



The Redeemed Body

Romans 6:8-23; 12:1

Part 3 • 5.20.18

Summary: A common evangelistic question is, “If you died tonight, would you go to heaven?” It’s a good question, but only part of the equation. Yes, the redeemed in the Lord have a future in heaven; but they also have a future on earth, one that begins now. We could just as fairly ask, “If you died to yourself tonight, who would you be tomorrow morning?” And the answer is, *a redeemed person, a new creation, someone living the life of the future right now in this mortal flesh.*

As Paul discusses the implications of redemption in Romans 6 and 12, he focuses specifically on our bodies and its constituent parts. At least four truths characterize the redeemed body:

1. It’s newly-reaccounted. Romans 6:11 exhorts us to *count* ourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Paul uses an accounting term here: How do reckon our lives? Where on the ledger do we book them? Redemption causes a radical reaccounting—like Paul describes of himself in Philippians 3. What he previously considered his assets, his Jewish pedigree and Pharisaical religion, he now counts as losses. Knowing Christ—worshiping, serving, and suffering with him—are all blessings and benefits.

2. It’s intentionally weaponized. When Paul calls us to offer the parts of our bodies as “instruments” of righteousness rather than wickedness (Rom. 6:13), the word he uses literally means *weapons*. As Charles Spurgeon said, “We are in a sense our own tools and must keep ourselves in order....My own spirit, soul, and body are my nearest machinery for God’s service. They are my battle axe and weapons of war.”

3. It’s faithfully rewarded. Romans 6:20-23 reminds us that wages will accrue to the body, whether it is redeemed or not. The wages of sin is death—both in terms of natural consequence and divine sentence. But the gift of redemption, and the benefit of walking in it, is eternal life. That truth applies not just to our conversion but to every day of our lives with Christ. It’s helpful to recall the negative consequences of sin as well as the positive blessings of faithful obedience.

4. It’s worshipfully sacrificed. Romans 12:1 challenges us to offer up our bodies as living sacrifices to the Lord—this is our spiritual act of worship. Worship simply means “worth-ship”—declaring and affirming the worth of something or someone. We declare the worth of God and the gospel by putting our lives on the altar, and offering every part of ourselves to God’s service. But of course, we offer up our bodies as *living* sacrifices only in response to Jesus, who offered up his body as a *dead* sacrifice, purchasing our redemption on the cross.

It’s like the great Anglican wedding vow: “With this ring I thee wed; with my body I thee worship; and with all my worldly goods I thee endow.” Jesus made this vow to us first. He declared and established our worth by his bodily sacrifice; he slipped the ring of the Holy Spirit onto our finger, and made us heirs of every promise and blessing of God. What more can we do but worship him with our lives?

Discussion:

1. Read Romans 6:8-14; 20-23; and 12:1. What to you is the most outstanding thought or phrase in this passage?
2. In baptism we are united with Christ in his death and resurrection. Have you undergone believer's baptism? What did it mean to you at the time? What does it mean today—does it have any added significance at this stage of your life?
3. Romans 6:11 reminds us to do a re-accounting of our lives, counting ourselves dead to sin but alive to God. What is one tangible way in which you've done this, or need to do it? Is there any area of your life where you're giving more credence to the old you over the new?
4. Romans 6:14 says that sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law but under grace. Do you every struggle with a slave mentality, acting or feeling under sin's domination even though you are free in Christ? In what ways might this compare to the slave mentality suffered by many after the Emancipation Proclamation?
5. Verse 13 calls us to "weaponize" our bodies, not offering our parts to wickedness but to righteousness. And elsewhere in the New Testament we find examples of what this means: We no longer steal but work with our hands; we no longer speak unwholesomely but use words to build others up; we stop fighting and start showing compassion. What has been the best change of this sort that you have experienced? What is one area in which you feel convicted and compelled to make a fresh, grace-driven effort to repurpose your body?
6. In the sermon, Craig Groeschel's "Daily Declarations" were cited. These include:
 - Jesus is first in my life. I exist to serve and glorify Him.
 - I love my wife and will lay down my life to serve her.
 - I will nurture, equip, train, and empower my children to do more for His kingdom than they imagine.
 - I love people and believe the best about others.
 - I am disciplined. Christ in me is stronger than the wrong desires in me.
 - I am growing closer to Jesus every day. Because of Christ, my family is closer, my body is stronger, my faith is deeper, my leadership is sharper.
 - I am anointed, empowered, equipped and called to reach people far from God.
 - I am creative, innovative, driven, focused, and blessed beyond measure—because the Holy Spirit dwells in me.
 - I develop leaders. That's not something I do. It's who I am.
 - My words, thoughts, and imaginations are under the power of Christ. I take all thoughts captive and make them obedient to Christ.
 - I wake up with purpose, direction, and meaning every day of my life.
 - Pain is my friend. I rejoice in suffering because Christ suffered for me.
 - I bring my best and then some. It's what I bring after I do my best that makes the difference.
 - The world will be different and better because I served Jesus today.

Would you consider doing something like this? How might it help you live into your redemption?

7. Romans 12:1 calls us to offer up your bodies as living sacrifices to God? The word "body" is such a physical word; it's more tangible than saying "heart" or "life." Does that make the call more tangible, more challenging? What does the Holy Spirit speak to you through this verse?