

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

¹⁹ Do you not know that your body is a temple^[a] of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

Pastor's Message

Recently, I became aware of an exercise facility in one of our towns that has started up “Poise and Prayer” exercise classes for anyone who wishes to join in for a small fee. Most of those participating are senior women. Respectfully watching them from afar, I thought that they seemed to be having a good time and to be expressing gratitude to God as they were being carefully guided in their workouts.

The point of such mixing of religion and health is to help us become grateful for God's gift of our bodies—and of God's command that we tend to our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit, as the Apostle Paul put it.

Some religions have taught that the material world is a bad world, and, consequently that our bodies are bad, even evil things. Consequently, the goal of these religions is to get us out of the world of physical things, including our fragile bodies, into more enduring “spiritual realms” on earth and heaven.

Christianity does not teach this—and for that matter, neither do Judaism or Islam. They all teach that this world of physical things is a good world, and that God made our bodies to be the means for us to do our good works on earth.

We, Christians, give thanks for the physical gift of our bodies (hand, blood, brains and more) to do God's good work on earth in whatever place in life we find ourselves. I address this section of this message to everyone but especially to our very senior members living in their home or in care facilities.

And we give thanks for those who taught us to honor and respect our bodies as gifts from God to do God's good work in whatever vocation to which we are called (any work, whether it pays or not, and to our families) to serve our neighbors.

And we thank God for the knowledge God brings us through all the sciences (including the health sciences that inform exercise programs like Poise and Praise) to find better ways for us to care for the Temple of the Holy Spirit (our bodies) that God has entrusted to each one of us.

Pastor Leonard

Some of my ministry over the years has been in health-care ministry: chaplaincy in hospitals, outpatient settings in cities for sometimes homeless mentally ill persons, and hospice. Throughout it all, I give thanks for the blessings