

Open Hands: Stewardship with Kingdom Vision
Stewarding the Body: Honoring God with Your Health

Heavenly Father,

We thank you for the gift of life.

We thank you for the breath in our lungs, strength in our minds.

Your words declare our bodies are the temple of God and Holy Spirit.

Help us see our bodies as not disposable.

Help us see our bodies as sacred.

Teach us to honor how we eat, rest, move and live.

I ask you to give us wisdom for rest, discipline to change and strength to overcome stuff in your life.

We know sickness is not a punishment and weakness.

Guide our minds from stress and anxiety.

Guide our bodies from harmful choices.

Guard our spirits from Temptation.

Give us choices to make practical changes

Give us accountability where needed

Give us consistency in small daily decisions.

You gave us your body on the cross.

We surrender our habits, health and our discipline.

Teach us to live strong for your glory and long for your purpose.

In Jesus name, Amen.

When I was in the Star of Hope Mission in Houston in the Spiritual Recovery Program, I was friendly with a lot of clients that it was times talking about leaving the program including Pastor John Johnson. They encouraged me to stay in the program and go to commencement in October 2023. If we truthfully want to honor God, we must honor him not only in worship and words, but in how we care for our physical health. I have autoimmune pancreatitis disease. I was supposed to eat low-fat foods and stick to a low-fat diet. I am not supposed to be eating foods with fats and sugars. Pastor John Johnson at Star of Hop Mission told me when I was in the Spiritual Recovery Program that I was supposed to eat light and eat light meals 4-6 times a day. When I eat too much of the wrong foods, I am suffering from fullness with my immune system. It means that my immune system is attacking the pancreatitis causing inflammation and swelling. I will need to do the ultrasound medical procedure again like the doctors told me in Detroit at Henry Ford Hospital. The left side of my pancreatitis could be still damaged. The pancreatitis sits in your upper abdomen behind the stomach. When the pancreatitis becomes inflamed, it affects digestion and creates pressure in the area. I was feeling like that recently because I have been eating the wrong types of food. I am not supposed to eat greasy or fried foods. When the pancreatitis is inflamed, it can swell. The swelling can press against nearby organizations including the stomach. It feels like pressure or swelling in my upper stomach area like I am eating a big meal although I didn't. The pancreas produces digestive enzymes. When the pancreas is inflamed, digestion can slow down. Food can sit in my stomach longer and can cause bloating. It is not normal fullness that I felt. It feels like internal pressure or swelling that does not go away quickly. Autoimmune pancreatitis can sometimes cause bile duct blockage or other complications and needs monitoring. We insure our cars. We secure our homes. We protect our phones. Are we protecting the body God gave us? I felt like I had a social life at Star of Hope Mission in Houston with clients and I became friends with clients that came through the door while I worked my way through the spiritual recovery program to commencement. I liked Star of Hope Mission in Houston better because they did not allow any profanity and very strict on that.

Our church is legally formed as a religious-based organization in Mississippi. It was approved by the Mississippi Secretary of State. The church Bylaws and Rules Committee members started and completed the process. While incorporated in Mississippi, our ministry operations and worship services are conducted in Southaven, Mississippi. The church is actively serving the Southaven, Mississippi community through worship services, outreach and teaching. The new 17,000 seating capacity church is located in Southaven, Mississippi. The 13,400 members have been extracted to the south from the north. Members live in the DeSoto County and near Tennessee border near Mississippi crossing into Southaven, Mississippi according to the updated database from the Vine Ministry. The church will reach out to the IRS to try to use the same Federal EIN number, but the Form 990N is different from the regular Form 990 that organizations can just check the name change on the form. The church has rebranded itself to the Lord Jesus Christ Center in Mississippi. The church may have to register for a new Federal EIN based on IRS rules and regulations. We may not be able to use the same Federal EIN number from the church in Michigan after it will be dissolved with Articles of Dissolution filing.

1. If your body stopped working tomorrow, what would happen to your assignment?
2. Do we treat our bodies like temples or like tools we can abuse?

We change our oil every 5,000 miles. We rotate our tires. We check the transmission. We do this because we fear the breakdown. Paul teaches us that our bodies are a temple in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Most people treat our bodies like a rental car. They drive it into the ground. They fuel it with junk. They ignore the check engine light. People treat their body like just by filling with alcohol and hard liquor during drunkenness and smoking too much cigarettes and marijuana. I oppose legalizing marijuana because it does not honor the body and damage our internal organs. It leads to a shorter life on earth. A car is a vehicle for a physical destination. Our body is a vehicle for divine purpose. We worship our bodies as Christians and disciples. When you get your next paycheck or SNAP benefits for next month, I want to put on your shopping list for your household to buy fruits, vegetables and proteins that will sustain your vessel. I tried to advocate for more nutrition programs at homeless shelters, soup kitchens and group homes because homeless men and women need to be more concerned with their health to start sustaining their vessel.

“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”-1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Paul was addressing the church in Corinth in writing about living in Corinth. He explained that the city was immoral, sexually permissive and wealthy. The temple was known for prostitution, pagan worship practices, and a culture that separated spiritual life from physical behavior. Paul corrects his thinking. Paul addressed misused christian freedom. People were using grace as an excuse for indulgence. Paul responded not everything is helpful. Paul responded do not be masterful of anything. Paul confronted sexual sin. Paul said the body is not a sexual morality. I explained this in a previous sermon in Detroit in 2017 when I spoke on the message about virginity. Young people and people in this world must stop treating virginity as a disease or bad thing to save themselves. First lady Jennifer and I were not afraid to save ourselves until the right time and after we got married to have sex. That is how it should be because women are getting pregnant and end up raising the children as a single parent. Then the father is taken to court to start paying child support. My mom did not want to talk to my biological father because he owed her over \$60,000 in child support. An attorney in Chicago in 2015 said he is not supposed to be

walking the streets right now. My mom said she raised me by herself from a baby until I was 18 years of age. Your body is a member of Christ. Sexual sin involves the body. The scripture is about sexual purity. Paul is not preaching shame, legalism, protectionism and health-based righteousness. Paul is teaching about ownership, holiness and unity. We need to try to avoid sexual purity. We need to try to avoid addictions and being addicted to stuff. For example, addicted to sex, alcohol, marijuana, double illegal and criminal things. We need to try to avoid bodily enslavement. We need to avoid harmful habits. We need to respect stewardship of our health and respect a physical life. If we are tired, we need to rest. If we are thirsty, we need to hydrate. A broken temple cannot lead a revolution. We live in a world that prioritizes the system update over the spiritual update treating a piece of glass and silicon with more reverence than a living temple of the Holy spirit. We ensure our hardware is current while our vessels are running on 1% battery. We plug our phones in at the first sign of 15% battery. We push through the exhaustion and ignore the holy fuel needed. We buy cases and screens to prevent a single scratch. We expose the vessel to cold without proper armor. We download the latest OS to fix minor bugs. We let bad habits run for years. It is obsolete for 24 months. It is bought with an eternal asset price. The Holy Spirit does not dwell in a cloud server. The Holy Spirit dwells in your biology. Tell the person next to you and check your engine light. When you feel tightness in your chest or fatigue in your legs, it is the temple diagnostic system. When you get your next paycheck or government benefits, your first transaction of integrity should be the temple. You need to budget and use your income to buy fruits, vitamins, vegetables and proteins. You would not put cheap and dirty oil in a new car, so we do not want to treat our bodies as cheap. Your body is your sanctuary. We update our apps, but neglect our arteries. When people see you treating your body as a temple, they will learn to respect themselves. Your weekly spiritual check list:

1. Drink 64 oz. of water to cleanse the temple and body
2. Is your body protected from the cold from your armor?
3. Do you get a lot of sleep to allow your body to recharge or are you running on 1% burnout? You need at least 7 hours of rest.
4. Do you service your body with walk or stretch to keep the arteries open? A 20 minute walk or the sun is good for the heart. I want to share a true story that my mom told me that told me that my stepfather sat in the car overweight stuffing his face with fast food while she was out walking and exercising. She told me that he is ashamed of how he looks and all he did was just look at her while he was in the car stuffing his face with fast food.
5. Delete your glitches.
6. Download the word and scriptures.

The pagan culture continues to infect our minds with an ancient lie. I believe people are disrespectful to their bodies when they have tattoos. People that get tattoos done not honor their bodies as a temple. The body is a tool for pleasure or billboard for status. Every mile on the vessel is a testimony for endurance. We service a machine like a car or phone, but starve the soul. Physical health is like an engine room for spiritual power. We need to honor God. Paganism today is not just about statues. Paganism is about techno-animism. People treat their smartphones like talismans that give them power. People treat their apps like oracles that tell them their worth. The Holy Spirit is waiting on a clean, warm and warm-fed temple to work through.

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

"Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers."-3 John 1:2

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."-Genesis 2:7

The body is God's temple. Women are always out here talking about how the government cannot control their bodies. What needs to be clear is that women need to understand their bodies are not there. Their bodies belong to the temple and God's kingdom. When children are created in the womb, they are created in God temple. God is the creator of the universe and all human life on earth. I oppose using federal funding for abortions under medicaid and medicare like others in the evangelical community. I oppose abortion because it is murder of humans in the womb. Children deserve to live a full human life on earth. God created humans for a reason and purpose in the womb. The temple was sacred. God's prince dwells in us. We do not own ourselves. We were bought at a price. If God lives in you, how are you maintaining his dwelling place? We need to stop neglecting our health. We need to stop abusing what God calls holy. we need to view our body as a sacred space. Your body is not your property. It is a God temple entrusted to your stewardship.

Stewardship requires responsibility. We need to present our bodies because this is intentional for us as a child of God. A living sacrifice requires daily discipline. Stewardship means management, not ownership. A steward manages what belongs to someone else. We need to change our eating habits. We need to exercise more. That's why on that Meet the Browns episode that he created that exercise program called jumping jack for Jesus. We need rest and sleep. We need to do more medical check-ups. My grandmother always told me before she died last year that I need to visit and visit the doctors once or twice a year. We need to reduce stress in our life daily. You cannot pour from an empty vessel. Burnout is not wholeness.

God desires us to prosper and be in good health. Health affects our assignments. God desires us to prosper and be in good health. We have to understand as Christians and disciples that poor health limits our effectiveness. We have to understand as Christians and disciples that fatigue weakens vision. We have to understand as Christians and disciples that sickness can hinder calling. If your call engine fails, you cannot reach your destination. If your body fails, your ministry suffers.

This message is not about vanity. This is not about body language. This is not about perfection. This is about stewardship. Some sickness is not a sin. We need to walk 20-30 minutes a day. We need to reduce sugars and processed foods. We need to drink more water. We need to get proper rest. We need to pray for our bodies. The Greek word porneia is sexual activity outside God designed for covenant of marriage between man and woman. I am talking about adultery, fornication that means sex outside marriage, prostitution, sexual exploitation, idolatry, sexual idolatry, and habitual sexual sin. Paul corrected believers who separated spiritual from bodily behavior. Sexual purity is connected to sanctification based on 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5. Hebrews 13:4 explains sex inside marriage is holy and good. God created sexuality in Genesis 2:24 because sex is sacred, covenant-based. God created sex for fruitfulness and unity. Sexual immortality is a distortion of design. Sexual immortality affects the body according to 1 Corinthians 6. Sexual immortality affects sexual intimacy. Sexual immortality can create emotional and relational bondage. Sexual immortality damages trust and covenant structures. Sexual immortality is serious. The gospel offers forgiveness, restoration, cleansing and new beginnings. When we say the body is seen as disposable, we are talking about a mindset separating the spiritual from the physical. Some

people were influenced by Greek philosophical ideas believing the spirit is good, the body is inferior, what to do physically that does not matter spiritually in Corinth. Some people I. Corinth says as long as my soul is saved that the body can do whatever it wants. This statement from people in Corinth led to sexual immorality, temple prostitution and moral looseness. Paul responded strongly that the body belongs to Christ, the body is a temple and your body will be resurrected in 1 Corinthians 6. Disposable body mindset still exists today as pleasure-driven culture, overworked culture, sexualized media culture and neglect culture. People perform sexual behavior because it feels good to do it. People like to burn their bodies out for success. People treat their bodies as objects. People ignore sleep, health and mental wellness. We treat our bodies as tools not as a temple to God. God created the body. Jesus took on the body. Jesus died in a body. Jesus rose bodily. Believers will be bodily resurrected. Say to the person next to you that the body matters eternally. Christianity is a pro-redeemed body. Chronic disease is not a spiritual failure. Weakness is equal to worthlessness. The world treats the body as temporary and disposable, but the scripture teaches us the body is sacred, redeemed and destined for resurrection.

It was a tabernacle in the wilderness before it was a temple. Read Exodus 25:8. The temple is all about God dwelling in his people. You have the outer court of the tabernacle. You have the Holy place in the tabernacle. You have the most holy place in the tabernacle. The most holy place in the tabernacle is called the Holy of Holies. God's presence is sacred, guarded and holy. The outer court is the physical and spiritual audit of the tabernacle that people had to pass through to get to God. The outer court was a threshold between the modern world and the Holy presence. White linen represented the purity and righteousness of Christ. White linen in the tabernacle blocked the pagan world to keep both separate. It was two pieces of furniture in the outer court that people needed to extract from as a believer for God. It was the bronze altar, atonement, brazen laver, and sanctification. It was only one way as the presence of God in the outer court in the tabernacle. You cannot pass the brazen in the tabernacle without a sacrifice. The priest had to wash at the laver or witness death. The first permanent temple was built by Solomon. God's glory filled the temple. The temple represented God's glory on earth along with holiness, sacrifice and covenant. The tabernacle was a sacred space. The temple was access to God, atonement of sin, divine presence, and covenant relationship. The temple was destroyed by Babylon after Israel repeatedly sinned. The temple destruction devastated the nation. Paul was making a claim that our bodies are a sacred space, God's presence lives in us, and defiling your body is like defiling the temple. When Jesus spoke about the temple in John 2:19, he was speaking about his body being a true temple and a meeting place. Living sacrifice is a constant upgrade. When you present the body as a living sacrifice, you are an ongoing discipline for what you eat, how you sleep and protect the temple. Discipline is the renewal of the mind. A living sacrifice does not wait for motivation. A living sacrifice operates Sovereign orders. The word steward comes from the Greek word oikonomos. Oikos are houses and estates. Nomos is law, rule and management. A steward is the manager of the house law. In the roman era, the oikonomos was a high-ranking servant who had authority over the master assets but zero ownership of them. Stewardship applies to the temple. We need to guard our minds that God gave us. Your mind is renewed by Christ. Your mind is indwelt in the Holy Spirit.

When I read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, I think about what people tell me that I should rest. I like to work hard and continuously work. My long friend like Brandon told me I need to rest. I never listened to people because I like to keep myself busy all the time. That is why I am the type of person that group homes and homeless do not work for people like me. I am busy all the time with church operations and preparing for sermons for upcoming services every week. I have to prepare for Bible study services every week as well. It is like I refused to rest because I feel like I have to work. I know that Jesus rested and some churches do the Sabbath. The church charter as a 501(c)(3) has been approved by the Mississippi

secretary of state. Mississippi approved a law previously to allow paperless documents from the Mississippi secretary of state. The church received the articles of Incorporation from Mississippi secretary of state by the Bylaws and Rules Committee members. According to IRS rules and regulations, the church is allowed to use the same Federal EIN number from the church in Michigan. It means the church had to apply for a new Federal EIN number and discontinue the EIN number from the church in Michigan. The church has its new Federal EIN number and is open for business in the State of Mississippi. The church may have to file for sales tax exemption at Walmart, Target and FedEx Office because the church probably cannot use the church federal EIN number from Michigan to transfer our tax ID to Mississippi. Bylaws and Rules Committee members say the church may have to reapply for a new tax ID for sales tax exemption from Walmart, Target and FedEx Office in the State of Mississippi. There was a moment that I was not my own. This church is not an ego project. Everything belongs to God and stewardship requires obedience not popularity. We must bring our bodies in the alignment of God. We must bring our ministries into alignment of order. Glorifying is not only shouting on Sunday. It is about filling paperwork on Monday. 60% support is a foundation. 25% disapproval is feedback. 14% unsure is an opportunity for clarity. Leadership is not about ownership of your opinions. It is about being accountable to God. Obedience requires courage. I am happy that you have the loyalty to follow me and this congregation from Michigan to Mississippi to continue to grow this congregation and flock. I want to say thank you. I want to say thank you for your loyalty to this flock. Our resources and gifts belong to God. Operation Breadbasket was about economic dignity, job creation, directing dollars in our community, and holding systems accountable. Our Volunteer to Work Program restores dignity through opportunities. More residents and members that we attract in Mississippi will witness that in upcoming months. Work restores dignity. Work affirms wealth. Work honors the temple. If parents cannot work because they have no childcare. Poverty becomes generational. Operation Breadbasket fought economic barriers. Childcare removes barriers. We are helping people glorify God in the body, reducing stress and restoring stability. When a crisis hits, the body feels it first with stress, anxiety and fear. We, as a congregation, step in so the family does not collapse under pressure. This is called Temple care. Housing is dignity. Housing is stability. Housing is the protection of the temple. The church has the free childcare program and Homelessness Financial Relief Program because they do not allow people to sleep under a bridge in his kingdom. Operation Breadbasket understood that you cannot preach on an empty stomach. Food security protects the body, mind and spirit. Operation Breadbasket taught us economic justice is spiritual work. 1 Corinthians teaches us that the body belongs to God. When we protect our bodies from hunger, Homelessness and hopelessness that we are glorifying God. Our mission is not a mission drift. Our mission is a fulfillment. Jesus fed people. Jesus healed bodies. Jesus restored dignity. Operation Breadbasket continued this model. That is why the church implemented the Emergency Grocery vouchers that can be issued to Mississippi residents and members that reside in DeSoto county. Gratitude should not cancel health. The quality of what we put in our bodies matters because our bodies are supposed to be a temple to God if we are wealthy or homeless. I am grateful for every shelter that serves meals. We need to just stop feeding people to nourishing people. Operation Breadbasket was not just about access. Operation Breadbasket was about quality access to fair contracts, wages and treatment. Poverty should not equal poor nutrition because people do not deserve diabetes while homeless. Emergency food should not create long term illness with high sugars, processed foods and excessive fats. high sugars, processed foods and excessive fats increase hypertension, heart disease and diabetes. The same people we feed today that we hospitalize tomorrow. Nutrition is dignity. Homeless shelters and organizations need to be partnering with local farmers and host fresh produce drives, nutrition education workshops. We need to be replacing sugary drinks with water and fruit. Homeless shelters and organizations need to serve more foods low in sodium. Feeding the hungry is charity. Nourishing the hungry is justice. Poverty does not cancel value. I am grateful for every volunteer that

cooks. I am grateful for every food bank that distributes groceries. Nourishment protects the temple. Poor communities receive the worst foods, such as high sugars, sodium, processed meals and sugary drinks. That is why poor communities have people with heart disease, disease and high blood pressure. Homeless people do not deserve hypertension and diabetes. This is not criticism. This is calling us higher. We need to protect our hearts, arteries, blood pressure and long term health. We are a church that protects temples.

The Volunteer to Work Program is not just about unemployment. It is about stewardship positioning Mississippi residents and members for decades of opportunities in the private sector. The program will expand teaching work readiness, building transferable skills, creating partnerships with local businesses, preparing people for sustainable careers, and keeping talent inside Mississippi. Operation Breadbasket believed if corporations profit from communities that they must hire from the community. The Volunteer to Work Program echoes these principles by developing, employing and strengthening families locally. We must understand that productive hands create purpose. A person with job confidence rises. Working people's families stabilize. Working person stress will decrease. Crime will decrease in communities. Community grows stronger when a person works. A job does not just pay a bill. It teaches people work ethic. A job teaches people with financial literacy. A job will break poverty cycles and homelessness for people. Work will strengthen the Mississippi economy with a healthy workforce, stronger tax base, stable neighborhoods, lower dependency and higher community pride. This congregation is not just preaching sermons. We are building pipelines. We are creating pathways, removing barriers and Unlocking potential. The Volunteer to Work Program is just about free labor. The program is about developing leaders, building skills and strengthening Mississippi for decades. When good people go to work, the community rises. The Volunteer to Work Program equips members and the wider community with practical skills, professional discipline, and workforce development to strengthen families, stabilize communities, and generate economic growth for decades. Our mission is to transform volunteers to employable leaders by providing structure training, mentorship, job readiness development, and strategic partnership with local businesses. The Volunteer to Work Program provides resume building, interview training, professional etiquette, time management and workplace ethics. The Volunteer to Work Program provides skill development in administrative support, community outreach, event operations, technology skills and customer service training. The business partnerships for the program will provide apprenticeship tracks, internship pathways, local hiring pipelines, career advancement coaching and employer collaboration. The program will decrease unemployment, build credit, increase homeownership, strengthen Mississippi Middle-class and reduce reliance on emergency assistance. The program is a pipeline for 20 years. Operation Breadbasket believed communities should benefit from economic systems in their own neighborhoods to prepare, empower and position people in communities. The Volunteer to Work Program partners with the manufacturing, aerospace and defense, healthcare, gaming, hotel/hospitality, transportation and logistics, construction. I will appoint a Director of Community Development and Employment Services to manage the process in Mississippi. Mississippi has a lower labor force participation rate. Mississippi has limited access to jobs in rural areas. Mississippi residents deal with skill mismatch for jobs. Many Mississippi residents are dealing with transportation barriers because most public transportation stops running in the evening while transportation stops running at midnight and overnight hours. Mississippi residents have limited soft skill readiness. Mississippi residents can have increased wages in the private sector, such as avoid financial vulnerability, limited savings, avoid low spending power and slow economic mobility. Mississippi has rural counties that face business closures, population decline, hospital closures and limited broadband access. Mississippi is rich in potential, but our challenges are alignment.

Church before we shout, we must assess

Before we celebrate, we must understand.

Before we build, we must evaluate the foundation.

The reality in Mississippi is that we have strength, industry, faith and potential.

We have challenges.

Opportunity and preparation are misaligned

Mississippi is not poor in talent

Mississippi is poor in access.

When access is limited, families struggle, communities decline and potential is delayed.

The church and members did not move to the state to criticize the state.

The church and members are in Mississippi to contribute to the state