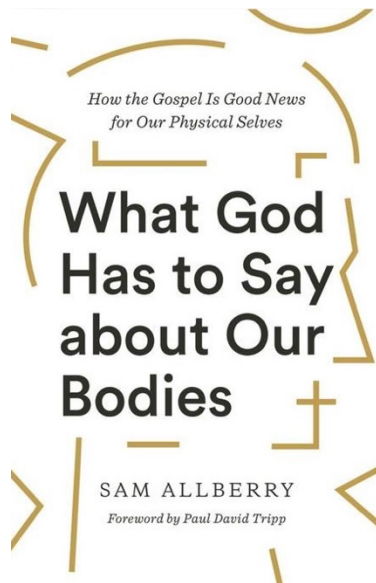


What God Has to Say about Our Bodies: How the Gospel Is Good News for Our Physical Selves

By Sam Allberry and Paul David Tripp

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Summary

There's a danger in focusing too much on our bodies. There's also a danger in not valuing them enough. The Bible has lots to say about the body. Sam Allberry explains that all of us are fearfully and wonderfully made, and should regard our physicality as a gift. He offers biblical guidance for living in and valuing our bodies. This includes understanding gender, sexuality, and identity; dealing with aging, illness, and death; and considering the physical future hope that we have in Christ.

Best Illustration

"Different Christians may have differing views over whether tattoos are good, bad, or neutral. But the fact that there has been such a dramatic increase is significant. Perhaps for many, it is a sign that our flesh needs to be 'branded' in order to show that it is truly ours, that, un-inked, it is unable to tell the story of who we really are. For others it might simply be an attempt to flaunt what they believe to be their physical attraction or prowess. So tattoos can be a sign that we're thinking of our body both too little and too much. Only the Bible will help us have the right view. When it comes to our identity, our body is not everything. But neither is it nothing." Kindle location 623

Best Idea

"In the Bible, our body is not an accessory to who we are; it is part of who we are. We can't properly understand who we are apart from our body. Your body is not other than you. It is not just a receptacle for you. It is you. In the Bible it's not just that you have a body; you are a body." Kindle location 444

Best Take Away

"This is the answer to our deep fear of missing out. I don't need to worry about squeezing every last drop of pleasure out of this physical life when I can look forward to an eternity of enjoying the new creation in a resurrected body." Kindle location 2315

Our Recommendation

In this book, you'll gain a new understanding for the immeasurable value of our bodies and God's ultimate plan to redeem them. Many times in the area of spiritual formation that focuses on our inner lives, we lose sight of the value of our physical bodies. This book helps to bring a balance to the two.

Best Quotes

"Your body--my body--is not just there, happening to exist. It means something to God. He knows it. He made it. He cares about it. And all that Christ has done in his death and resurrection is not in order for us one day to escape our body, but for him one day to redeem it. Far from being a spiritual irrelevance, Scripture tells us our body is meaningful." Kindle location 159

"Jesus's incarnation is the highest compliment the human body has ever been paid. God not only thought our bodies up and enjoyed putting several billion of them together; he made one for himself." Kindle location 186

"Becoming human at Christmas was not meant to be reversible. It was permanent. There is now a human body sitting at the right hand of God the Father at the very center of heaven." Kindle location 190

"We're not used to thinking of our body as a gift. Perhaps one reason is that when we think of our body, we tend to think of the frustrating limitations it places on us. This is true even when it is working well." Kindle location 202

"The body is intrinsically good, not bad. So it doesn't need to be abandoned or changed into some completely different form. In the words of the apostle Paul, it needs to be redeemed: 'We wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies' (Rom. 8:23). It is a gift." Kindle location 225

"We're not just the outcome of God's activity; we are the product of God's intention." Kindle location 262

"It's not that God made them (but didn't particularly care how they turned out). He purposed them. They are what he intended them to be. We can affirm, as David does, even of these imperfect bodies, that God made them and that he meant to." Kindle location 270

"But however difficult we may find it, the bodily life we have remains a gift from God, one for which we need to be thankful. It is the means he has given for you to exist in his world." Kindle location 291

"Your body is not nothing. Nor is it everything. Is your body you? Yes. It is intrinsic to who you are. But it is also not the totality of who you are." Kindle location 442

"When people hurt your body, you know that they have not just damaged some of your property; they have violated you. What you do to someone's body, you do to a person." Kindle location 507

"Your body is you. It is not nothing. It's not even just something. But neither is it everything. It is not the totality of who you are." Kindle location 516

"As one writer puts it, 'the real me is a soul tightly and hermetically sealed within my body' and it is this that accounts for what makes me uniquely me." Kindle location 577

"Maleness and femaleness are physically grounded, not psychologically determined. When Genesis 1:27 talks about us being made male and female, it is talking about us being physically made as such." Kindle location 670

"Our gender identity is not something we search for in our feelings; it is something we find in our body." Kindle location 682

"Because God has made us male and female, there is such a thing as marriage—not just in Genesis 2 with Adam and Eve, but ever since then and continuing today. Marriage is grounded on the union of two sexually different people. So however much sin has spoiled our understanding and experience of being male and female, it hasn't obliterated the distinction between the two sexes." Kindle location 723

"But as our image bearing is stressed, so too is our sexual differentiation as male and female. This is no accident. Our sexual difference is bound up with how we are to image God." Kindle location 783

"Being male and female is designed to help us be better at being people. It is not just a matter of biology, but of theology; not just about the multiplication of humanity, but the fuller imaging of God." Kindle location 815

"The fact is, it is clear from Scripture that differences between men and women are not just physiological. And while we mustn't over define what these differences are, neither must we deny they exist at all." Kindle location 911

"Biblically speaking, masculinity is what long-term sanctification produces in Christian men and femininity what long-term sanctification produces in women. This must certainly be true; whatever else manhood and womanhood are, they can't be less than, or different from, godliness in a man or a woman." Kindle location 940

"Yet there are some general ways in which men and women are distinct from each other while at the same time being very much alike. We are not meant to be interchangeable, so that all one can do, the other must also do in exactly the same way." Kindle location 1024

"The physical world that has been subjected to frustration includes our bodies. They are part of the natural order to which we belong. They are made of the same stuff that has been put out of joint. And so they, too, do not work as they were originally meant to. They get sick. Sometimes they stay sick. They break and deform. They age and decay. And all of them, at some point, die." Kindle location 1063

"Redemption—bodily redemption—awaits. Frustration is not the end of the story. But it is the part of the story we find ourselves in now." Kindle location 1089

"Infirmity is not the only problem we encounter with our body. It is possible to experience minimal health problems and yet still find that our body causes us deep and lasting grief. Bodies are not just subject to infirmity; they can cause us shame." Kindle location 1134

"Today we all collude in upholding an expectation of beauty that is virtually fantastical. No wonder we view our bodies as increasingly flawed. We're not comparing them to the best of our species but to the best of our species' imagination." Kindle location 1149

"All of us experience something of the shame of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. All of us feel the need for covering. All of us have some degree of self-consciousness. In many cases, the brokenness is not so much the body itself, but how our experience has taught us to view the body." Kindle location 1205

"No part of the body has been left out. Every aspect of our physicality has in some way been pressed into service of sin. It is why, as we shall see, we must now as Christians be diligent in consecrating every part of our body to Christ." Kindle location 1283

"The greatest evidence of our bodily brokenness is simultaneously ubiquitous and forced out of our minds so that we tend not to notice its significance—our bodies die." Kindle location 1339

"Death is the climax and ultimate proof of our bodily brokenness. But it is not the end of the story. We've thought about some of the principal ways we encounter this brokenness—affliction and shame, sin and death— but our own experience of brokenness, extreme though it may be for some, is not itself the ultimate experience of brokenness humanity has ever faced." Kindle location 1452

"The problems we experience with our body were never ultimately going to be solved by our body. We may be able to ameliorate some aspects of our bodily brokenness—we can cure some ills and ease some pains. But we cannot fix what has been broken. The only hope for us is the body of Jesus, broken fully and finally for us. And by looking to his broken body we find true hope for our own." Kindle location 1668

"The only way our bodies can be restored and redeemed by Jesus is through them belonging to Jesus." Kindle location 1692

"Our body is not our own personal playground. It is not for us, in this sense. It is for the Lord. It is meant to be oriented toward him, to be used for him. It is not spiritually irrelevant. It has a purpose that is found in service to God. He has a plan for our whole self, body included." Kindle location 1742

"It is hard to think of a bigger affirmation of human bodies than the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus. Not only did he become fully and physically human, but Jesus has remained so. And the resurrection of Jesus points to the resurrection we will all one day experience as his people." Kindle location 1750

"For each of us, the parts of our body are now Christ's. We cannot help but take him with us wherever we go and involve him in whatever we do. We have no freedom to reassert ownership of these parts to do with them what we wish or borrow them from him for a time and return them later." Kindle location 1784

"Not being our own means our body does not exist solely for our pleasure and agenda. We are to glorify God with it, not ourselves. And this is actually good news. Our body can glorify God." Kindle location 1854

“So we can trust him with our bodies. When we’re told to honor God with our bodies, or to offer our bodies to him as a living sacrifice, we needn’t be nervous. To commit ourselves to Christ is not to put ourselves at risk of being abused by him. To live for his pleasure is the most healthy and humanizing way we can live with our bodies.” Kindle location 1886

“But the fact that godliness has greater value doesn’t change the fact that bodily training still has some value. Paul is not advocating the former instead of the latter, but in addition to it. Godliness is of supreme value, but that is not to say physical exercise is of no value. Sure, if we make physical exercise ultimate, we have turned it into an idol and are not actually stewarding our bodies for the Lord in the right way. But prizing godliness shouldn’t mean we are indifferent to our physical health. A healthy lifestyle is an appropriate way to care for the bodies God has given us.” Kindle location 1963

“We need to know this. In too many areas of our discipleship we have separated our Christianity from our bodies. There are aspects of our physical life that we think are irrelevant to our faith, and there are parts of our Christian life that we think have nothing to do with our bodies.” Kindle location 2135

“It is both curious and revealing that we human beings seem to find life uncomfortably short. The sense of not having enough time, of our typical life span being inadequate, of even death in old age coming too soon—it’s all unique to us. We live far longer than some creatures (fruit flies tend to stick around for just a couple of weeks), and far shorter than others (some sharks and whales can live for a couple of centuries). But we seem to be the only creature with an unshakable sense of the shortness of life.” Kindle location 2186

“We often labor under the misunderstanding that the life to come will be some vague form of nonphysical existence. If we have any image of it, it is of something almost ghostly, floating around as spirits. But the vision the Bible has for us is not wraithlike but physical.” Kindle location 2224

“We can expect something of the same continuity and difference between our present and future bodies that was evident with Jesus’s resurrection body. When he was raised, he was still recognizably Jesus.” Kindle location 2291

“Death is no longer a threat in the way it was. It has been defeated in Christ. The signs of aging are no longer a threat but a promise. Gray hair and deepening lines on my face don’t need to speak to me of a past I can’t recover but of a future I can barely conceive. The real glory days are not behind but ahead.” Kindle location 2333