentional meal this week with someone. No phones. Just fellowship and thanksgiving
- **Moving:** Start moving. Walk for 15 minutes. Pray: Lord, use my body to love you and serve others
- **Aging:** Write Proverbs 16:31 on a card and thank God daily for the season you're in. Rather than fighting your age, ask the Lord to show you ways to bless someone younger than you as we read in Titus 2:1-6.

- **Suffering:** Share your struggle with one trusted follower of Jesus and ask them to pray with you about your suffering. Ask our gracious and loving God to “shout” in your pain and suffering.
- **Pleasing:** Fast for one evening from a “comfort” habit (scrolling, snacking, shopping, watching) and instead turn that desire into prayer: “You are where true joy is found, Jesus.”
- **Working:** Block off time for Sabbath (maybe start with 3-4 hours but could be a whole day) with no work, no email, no “being productive”.....just rest and enjoy the Lord.