**Restore**

**1 Corinthians 6:12-20**

Small Group Discussion

**Opening question**:

* What is the one thing you like to do just for fun? What about it is so enjoyable and energizing?

We’ve been doing a series called “Rhythm of Life.” We’ve been looking into how we, busy people, can incorporate intentional rhythms into our lives that will allow us to experience God in every corner of our lives. This week’s study examines two wonderful avenues of RESTORATION that enable you to be more alive to God and other people.

1. The first of these avenues is that God offers us the gift of play.
   1. What is your initial reaction to the notion that God offers us the gift of play?
   2. In describing a music video, Pastor Josh noted that kids have an innate ability to play, while adults have “forgotten” how to play. How did we adults unlearn this gift of play and enjoyment of beauty?
2. Ken Shigemitsu, who preached three weeks ago, offers two pieces of practical advice to get started:
   1. First, “choose healthy forms of play.” Are some types of play more naturally addictive, or otherwise unhealthy, than others? What are they? How can we set tighter limits on these?
   2. Read Phil 4:8. How does this verse help us evaluate what forms of play pull us toward God?
   3. Second, “start by doing something you really love.” Ken Shigematsu suggests that if you have trouble thinking of a form of play, try imagining a childhood friend showing up with your favorite toy in the trunk of his/her car. What would that be? What was your favorite form of play as a child? Is that helpful for you as an adult?
3. The second avenue that God offers you for restoration is the gift of practical care for your body. But we need some background first. Take turns reading.

One of the themes in the Old Testament is about the incredible challenge it was to create a way for God to dwell among his people, the Israelites, without wiping them out by his sheer glory. In the book of Exodus, we not only learn how God led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt to their new land in Canaan (modern day Israel), but also about the complicated and lengthy process the Israelites took to build God a “tabernacle”: a large, portable, ornate tent that was purified by elaborate design and by ritual ceremony in order to house God’s presence.

Then 400 years later, Solomon expanded on this tent by building an ornate structure called a “temple.” When it’s finished, it’s one of the most amazing structures known to humanity. All the priests go through an elaborate ritual of purification, all the people of Israel gather for the ribbon-cutting, the Ark of the Covenant is brought into the innermost part of the temple, and listen to what happens:

When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. **2**The priests could not enter the temple of the Lord because the glory of the Lord filled it. **3**When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the Lord above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, “He is good; his love endures forever.” (2 Chron 7)

So fast forward another 1,000 years. What’s the culmination of this story of God’s house, where he would make his presence available to his people? Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6:19, “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?”

* 1. What is your initial reaction when fully understanding this Old Testament background: that a Holy God, who used to wipe out people if they came in contact with him without being purified first, could now, by Jesus’ death, reside within us in the form of his Holy Spirit?
  2. And so, Paul says, “Honor God with your bodies!” How could we better honor God with our bodies when he sacrificed his only Son in order that his Spirit might dwell within us?

1. Josh claimed that God offers you the gifts of food, exercise, and sleep, as means of practical care for your body.
   1. Food is given for nourishment *and* enjoyment. Which of these two could you improve upon and why? (Do you need to set any limits? Do you need to enjoy it more rather than eating on the run? Do you need to eat healthier?)
   2. Regular exercise is God’s gift to us. How can you honor God more here (More regular? Less compulsive? More enjoyable? Less competitive?)
   3. Deep sleep is another of God’s means of restoration. God says in his word that he acts on behalf of his beloved children while they’re sleeping. Does this change your attitude toward sleep? Explain.
   4. Results of one study: “People who slept 7 or more hours each night were 4 times less likely to get sick than people who slept less than 6 hours per night.” What’s your reaction to this finding?
   5. How are you doing with these three areas? Is there one that needs more attention in your life? How have you experienced one of these areas making you more alive to God and to other people?
2. Last thoughts:
   1. What keeps us from doing what we know we ought to do for our restoration?
   2. Josh said that it is our fixation with achievement, or justifying our existence, that prevents us from simply delighting in these gifts of self-care. Do you agree? What is the solution to this? Read Psalm 147:4, 10-11 for an answer.
   3. How can we incorporate “accountability partners” in our lives in order to better honor God in our play/enjoyment of life and with how we care for our bodies?
3. **Share and Pray:** Among our usual prayer requests, let’s pray that we will develop the willingness, practical goals, and accountability partners in order to better honor God with play and with bodily care.

**ADDENDUM for Personal Study and Meditation**

**One of the most important passages in the Bible on understanding our bodies is 1 Cor 6:12-20.**

**12**“I have the right to do anything,” you say—but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but I will not be mastered by anything. **13**You say, “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both.” The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. **14**By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also (*resurrection bodies*). **15**Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! **16**Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, “The two will become one flesh.” **17**But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit. **18**Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. **19**Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; **20**you were bought at a price (*Jesus purchased your body on the cross—it belongs to him*). Therefore honor God with your bodies.

1. We know our spirits our important to God, but what above indicates how important our bodies are to God? (see especially vv19-20)
2. In v. 12, Paul discusses the rights we have in Christ due to his grace. What does he list that are boundaries to these freedoms?
   1. What does it mean to be mastered by something? What does that look like in regards to our body?
   2. How do you know for sure if something is “beneficial” to your body?
3. Paul raises the issue of freedom vs. self-discipline in regards to the body. Why is it important to have a good understanding of the tension and the boundary between these two?
4. Paul discusses two aspects of one’s body: food and sexuality. Why do you think he used these two examples and not others?
5. List all the reasons Paul gives in this passage for experiencing your sexuality as God designed it and for fleeing sexual immorality.
6. How does it make you feel to learn that you were “bought with a price” (*Jesus purchased your body on the cross—it belongs to him*). Does it feel freeing or limiting; encouraging or discouraging?
7. Is it wild to think that we are one with the Lord in spirit (v17) and as such that would compete with an illegitimate union with another? What importance does that bring to our sexual purity?