

Yielded Bodies

by Robert G. Lee, D.D.
Pastor, Bellevue Baptist Church
Memphis, Tennessee

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CHAPTER ONE

THE HUMAN BODY

"I will praise thee;
for I am fearfully and wonderfully made:
marvellous are thy works;
and that my soul knoweth right well" (Psalm 139:14)

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God,
and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (I Corinthians 3:16)

We live in a world of wonder, wonders and wondering.

Said James Gates Percival.

"The world is full of poetry -- the air
Is living with its spirit; and the waves
Dance to the music of its melody."

And Shakespeare exclaimed:

O wonderful, wonderful, and most
Wonderful, wonderful.

Thus we feel when we think of the marvels, the wonders, of this universe and the marvels of the animal kingdom, the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the bird world, and the astronomical realms.

Think of the marvels of the mechanical world that almost awake in us a primeval faith in magic, marvels which annihilate distance, make ice in the tropics, grow oranges in the snow, make a messenger boy out of the lightning, marvels which make art to rejoice and science to exult.

Think of the jet planes which mount up with such speed as to be almost as fast as the lightning that flashes out of the far west unto the distant east.

Think of the great reapers, "careening like yachts through seas of waving wheat," that have taken the place of the old scythe which the Egyptians used on the banks of the Nile or the Babylonians in the Euphrates river.

Think of the scientific marvel of compressing a Caruso into the microscopic point of a needle and imprisoning Sousa's brass band in a wax disc.

Think of the chemical marvel of putting seven-tenths of one per cent chromium into low carbon steel and increasing the tensile strength of that steel from 55,000 pounds to the square inch to 100,000 pounds to the square inch.

Think of the marvel in "the bird world" - such as the humming bird making two hundred strokes a second, as man found out by matching the bird's hum with a note on a violin. What a clever flier the humming bird is, with ability to rise straight up in perpendicular speed in the air, to hover motionless before a flower, and to fly backwards as well as forwards.

Think of the marvel, too, of the homing pigeon, which nurses in its strange little breast, for years, that directing sense of its way home, makes flight, as did Nansen's pigeon, over thousands of unmarked miles across an ocean and mountain wilderness, flies an unseen line and comes at last to the one window ledge in all the world where it was looked for.

Think of the marvels of the bee with wings which in flight beat 11,400 times a minute, which move in a figure-of-eight design, and which thus make flight in any direction possible - up, down, side to side, backward and forward.

Think of the marvel of honey making when we know that it takes about 37,000 loads of nectar to make one pound of honey and that the bees from one hive (say about 45,000) will visit more than 250,000 blossoms in one day to gather this amount, making a flight mileage of at least 50,000 miles.

Think of the marvels of instinct, or that sense of direction, or whatever you may term it, of the dog.

This is shown by what W.H. Gambrell wrote to the *Boston Post* from Cambridge, Mass., about his dog, Vixen. Here it is:

"About two months ago when I came from my home in Greenville, S.C. to Cambridge, I brought with me a very highly prized St. Bernard dog named Vixen, as I was very fond of him. I exercised great care that he should not get loose until he had become familiar with his new surroundings; but one bright morning some ten days after arriving here with him, I decided to let him have a sun bath by tying him in front of the house while I went to the post office for the mail. When I returned to the house thirty minutes later, to my great surprise, I found that Vixen had gnawed the least in two and departed. I advertised for him in the papers, offering a liberal reward for his recovery, but all to no avail. I never heard anything from him. Yesterday I received a letter from home stating that Vixen had just arrived there in apparently good health.

How a dog could find his way from here to Greenville, S.C. is more than I can understand."

Think of the astronomical wonders

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chambers and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the Heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof" (Psalm 19:1-6).

Think of the architectural wonders of the Taj Mahal of Shah Jehan. Standing on the banks of the Jumna River at Agra, India, is the Taj Mahal, the love-tribute of Shah Jehan to Princess Arjamand, his wife, whom he called Mumtaz Mahal, the "exalted of the Palace," loved as few women have ever been loved. It is the most beautiful structure in the world. It is a dream in marble. It is, as some one has called it, "frozen poetry." "On each visit to Agra I have gone time and time again, at sunrise, at noon, and at sunset, and lingered for ours, now on the entrance gateway, now on the marble approach, or again lying on the green sward, to gaze upon and to drink in its wonderful beauty."

But think of the

MARVELS OF OUR MAKER'S MASTERPIECE

Greater than any temple built by man is the human body - the greatest temple known to men.

Wonderful the framework, with two hundred bones in the framework, not counting the bones in the ears; more durable than steel, with every joint tightly enclosed, moving in a constant bath of oil and producing its own oil.

Wonderful the body's running gear - the muscles - with its system of co-ordinate contractions among different groups of muscles.

Wonderful the breather system of the human machine, starting at the nose, with the thermostatic control - the lungs and skin. Throughout every portion of the skin are found millions of tiny glands.

A most marvelous fact about the human body is that its life is not a single thing. It is made up of an immense number of individual units, microscopic in size, each having a structure of its own, a function of its own, a life of its own. So small are they and so numerous that in a drop of blood as large as a small pinhead, there are five million of them.

Can you imagine any human architect sitting down at a desk and making declaration that he can plan a human body?

Is it not true, as one has stated, that the most eminent group of anatomists and physiologists and

scientists from every realm could not, though they united their mentalities, though they labored one thousand years, conceive or devise the thousands of contrivances which confront us whenever and wherever we touch the human body? Are not the leading scientists baffled and profoundly conscious of the impenetrable mystery which encircles them as they study the human body?

Is the efficiency of any modern machine about which engineers talk as great as the efficiency of man's body when its functions in health and strength?

Is any pump as perfect as the human heart which, when properly cared for, stays on the job,

- though sometimes overworked,
- though sometimes poisoned,
- though sometimes overloaded,
- through sometimes thrown into high speed without going through the low gears,
- though abused in so many ways?

Is it not wonderful the way it stays on the job, miraculously efficient in spite of the punishment it takes, making 4,320 strokes and pumping 15 gallons of blood an hour?

In one year the heart beats 40,000,000 times, with no rest except between contractions. In the heart are 100,000 miles of blood vessels - a vast system through which the blood flows regularly.

- Is any telegraphic mechanism equal to our nervous system?
- Is any radio so wonderful and so efficient as the voice and the ear?
- Is any camera as perfect as the human eye?
- Is any ventilating plant as wonderful as the nose, lungs and skin?

The answer is no.

Can any electrical switchboard compare with the brain? Is any cable as worthy of wonder as the spinal cord? Is not such a marvelous mechanism worthy of the highest respect and the best care? Yes! Is not the temple of the body to be kept clean? Yes!

All of which brings us to say that GOD made the human body - and it is his masterpiece.

"For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?"

And if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?"

If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing?

If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body.

And the eye can not say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: and those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one of another.

And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it" (I Corinthians 12:14-26).

GOD's masterpiece - the human body - is the most exquisite and wonderful organization that has come from the divine hand.

Now think of the

MASTERY OF THIS BODY

This mastery GOD urges:

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Romans 6:12-14).

This mastery Paul urged by word and by example:

"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (I Corinthians 9:27).

This mastery is necessary because of the deadly doing of sin in the body.

The destruction of sin is extensive.

Sin abuses the body and makes that which should be the temple of the HOLY GHOST, the temple which the Devil uses.

As the traders in the Temple at Jerusalem made GOD's house "**a den of thieves,**" so sin makes the human body a den where iniquities find dwelling place and iniquities issue.

As sin would pull GOD out of His throne,

- abusing His authority,
- His justice,
- His power,
- His wisdom,
- His patience,
- His mercy,
- His holiness,
- His promises,

so sin would abuse all the powers and defile all the precincts of the human body.

There are many steps to Satan's ladder in this matter of his effort to devour the strength and mar the usefulness of the human body in which man should glorify GOD.

- A man comes first to walk in the counsel of the ungodly,
- then he stands in the way of sinners,
- and lastly sits in the seat of the scornful.

Satan leads up the steps of his ladder.

- After temptation is offered, then comes approbation in the understanding.
- After that, consent in the will.
- After that comes the defense of it, with all the rhetoric hell can invent.
- After that comes boldness in sinning.

And last of all comes scorning and a drawing "**of iniquity with cords of vanity**" (Isaiah 5:8), boasting in wickedness and glorying in shame.

Satan acts like a creeping dragon and then like a flying serpent. His first request seems mannerly and modest, as Semiramis desired of Ninus to reign but one day, and that day to do what she pleased - and in that day she cut off his head. That is sin!

Sin deceives man till man is hardened through its deceitfulness. It appears at first but little in the fountain, in the heart and thought. Then it bubbles into a stream of evil words; then it increases into a river of evil actions. Next it swells into a torrent and overflows till it drowns men in perdition. Thus it gradually destroys them.

Satan would have us forget these words:

"Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body" (I Corinthians 6:13).

Satan would have our ears be deaf to the words:

"Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body" (I Corinthians 6:20).

Mrs. Wilcox describes the deadly and dastardly doings of sin in the body in her poem which she calls "*The Squanderer*:

GOD gave him passions splendid as the sun
Meant for the lordliest purposes - a part
Of Nature's full and fertile mother's heart,
From which new systems and new worlds are spun,
And now behold! Behold what he has done!

In Folly's court and Carnal Pleasure's mart.
He flung the wealth GOD gave him at the start.
At dawn he stood potential, opulent,
With virile manhood and emotions keen.
At noon he stands - all Love's large fortune spent
In petty traffic, unproductive, mean --

A pauper cursed with impotent desire!

Stephen Phillips wrote:

Who stabs at this my heart, stabs at a kingdom;
These veins are rivers, and these arteries
Are very roads; this body is your country.

But Carlyle showed how sin can stab and ruin the kingdom of the body when he wrote:

Seated within this body's car,
The silent self is driven far,
And the five senses at the poles,
Like steeds are tugging restive of control.

And if the driver lose his way
Or the reins break, who can say
Into what blind paths, what pits of fear
Will plunge the chargers in their mad career?

The consoling fact that we can glorify GOD in the body urges us that we should not let sin reign in our mortal bodies.

Our bodies are but dust, but they can bring praise to Him who created the human body and set the members in place as it pleased Him. Dull and tuneless in themselves - mere houses of clay which we lease for just a few summers and winters - they can be glorious harps on which the music of piety can be struck to Heaven.

Though often assaulted by disease, they can be channels through which the Divine shall become articulate. No matter what temptations assail or what difficulties surround us, we can glorify GOD in our mortal bodies - if we will to, if we will. Paul taught that in these words:

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (II Corinthians 4:8-11).

And by presenting our bodies to GOD "**As those who are alive from the dead**" and the members of our bodies as instruments of righteousness unto GOD by always bearing in the body the death of JESUS and manifesting the life of JESUS, we shall be saved from reaping to the flesh.

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21).

And the truth is that "**he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption**" (Galatians 6:8). Now, remember that the body is not for fornication but for the MASTER.

Let us not forget that the body is

MORTAL

"Your moral body," GOD says.

And, if JESUS tarry in His coming, the body shall wrestle with death.

- Death will close the mortal body so that it shall wrestle with death.
- Death will close the mortal eyes so that they shall see no more.
- Death will deaden the ears so that they can hear never a voice or sound.
- Death will stop the feet so that never a step will they take again.
- Death will fold the hands to that no task they can do - with pen or tool or touch.
- Death will silence the tongue so that no word will be spoken.
- Death will still the heart so that neither hate nor love shall abide there.

"It is appointed unto man once to die." "Your mortal body"!

What David once said to Jonathon we can say to others - some younger and some older than are we: "**Truly as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death**" (I Samuel 20:3).

How grim a fact is death!

The blackest shadow that ever wrapped this earth in darkness, it seems to blot out the lamps of life, of love, of hope, leaving people in ashes and grief, even in despair.

Death,

- the one sanctify all men respect,
- the one gesture that melts the hardest,
- the one awe that appalls the most impious,
- the one great democrat,
- the one mocker at our aristocracies and high mightiness,
- the one commander whose words all obey, and one stroke of common sense that annihilates all our follies

Death is also the one preacher of righteousness and truth and justice that gets the ears of all.

That step between us and death all must take - if JESUS tarry.

- The athlete must.
- The cripple must.
- The strong, the weak, the sick must.
- The rich must.
- The black man must.
- The white man must!
- The scholar must.
- The ignoramus must.
- The king must.
- The beggar must.
- The millionaire must.
- The maiden must.
- All folks must.

Settle us in the finest spot under the fairest skies, beside the clearest streams, watching the choicest flowers, listening to the sweetest songs, yet even there that step would be before us and death find us. We can not escape taking it. We can not refuse to take it. We can not ask to be left off. We must follow in the train of all who have gone before us. "**Death has passed upon all men.**" It is the one event that happeneth to all.

Remembering that your body is a mortal body, do not take the step between you and death without GOD. Do not take that step alone; alone without CHRIST who can brighten or dispel every shadow; alone without Him who knows the way out of every difficulty; alone without Him who gave His body on the Cross for our sins, who lay in our grave and came forth that we might sit on His throne.

Let not sin reign in your body - lest you utter some remorseful wail akin to that uttered by Edward in *King Lear*:

"I have served the lust of my mistress heart and did the act of darkness with her. Swore as many oaths as I spake words and broke them in the sweet face of Heaven . . . Wine loved I deeply, dice dearly, and in woman out-paramoured the Turk. False of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand. Hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey."

Yield your body to GOD.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1).

And yield that body, so fearfully and wonderfully made, now.

Be done with excuses. Be done with alibis.

Remember that JESUS looked upon His body as a temple.

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spoke of the temple of his body" (John 2:19-21).

Remember that the bodies of Christians are the "**members of Christ**" (I Corinthians 6:15) - and are the body of CHRIST (I Corinthians 12:27).

Give ears keenly sensitized and wills obedient to the words of Paul who, by the HOLY SPIRIT, wrote:

"Christ shall be magnified in my body" (Philippians 1:20).

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

Say with David:

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well" (Psalm 139:14).

See to it that you are always bearing about in the body the dying of the LORD JESUS so that the life also of JESUS might be made manifest in your body (II Corinthians 4:10).

Then you will surely glorify GOD in your body and GOD will be glorified in your life as the sun is glorified in beautiful and fragrant flowers.

~ end of chapter 1 ~
