

Our Bodies and Worship

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 28 July 2024

Preacher: Kevin Murphy

[0 : 00] Good morning, Watermark. Let us turn our Bible, or you may refer to your bulletins. The passage for today is Romans chapter 12, verse 1 to 8. We will read about our bodies and worship.

Starting in verse 1, I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me, I say to everyone among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith God has assigned.

For as in one body, we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function. So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of one another.

[1 : 17] Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them, if prophecy in proportion to our faith, if service in our serving, the one who teaches in his teaching, the one who exhorts in his exhortation, the one who contributes in generosity, the one who leads with zeal, the one who does acts of mercy with cheerfulness.

This is the word of God. Great. Thank you, CK. Good morning, everybody. Great to see you. Eric and Dora, great to see you guys.

Welcome back from L.A. And if you are new to Watermark, my name is Kevin. Great to have you with us this morning. We've been away for the last two weeks, so it's really great to be back with the Watermark family.

I don't know about you, but I wonder, how good are you at handyman stuff? My description of handyman stuff should give away that I'm not very good at it.

I'm what you could describe a handyman hack, which means I don't really know what I'm doing, but if something is wrong at home or something is broken, rather than calling somebody, trying to find the right person, trying to find someone that speaks English, and then waiting for them, and then paying for them, I'd rather just attempt it myself.

[2 : 43] And so I have about four tools at home. Most of them came with IKEA furniture. And those four tools solve most of the problems in our home, whether it's fixing a shower, or stripping paint, or painting something, or fixing a hole in the door, or sorting out the buzz in some appliance.

Those four tools will be hacked one way or another to fix the problem, right? And if those four tools don't do it, a good just whack to the side will sort out whatever is wrong in the house.

Now you may say, well, why don't you just go to a hardware store? You know, one of those five element stores? They have all the tools you need. Well, the problem is, if I went there, I wouldn't even know what to do with those tools.

You could show me all the tools in the world, and I wouldn't know what they are for, or what their purpose is. They all just look the same to me. Knowing what something's purpose is really helps to know what you should do with it, right?

If you are presented something, and you have no idea what its purpose is, chances are you're going to misuse it. I wonder how many husbands, and maybe a few ladies, have caused far more problems than they needed, not to mention far more injuries themselves, by using some tool incorrectly.

[4 : 00] using a spanner to try and fix something that needs a hammer, right? Just whack it and jam it, and then you end up damaging yourself. Mike and Greta, why are you looking at yourselves like this?

It sounds like a familiar story in your household. Well, here's the question. What about our bodies? What about our bodies? What are our bodies used for?

What is the purpose of your body? Why didn't God just make you a soul in a box? Why didn't God just make you a brain or a mind in a laboratory?

God has made us embodied beings. What is the purpose, the goal, His design for our bodies?

That's the question we're going to be looking at a little bit this morning.

Why is it that we are physical beings in physical bodies? If you are new to church this morning, I wonder if you've ever considered that. What is the spiritual significance of your physical body?

[4 : 59] We live in a time where we are very confused about how to think about our bodies. On the one hand, we are enamored with our bodies. We love to think about how we look. On the other hand, we're very confused.

But God is not confused. God has lots to say about our physical bodies. And so, today we're looking at the question, what is the purpose of our bodies? And we're going to be looking at Romans chapter 12, this passage that CK read for us.

If you have your bulletin, keep it open in front of you. We're going to be looking at this passage. And in this passage, the Apostle Paul writes to these Christians, and he gives us two purposes for our physical bodies.

Two functions that God intends should inform how we view our physicality. And the two purposes of this, our bodies and God, and our bodies and others.

Okay, very simple. Our bodies and God, our bodies and one another. So, let's dive in and take a look at it. Firstly, our bodies and God. Look at this verse with me again.

[6 : 01] Look at verse one. Paul writes this. He says, I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies, your physical bodies, as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, for this is your spiritual worship.

Okay, the Apostle Paul here clearly wants, spells out for us how God wants us to think and understand about His purpose, His design for our physical bodies.

What purpose do they serve? What are they to be used for? Well, here he tells us. Look at what he says. He says they are to be seen as instruments of worship. Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to the Lord, for this is true or spiritual worship.

Now, we know that in the Bible, worship is the sincere giving of yourself to God for His pleasure and His praise.

That's what worship is, right? Worship is not just mouthing things or singing some songs on the screen. It's giving of yourself to God. Saying, God, here I am. I give myself to you.

[7 : 15] But Paul here clearly has in mind the Old Testament system of worship. If you're familiar with the Old Testament, every Jew or Israelite had to regularly come before God as a form of worship and bring an offering, a sacrifice.

And what they would do is they'd bring an animal to the priest, to the temple, they'd present it to the priest and offer it as a sacrifice, an offering of worship to God. That's why he says, present, same word, present your bodies as a sacrifice to God.

This is worship. Now, in the Bible, when people bring something to God as an offering, an act of worship, Scripture's understanding is that is always meant to be seen as a representative of the entirety of our lives.

When someone comes to God and says, God, I give this to you, that's not the totality of our worship. That's just a representation. So, for instance, right, Claire spoke earlier about our financial offering, our worship to God, our tithes and offerings.

When someone comes and brings their tithe to God, it's not saying, okay, God, you get 10% and the other 90% is mine. I get to do what I want to do. In a way, it's saying, God, this is representing the fact that all that I have, all that I am, belongs to you.

[8 : 37] Or if someone gives their time to God, you come to church on a Sunday morning, you say, okay, God, I'll give you two hours on a Sunday morning. It's not that God gets two hours and we get the other, you know, 168 hours or something.

Actually, that's representative of the fact that God, all that I am, all my time, my Monday to Sunday, whether I'm in the office or at church or at home, all of my time, I belong to you.

And so when the Bible says here, present your bodies to God as an act of worship, it's a representative of the fact that all that we have, the Christian knows that our entire lives, every

aspect of our being, mind, soul, body, all of our lives, belong to God.

Now, we know that God is not just interested in mechanical, going through the motions worship, right? Where you kind of just go through the motions, you burn the incense, you put it before God, you just do what you need to do.

No, no, we know that God is interested in our hearts, in our motives, in what's really going on. Remember, Jesus meets a lady at a well and he's talking to her about worship and he says, the kind of worship that our Father desires is worship that is in spirit and in truth.

[9 : 51] In other words, in sincerity and heart genuineness. That's the kind of worship that God wants, right? So God is interested in our hearts and our motives, what's really going inside, not just the motions.

But on the other hand, there's the temptation to swing to the other side and create this false dichotomy that God is only interested in our hearts and he doesn't care what to do with our bodies. But here, Paul tells us that actually the kind of worship that God wants is the entirety of our lives.

Yes, our hearts, our motives, what's going on inside of us, but also, what to do with our bodies, our physicality. Paul says, this is proper worship or the ESV says, spiritual worship.

The Greek word is *logiken*, from which we get the word logical. He says, this is logical worship, this is reasonable, this is rational worship to bring our entire lives and say, God, all that I am is a declaration of your kingship, your majesty, your worth.

Okay? So Paul says, what is God's plan for our lives? It's worship. Our bodies are to be given to God as worship. Except, there's two differences between the Old Testament understanding of worship and the New Testament understanding.

[11 : 12] Did you notice what they are? The first one here is he says, we are to offer us bodies as living sacrifices. In the Old Testament, when you offer a sacrifice to God, you generally would bring an animal, maybe a goat or a lamb or something, and you come to the temple to the priest, and you say, here is my offering.

And they would slaughter, kill the animal, and they would put it on the altar, and they would burn it as an offering of a sacrifice, right? In other words, it's a once-off, done-and-dusted deal.

It's done, and then you go home. When God wants us to bring our bodies, we don't burn them on the altar, we don't kill ourselves. He says here, they are living sacrifices.

In other words, it's not just a once-off decision when I was back in college, back in 1985, I made a decision, okay, God, I'll become a Christian, I'll follow you. And then from there on out, I live for myself.

No, it's a day-by-day we are to live for God. Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, week in and week out. So, whether you're at church on a Sunday morning, and you're worshiping God and praising Him and declaring His majesty and His kingship, or whether you are at the office on Wednesday, or whether you're at the trading desk on a Tuesday morning, or whether you're at home on a Friday evening, or whether you are out on a date with somebody or at the gym, Christians think about their bodies as saying, in all of life, in every day, every sphere of life, God, I bring my body, I offer it, I present it to you, be glorified and honored in the way that I hand on and steward my body.

[13 : 05] Here I am. All that I am belongs to you. All of my life, heart, soul, mind, body, will, emotions, everything I am belongs to you. In other words, Christians are those who have decided to live for God, not just decided to follow Him once upon a time.

But here's the second distinction. In the Old Testament, broadly speaking, there were two kinds of offerings that people brought. There were sin offerings and free will offerings. Typically, when we think of the Old Testament, we think of sin offerings, right?

So, somebody comes to the priest and they say, okay, I'll bring a lamb or a goat or a bull or something and offer it on the altar to atone for my sins, to make right for my many transgressions. The other kind of offering is a free will offering where somebody comes to God and says, God, out of gratitude for who you are, I bring this as an offering of praise to you. Now, when Paul is talking here and says, in view of God's mercy, offer your bodies as a living sacrifice to God, what is he thinking about?

He's not thinking about a sin offering. How do we know that? Well, a couple of reasons. One is this. Paul's writing this in Romans chapter 12, right? In other words, there are 11 chapters of the book of Romans before Paul writes this.

[14 : 30] And he says here, he says, I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, he says, therefore, offer your bodies as living sacrifices. He connects everything that he's written with this injunction to bring our bodies to God as worship.

And the injunction uses is therefore. Okay? He connects everything he's been writing and saying, therefore, in light of this, present your bodies to God as worship and to the praise of his name.

If I say to you, I've come down with the flu, therefore, I won't be able to meet you. The second half is obviously predicated on the first half, right?

Paul says here, in view of God's mercies, therefore, offer your bodies to God as worship. Now, what is the first 11 chapters of the book of Romans about?

Well, if you're new to church, if you don't know, the book of Romans is all about how the Christian life is grounded in the radical, extravagant, undeserved, unearned mercy and kindness of God.

[15 : 42] That though we deserve God's judgment and his wrath, sinners though we are, Jesus died on the cross as a sin offering in our place to take upon himself the sin that we have.

Jesus was punished for us so that we can now live for God and know him and be accepted by him. So, look at a couple of verses in Romans. Look at what Paul writes here.

This is chapter 5. He says, while we were still weak, in other words, while we didn't have it all together, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly.

That's me. That's you. That's us. Jesus died for us when we were sinners. But God shows his love for us that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

While we were enemies of God, we were reconciled, brought back to God by the death of his son Jesus. Much more now that we are reconciled, let us live for him.

[16 : 41] We shall be saved by his life. In other words, Jesus on the cross allowed his body to be broken, ripped in two, torn apart, shamed, beaten, crushed, mocked.

Jesus gave himself up as the ultimate sin offering. And now he says, in light of that, bring your bodies and offer them to God, not as a sin offering, not to earn God's mercy or his grace, but as a free will offering, saying, God, in light of all that you've done for me, here I am, have your way. See, amazing, Jesus Christ was the sin offering that ends all sin offerings. Jesus died in our place and now God the Father can look at you and I, sin as though we are, and say, your sin has been paid for, expiated, atoned for, it's done, it's gone.

And now, in light of that, offer your bodies to God in worship. You see, friends, worship for the Christian is never a means to earn God's acceptance or his love or his forgiveness.

Never. It's always done in response to what God has done. Jesus died to earn God's acceptance for us and now in response that we say, with all that I am, I give myself to you.

[18 : 09] Sam Albury says it like this, we don't offer ourselves to God so that he might love us or forgive us or accept us. We offer ourselves to God because he has loved us and accepted us and loved us.

friends, Jesus died the sin offering to end all sin offerings. Jesus never asks us to come and to worship him and to sing praise to him in order to earn his love but in response.

So, what is God's purpose for our lives, for our bodies, for our souls, for all that we are? What is his purpose for us? Worship, to glorify him, to live our lives to the praise of his great name.

Okay, so what does that actually mean? How does that, what do we do with that this week? Well, give thought to your physical body. Think about how you steward your body.

What does the way that you handle your physicality say about who God is or who you belong to? So, obviously this means that we should automatically challenge patterns of sinful behavior in our lives.

[19 : 15] Obviously we don't steward our bodies towards sin. But think more generally, think about your eyes, right? Think about what do you do with your eyes? What do you feast your eyes upon?

What does that say about what is most important to you? What do you look at? Those Netflix shows that you watch, the websites that you visit, the way you view people of the opposite sex and gender, the amount of time we are scrolling on our phones and social media.

How much of that is done as an act of worship? How much of that is done saying, God be glorified with what I do with my eyes? Well, think about something as simple as when you're talking with someone, are you engaging in eye contact?

Are you communicating, you are really important to me and I value my time? Why are you thinking about all those around you? Well, think about your ears. What podcast are you listening to?

What music are you listening to? Is it fueling a passion for the supremacy of Christ and to live for Him? Or is it numbing you to the wonder of Jesus? If all we listen to a podcast about how to grow our portfolio and make more money and become more wealthy, is that fueling an idol in our lives? [20 : 30] Or is it fueling a passion for Christ? Well, think about your hands. What do you do with your hands? Are your hands instruments of comfort and encouragement?

Or are they instruments of aggression and anger? Do you lift your hands to intimidate people, a spouse or a child? Do you lift your hands in anger? Or do you lift your hands to comfort, to encourage, to show compassion, to show sympathy?

Do you use your hands to touch people inappropriately, to seduce people, to exploit people, to take advantage of them? Do you use your hands to make people feel safe and secure?

Every part of our body is God, how do we use our physical bodies? I think Romans, or think about your mouth, think about the words that come out of your mouth. Do they encourage and build people up?

Do they praise God or do they bring people down? Do we engage in gossip? Do we speak the truth? Do we fetch the truth with how we speak? I think Romans 12 is not specifically talking about this, but at the very least we should think about how do we use our bodies in sung worship on a Sunday?

[21 : 41] today? I often think about this, you know, I quite like to watch sport and when my sports team is doing well, I demonstrate it physically, right?

That winning goal in the 95th minute of the World Cup, come on, yeah! Let's do it, right? Okay, only Claire finds that funny, right? None of you do that, okay, only me, only me, that's fine.

When I watch sport, it's very hard for me to say, nice goal, chap, good job, well, I'm scoring the goal, right? But sometimes when we come to church on Sunday, how do we use our bodies?

We say, praise God, praise God, oh, praise God, but do we actually engage our bodies in our worship?

We are embodied beings. You don't have to do this, but one of the things I like to do is I like to raise my hands as a way of saying, yes, I believe this, this is true. When I say, God, you're glorious, I'm saying, God, this is true, yes, come on.

[22 : 47] Well, sometimes I'll just stand like this and say, God, I need you. Lord, I come before you with nothing in my hands. Lord, I need you.

Well, sometimes even to maybe get on our knees and say, Father, I have nothing. God, I bow before you and surrender.

God, you have my, Jesus, you are my king. God, come and have your way. You see, the Psalms tell us often to worship God with our entire being, to clap in his presence, to kneel down before him, to raise our hands.

The Psalms tell us with all that we have, not just the words of our mouth, but with our entire being, heart, soul, mind, body strength, say, God, all that I am is given to you as a declaration of your majesty and your kingship and your worst.

I appeal to you, therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of Jesus' mercy, in view of what Christ has done on the cross, in view of the fact that Jesus died and was broken and beaten and said, you can know God.

[24 : 00] Bring your whole selves, your body, your mind, your soul, your strength, your will, your emotions, bring your self and offer it to God as a living sacrifice.

This is spiritual worship. You see how radically different this is? You see, most religions, in the ancient world, certainly, but even in modern culture, most religious traditions, worship is something that you just give to the gods to appease the gods, to curry their favor so that you can get their blessings so that you can go on with your life doing what you really want to do, right?

So you will burn some incense sticks and just put them at the shrine or you'll put some fruit in front of the shrine and you'll offer something to God and then He will bless you in return and you can go on with your life.

But what Jesus says here is all of the world is mine. It all belongs to me. And if you're going to follow me, says Jesus, you need to bring your entire life, mind, body, soul, will, strength, all that you are, everything, bring it to me.

And this is a radically new way of thinking. Now the question is this, how, before we get to our second point, how should we respond to that? How should, how are you going to respond to that?

[25 : 17] You see, you could go home and say, well that was quite interesting. No, I hadn't thought of that before. And then just go on with your life, right? Tomorrow you go to the office and you completely forget about it. You could go home and say, well that wasn't very interesting, what a waste of a Sunday morning.

But at least I've done church for one more week, okay, now I can really get on to what I want to do. Maybe you're here and you're not a Christian. And so maybe you go home and you think, wow, that's quite interesting.

I've never heard of the idea that Jesus wants me to follow him with everything that I am, to lay down my life with. That's pretty new, I need to think about that some more. Okay, that's a better response. But here's what the Bible wants us to see. Christians believe that God's word is true and because it's true, it's always liberating. It's freeing.

It's often challenging, but it's freeing, it's liberating. But here's the thing, it's only liberating to the degree to which you engage with it or respond to it or accept it, receive it, right?

[26 : 23] In other words, if you go home and say, oh, that was interesting and then ignore it, it has zero impact on your life, zero bearing on your life. But if you will say, okay, God wants me to give everything that I have to him, to follow him with all that I am, do you know what you'll find?

You'll find it'll start to change you. It'll start to change you and transform you. It'll change the way you live. And that's what verse 2 says in our Bible.

Look at verse 2 with me. This is a tricky passage, a tricky verse, but he says this, do not be conformed to the ways of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.

Okay, that's an interesting phrase. That by testing or learning or examining, you may discern what is the will of God, what is his good, acceptable, and perfect will.

Okay, so this is a difficult verse, but essentially Paul says this, the word of God, the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ reframes the way we think about life and the way we approach life, right?

[27 : 31] We used to live for ourselves and Jesus says, I am God, now you live for me. We used to live according to the values and the principles of our culture and Jesus says, no, no, I am God, now I live according to my values, my principles.

Jesus Christ used to be an accessory to our lives, something we just, you know, honored a little bit on Sundays and then got on with our lives. Now Jesus says, I want to be the center of your lives. So Jesus makes a radical claim on our lives, right?

And Paul says that when you accept his claim, when you receive him, what he calls a renewal of your mind or a renewal of your thinking, when you accept this and receive it and respond to it and believe it and trust him and take him as word, what does he say will happen?

He will transform your life. He has to, right? He'll change the way you live. The word transformation there is the word metamorphoster, something like that.

Metamorphoster, okay? It's where we get the English word metamorphosis. You know, metamorphosis is a radical change like a silkworm changes into a butterfly. It's a metamorphosis.

[28 : 40] It's a radical change. God says here that when you take his word and you say, okay, you God, Jesus, our king and Lord, I will follow you with all that I have.

When you change your thinking and accept that, he will transform your life. And then what happens? What will happen?

The more you do that, the more you learn to understand and know God's will for your life and to walk according to it. So I don't know if you're someone that often wonders, what is God's will for my life?

What is God's will? What is his will? What does he want me to do? Well, here the Bible says the way to discover God's will is to shift your thinking according to God's thinking.

To think God's thoughts often. When you start to renew your mind and renew your thinking by accepting what God's word says, do you know what happens? You discover or here it says you discern, you learn what God's will is, you walk in that will and you find the liberating, freeing power of God.

[29 : 47] It'll change your life. It'll change your life. So, what is Paul saying to us? Our bodies are gifts from God. They are an integral part of who you are.

And in light of what Jesus did on the cross, giving up his body, his body broken for you that you might be saved, now you bring your entire life into God with all that I am and all that I have, I offer myself to you to the praise of your great name.

Does that make sense? Okay. Our bodies and God. Secondly, this will be very quick. Our bodies and one another. Look at what Paul says in verses 4 to 8 here.

Here Paul says that by virtue of our union with Christ, if you're a Christian, you're united to Christ, he says our lives are not just individualistic, it's not just me and Jesus, actually our lives also impact those around us.

And so look what he says here in verse 4. He says, for as in one body, he's talking about a physical human body, we have many members, right? You have an arm, you have a nose, you have an ear, you have an appendix, maybe not anymore, but okay, we have many members in our bodies.

[30 : 55] And the members do not all have the same function. So, we, now he's talking about the body of Christ, though many are one body in Christ and individually members one of another.

So he's comparing the church family to a human body. He's saying, your body's got lots of body parts, the church family's lots of parts, and we are all distinct and different. And then he says, each one of us are to use our gifts and our abilities to serve the wider body.

Look what he says, verse six. So, having gifts that differ according to the grace that's given to us, let us use them. If your gift is prophecy, prophesy in proportion to your faith.

If your gift is service, in our serving. If your gift is teaching, to the one who teaches. If your gift is the one who exhorts or encourages, do that. To the one who contributes and generosity, do that.

To the one who leads, do it with passion. The one who does acts of mercy and kindness, do it with cheerfulness. What's his point here? His point is, you are not your own.

[32 : 04] You belong to Christ, yes, but in a sense, you also belong to one another. Now, not in a weird cultish way, okay, but in a way, when you're saved and united with Christ, you're also part of Christ's body, and now we use our physical bodies to serve one another.

So, my gifts and my talents are not given to me alone, they're given also to the church family to serve the family. And your gifts and your talents and your abilities aren't just given to you alone, they're given to you to serve the person across the aisle or behind you or in front of you.

So, your body is an instrument of worship to God but also an instrument of service to one another.

And you know what happens when you have an injury? What happens when you're injured, right?

The other parts of the body have to compensate for your injury, right? So, you break your leg and you're now in crutches and now your arms need to carry the weight of your body, right? In a church family, all of us from time to time are going to be injured.

All of us are going to go through suffering and hardship, difficulty, right? And so, what do we do?

The body comes around us and compensates. The body strengthens one another to help us in our time of weakness.

[33 : 21] I think a great example of this is Jack. Where's Jack? I saw Jack. There you go. There you go. There you go. There you go. There you go. There you go. There you go. So, a few months ago, Jack's playing badminton and raptures his Achilles tendon, right?

And a CG is there with him. Is that right? I think they were with you? Yeah? Okay? So, the CG gets him off to hospital. I saw some photos of Alfred in the ambulance with him, making sure Jack gets to hospital and they make sure he's all safe and secure and the doctors see him and then a few days later, there's his CG at the hospital, right?

And they bring him gifts and food and flowers and then for the next few months, he's in a wheelchair and it's really hard to get to church. So, CG goes and meets him and picks him up and makes sure that he gets to church here.

He has one part of the body helping another part of the body with their physical strength in a very physical way. Now, maybe you say, oh, well, I don't have much to offer, right?

I'm just like, what can I do? I'm very weak, I'm very poor, I'm sickly, I'm old, my body can't do anything. I once heard a story of an old lady in her 80s and she was housebound in a wheelchair, couldn't leave the house.

[34 : 31] But she figured the one thing I can do is I can pick up the phone and so every day she decided I'm going to phone one person in my church and I'm just going to talk to them. I'm going to encourage them.

I'm going to listen to them. I'm going to ask them how they're doing. I'm going to ask them what their fears are. I'm going to pray for them. So here's a little old lady in her 80s sitting in some cottage in a nursing home and using her body to serve and strengthen the body of Christ.

Friends, what's the point? in view of God's mercy. Jesus offering up His body for us. Now we get to offer up our bodies to Christ's offering and to one another in service.

So friends, you are an embodied being. You're not just a soul in a box. You're not just a mind in a laboratory. You're a human being, an embodied being made to know and love and serve and worship the creator God, the sovereign God of all creation to be in relationship with Him.

Not just with your heart but with all that you are. Mind, soul, body as well. Let's do that now as we come to Him in prayer.

[35 : 46] Let's pray together. Father God, we do want to do that. We do, God, want to bring our entire bodies before you.

We want to bring our hands, our mouths, our eyes, the words of our mouth, God, the meditation of our hearts, the actions of our hands, the things we look at online, the websites we visit, the way we listen to people.

God, we want our physical bodies to be an act of worship to you. God, I pray, help us as a church not just to worship you in word, not just to go through the motions but to bring our entire lives and say with all that we are and all that we have, let them be an offering that is pleasing, holy, acceptable to you.

This is our true and logical, our rational, our reasonable worship. God, we pray, Lord, I pray for our youth, God, I pray for the teenagers, those who are particularly in a time that is so confusing and where our culture has so much to say about our bodies.

God, I pray that our youth, our teenagers, God, will more than anything be radically secure in who you say they are. That they won't try and find their identity in what culture says but they, God, even at a young age, even in their teens will say, God, with all that I am and all that I have, I give myself to you.

[37 : 20] God, I pray for all of us. God, I pray, Lord, for those of us that are struggling with our bodies. Maybe we struggle with physical health. Maybe we struggle with how we feel about our bodies.

Maybe we struggle, God, with how we look. God, I pray that each one of us in this room will bring ourselves before you and offer ourselves to you and that our offering will be pleasing and delightful to you.

I pray this in your great and glorious name. Amen.