

1 Corinthians 6:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Another Corinthian slogan: *ta brōmata tē koilia kai hē koilia tois brōmasin* (τὰ βρώματα τῇ κοιλίᾳ καὶ ἡ κοιλία τοῖς βρώμασιν)—'foods for the stomach, the stomach for foods.' They argued: bodily functions are morally neutral, so eat what you want (cf. Mark 7:19). Paul agrees—partially. Yes, **God shall destroy both** (*ho theos kai tautēn kai tauta katargēsei, ὁ θεὸς καὶ ταῦτην καὶ ταῦτα καταργήσει*): food and digestive systems are temporary, part of the perishing order.

But then the contrast: **Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.** *Sōma* (σῶμα, 'body') ≠ *koilia* (κοιλία, 'belly'). The body is the whole person, destined for resurrection; the belly is temporary appetite. Sexual immorality (*porneia, πορνεία*) isn't like food—it violates the body's telos (purpose). The body exists **for the Lord** (*tō kyriō, τῷ κυρίῳ*), and reciprocally, **the Lord for the body**—He's redeeming, not discarding, it.

Historical Context

Greek dualism (Plato, Gnosticism) despised the body as inferior to the soul, leading to two errors: asceticism (punish the body) or libertinism (indulge it, since it's irrelevant). Corinthians leaned libertine, treating physical acts as spiritually neutral. Paul's Hebrew theology insists: embodiment matters. God created bodies

good (Genesis 1-2), incarnated in a body (John 1:14), and promises bodily resurrection (1 Corinthians 15). Therefore, what you do with your body matters eternally.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What false dualities (body vs. soul, secular vs. sacred) cause you to treat bodily choices as morally insignificant?
2. How does the promise of bodily resurrection (v. 14) elevate the importance of sexual purity and physical stewardship now?
3. In what ways do you live as if your body belongs to you rather than to the Lord?

Interlinear Text

τὰ βρώμασιν τῇ κοιλίᾳ καὶ ἡ κοιλίᾳ τοῖς
G3588 Meats G3588 for the belly and G3588 for the belly G3588
G1033 G2836 G2532 G2836

βρώμασιν ὁ δὲ θεὸς καὶ ταύτην καὶ ταῦτα
Meats G3588 Now God and G3778 and them
G1033 G1161 G2316 G2532 G2532 G5023

καταργήσει τὸ δὲ σώματι· οὐ τῇ πορνείᾳ ἀλλὰ
shall destroy G3588 Now for the body is not G3588 for fornication but
G2673 G1161 G4983 G3756 G3588 G4202 G235

τῷ κύριος καὶ ὁ κύριος τῷ σώματι·
for the Lord and G3588 for the Lord G3588 for the body
G3588 G2532 G2962 G2962 G4983

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 6:19 (References God): 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?

Romans 6:12 (Parallel theme): Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

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

1 Corinthians 6:15 (References God): Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.

Ephesians 5:23 (Parallel theme): For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

Matthew 15:17 (Parallel theme): Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

Romans 14:17 (References God): For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

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