



The Sustained Marriage: A Sacred Sexuality

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God has entrusted us as citizens with a unique stewardship of our communities' freedoms, rights, and moral direction in this nation. Part of that responsibility and stewardship is electing officials to lead and legislate in an honest, righteous, and just way. In August, we will have a primary election for state offices, including the governor of Missouri. One of three Republican candidates will be our next candidate and, more than likely, our next governor.

Josh, what about the Democrats? When the Democrats publically renounce and repent of running on a platform that condones and propagates the murder of innocent unborn human beings, protects the ability of confused children to mutilate themselves in the name of gender identity, and promotes sexual perversion in the name of education, come talk to me. Until then, the Christian has no business supporting the party or a candidate who runs on that party's platform. We will still fervently pray for those leaders as the Bible commands us to, but we should have no place lending them our support.

But in a primary, things get more nuanced. And the only way to navigate is to become familiarized with the candidates as best we can. Myself and Grace is not endorsing any one Republican candidate, but I have no opposition to helping people become as informed as possible. Bill Eigel is one of our Missouri state senators and a candidate for Governor. His campaign reached out and was in the area today, and he is joining us this morning for worship.

[1Ti 2:1-2 NKJV] [1] Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, [2] for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

We want to invite him today to pray for him as one of our leaders. It's an invitation I extend to any of the republican candidates. Bille will return to our chapel this evening at 5 for a local townhall. If you're interested in informing yourself on his positions or have questions, you can come back this evening and join him.

QUOTE

“ This morning, we will approach a subject that is difficult to tackle on a Sunday morning. If you have children, be fully aware that we will be discussing biblical sexual intimacy within the context of marriage. There are no graphic details, but we will speak candidly.

I also need to acknowledge the sensitivity of the discussion based on the various sexual pasts and experiences of people in the room. We will discuss today how Satan has perverted sexuality to the point of taking something beautiful and turning it into something deceptive and destructive. But I want to acknowledge that for some, sexual abuses have led to real pain that has turned some off completely from desiring a sexually intimate marriage. While I can't address every nuance, I hope today that, at the very least, you understand God's heart and desire surrounding sexual intimacy and, at the most, find a path forward in your marriage.

APPLICATION

A sacred sexuality is a sexuality that is holy and devoted, committed to the marriage relationship, and used as a tool to build intimacy, trust, and enjoyment within a oneness bond.

[Heb 13:4-5 NKJV] [4] Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge. [5] Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Notice that in one verse, Paul lays out these essential principles: There is an accepted sexual practice for everyone, believer and nonbeliever alike. That is in the context of marriage. Everything else is fornication and adultery (sexual practices that are self-destructive). I also find it interesting that Paul connects an unholy sexuality with covetousness.

- When married people lose mutual respect and become dissatisfied with the sexuality of their spouse, they may be tempted to look in other places and to different people.
- It is a lie to believe that you should take what looks better rather than invest in what you have.

The grass may be greener on the other side for one of two reasons:

- ***A - it's fake grass.***
- ***B - someone over there is taking better care of their grass than you are.***

QUOTE

“ Sex is not everything, but sex is not nothing.

Sex is not the ultimate goal of marriage, but it is an essential and beautiful part of the marital relationship that should not be neglected or dismissed.

A. SEX IS NOT EVERYTHING

That might seem elementary, but it's at the root of so many sexual problems in the marital relationship.

- Like everything else that's good and godly, Satan has taken sex and manipulated it to be a deceptive, false substitute for wholeness within the human soul.
- Let me try to explain: For many people, sexual ecstasy has become a god, an idol that they seek to give them a sense of fulfillment, security, acceptance, and pleasure.
 - We are physical beings who can experience pleasure, and the love and pursuit of pleasure can create addictions and unhealthy pursuits that seek to fill a void in the human person. Sex has proven to be, over the ages, the most effective drug of choice that has left a person with a momentary sense of completion, but outside of God's design, it leaves a path of destruction.
 - Marriages destroyed, families lost, ministries devastated, and legacies ruined to a momentary rush of physical pleasure... all because sex was everything.

QUOTE

“ During those few moments of sexual climax, a person experiences a consuming excitement in the body that counterfeits a sense of wholeness in the soul.

Larry Crabb, The Marriage Builder

APPLICATION

In short, marriage is so much more than living for sexual pleasure.

- Jesus was the perfect man. He was a human male, yet without sin, he displayed a life that never experienced a sexual relationship and never entered into marriage. This is a demonstration that neither marriage or sex is designed to complete and fulfill a person, only a deep connection with God can do that.

If a spouse expects that sexual and physical pleasure needs to be the goal of their marriage, they are actually settling for less than what God wants.

B. SEX IS NOT NOTHING**APPLICATION**

In explaining this, I'm not suggesting that sex is unnecessary in marriage or should be considered of little importance. While physical pleasure should not be the ultimate expectation in marriage, we find that what God wants for couples in sex is to experience a physical, spiritual, and emotional oneness that far exceeds a mere physical experience.

Again, I have to agree with Larry Crab when he wrote:

QUOTE

“I cannot help but think that Christian couples are short-changing themselves when all they seek from the sexual relationship is more physical pleasure and less frustration... to splash around in a puddle when God provides an ocean is no noble self-denial.”

Larry Crab, The Marriage Builder

APPLICATION

But this requires so much more than most are willing to give. Many are willing to settle for building emotional walls and protective mechanisms and avoiding true intimacy, never reaching the pinnacle of sexual climax the way God intended.

So let's look at several things that can cause the marriage bed to thrive:

1 The wedding bed deserves sexual purity

QUOTE

“Once, Robert Redford, a leading man, was being interviewed on a late night talk show. The host asked him, “What makes for a good lover?” The interviewer was trying to bait the actor for a juicy

description of his sexual escapades...But he answered, “A great lover is someone who can satisfy one woman all her life long... and who can be satisfied by one woman all his life long. A great lover is not someone who goes from woman to woman to woman. Any dog can do that.”

He might not have been trying to be biblical, but he hit the nail on the head.

APPLICATION

Many people solely live from one sexual experience to the next, regardless of partner or method, in order to experience a sexual high.

- This is where it's so important to recognize that God placed sexuality within the borders of a covenantal relationship, not to hinder sexual pleasure, but to protect it from impurities that want to bring pain, shame, and destruction into the potential intimacy in a marital relationship.

SEXUAL PURITY REQUIRES EXCLUSIVITY

Your sexual energy must be solely reserved for your spouse:

- Not the secretary, coworker, computer screen, or romance novel.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Proverbs 5:15-21 (NKJV - New King James Version)

¹⁵ Drink water from your own cistern, And running water from your own well.

¹⁶ Should your fountains be dispersed abroad, Streams of water in the streets?

¹⁷ Let them be only your own, And not for strangers with you.

¹⁸ Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth.

¹⁹ As a loving deer and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; And always be enraptured with her love.

²⁰ For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman, And be embraced in the arms of a seductress?

²¹ For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, And He ponders all his paths.

APPLICATION

Solomon had an interesting journey with women.

- 700 wives and 300 concubines - the man probably had been swept away from the joy of a committed sexual relationship with one woman because he had fallen for the lie that 1000 women who could fill an immediate carnal desire is better than one woman that you can share growing intimacy with the rest of your life.
- Yet at the end of his life, he came to the conclusion that one is better than 1000.
- David might say, "**Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere.**" Solomon ended up saying, "**Better is one woman in your bed than a thousand.**"
- **At the end of his life, he writes in Ecclesiastes:**

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Ecc 9:9 NKJV] [9] Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; for that is your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun.

APPLICATION

This is what most men who have been disciples of the culture don't understand about the dangers of pornography at any level.

- Pornography has made it possible for men to have a digital, secret haram at their disposal. The deception is, "Well, I'm not actually sleeping with them, so it's not the same."
- Jesus would argue with you that it comes from the same adulterous heart, and I guarantee that any wife who finds out will say that it felt like her husband was choosing the bodies of a bunch of harlots over intimacy with her.

I find that most men who get addicted and caught up in pornography, which frequently leads to physical adultery when it goes unchecked and unrepented of, are actually running from the thing they've created.

- They make excuses: I just need release. My wife is such a nag. My wife is so difficult. She withholds sex from me when I need it. She's not taking care of her body, etc. Hey, look in the mirror! Are you such a studd?
- Maybe you've neglected tending your flock and watering your garden. Maybe you haven't treasured your wife's sexuality in a way that makes her feel special, seen, and desired because you're only interested in a sexual experience that is convenient for you.

This needs to stop, and you need to start taking accountability as a leader and a tender.

APPLICATION

But looking outside the marriage bed for sexual fulfillment happens with both sexes.

- When a man feels disrespected or is told that he isn't sufficient as a man, and he connects that to the reason his wife withholds sexual interaction from him, his temptation will be to seek sexual excitement elsewhere.
- When a woman feels disconnected, unvalued, misunderstood, and unworthy, her temptation will be to look outward for a sense of cherishing and emotional and physical connection.

This is why a healthy sexual relationship starts when there is a strong spiritual connection and a strong emotional connection already at play, leading into the physical connection. When two people are connected to Christ, seeking holiness and purity in their own lives, they will be a more complete person to engage their spouse sexually.

2 The Wedding bed deserves sexual pursuit

BIBLE PASSAGE

Sexual sin in marriage is not limited to adultery, but withholding sexual intimacy from each other is also a sin that parts a marriage.

[1Co 7:2-5 NKJV] 2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. 3 Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. 4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband [does]. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife [does]. 5 Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

APPLICATION

A nurtured sex life requires mutual investment, sacrifice, willingness, trust, and availability.

QUOTE

“In a Christian marriage, sex is meant to be an act of love and worship, a way for a husband and wife to serve one another selflessly and build each other up.”

Gary Thomas, Sacred Marriage

APPLICATION

I've heard it suggested that men need and want sex, and women want and need conversation.

- I'm here to tell you that most wives want sex... they just want a different kind of sexual encounter than most men do. They need more than a physical release; they want a connection that patiently draws them in.
- ***Men and women are both created to be sexual beings, but their sexuality is engaged on different planes and in different ways.***
- It might seem that she is not interested, but in reality, she's interested in more than what you're often willing to give.

Men, your wife needs to be sexually pursued, not sexually conquered.

In Solomon's early life, when there was one woman he loved and desired and married, the book of Song of Solomon records his romantic pursuit of this woman, which in turn ignited her sexual desire for him.

- **1:2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine. - she wanted his kisses because of wonderful his love was toward her.**
- **In 1:6, she indicates that she is embarrassed by her appearance. She hasn't kept her own vineyard and her skin was tanned and not well taken care of, yet Solomon declares, "[Sng 1:8 NKJV] [8] The Beloved If you do not know, O fairest among women, Follow in the footsteps of the flock, And feed your little goats Beside the shepherds' tents. He calls her the fairest among women to help her overcome her insecurities.**
- **And look at what the man's love, care, and investment yields him: [Sng 3:3-5 NKJV] [3] The watchmen who go about the city found me; I said, "Have you seen the one I love?" [4] Scarcely had I passed by them, When I found the one I love. I held him and would not let him go, Until I had brought him to the house of my mother, And into the chamber of her who conceived me. [5] I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, By the gazelles or by the does of the field, Do not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases.**

- **All of chapter 4 is the husband praising his wife's body, every single part from her head to her toes, he compliments, affirms, and states, "[Sng 4:9 NKJV] [9] You have ravished my heart, My sister, my spouse; You have ravished my heart With one look of your eyes...**
- **Chapter 5, the response comes that when she even hears him touch the door to the room, her heart longs for him to be with her.**
- **She is secure in his love and feels safe giving her body to him completely. [Sng 6:3 NKJV] [3] I am my beloved's, And my beloved is mine. He feeds his flock among the lilies.**
- **Again, in chapter 7, he praises the woman's qualities and beauty, to which she responds: [Sng 7:10 NKJV] [10] I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.**

Men, we live in a day and age where men have not been trained on how to be lovers who pursue their wife's sexuality, beautiful her with their words, lavish her with their gifts, romance her with their time, and build a single desire for her in their hearts.

LADIES

Ladies, you need to understand that your husband's sexuality is also directly connected to his sense of self-worth.

- A man who is convinced by his bride that he can never be enough in the bedroom will struggle to find confidence in his ability to lead.
- There is a balance for a wife to learn how to communicate what she wants and needs in the bedroom without turning it into an all-out attack on her husband's manhood.
- If you have a husband who is simply not interested in pleasing his wife, that is a problem with his selfishness, but don't always assume it's selfishness. Sometimes, he doesn't know how.

Marital sexuality is like a tree's fruit that increases with every season. It takes work, effort, time, mistakes, and success. This is why grace, communication, and managing disappointments in a godly way is so important for long-term success.

Notice the attitude of the wife figure in song of Solomon toward her lover:

SONG OF SOLOMON

1:7 - Tell me, O you whom I love, Where you feed your flock - here she seems to show interest in pursuing her man. She wants to be with him where he is. She wants him to know, "Out of all the shepherds, you're my superman!"

In chapter 3, the bride desires her husband, but he's not there. That doesn't stop her; she seeks him out, and she brings him to a room prepared for their love. There's no doubt that her man senses that her desire is for him and that she is willing to pursue him even when he can't always be available.

4:16 - Let my beloved come to his garden, and eat its pleasant fruits. - Here, she wants her husband to know that her body belongs to him and only him and that he can approach love's table without fear of rejection.

In chapter 5, the bride builds up her husband by complementing his physical features, making him secure that he is enough for her.

APPLICATION

- **Understanding Differences:** Men and women have different needs, desires, and approaches to sex. Recognizing and appreciating these differences can enhance mutual satisfaction.
- **Communication:** Open and honest communication about sexual desires, boundaries, and concerns is essential for a healthy sexual relationship.
- **Emotional Connection:** Emotional intimacy and a strong relational foundation are crucial for satisfying sexual intimacy.
- **Biblical Perspective:** Sex is a gift from God, intended to be enjoyed within the bounds of marriage. It is a way to express love, commitment, and unity.

3 The wedding bed deserves sexual healing

ILLUSTRATION

Cancer is a terrible disease that typically slowly propagates in the body until it takes over vital functions. In some forms of cancer, people don't recognize the symptoms until it's too late.

- **Sexual, emotional, and mental brokenness can all have cancerous effects on sexual intimacy that, when unaddressed, can lead people into a death spiral from which they feel their sexual relationship can never recover.**
 - **Whether it's a wife's past sexual abuse that has led her to believe that all sexual vulnerability will hurt her, or a husband whose past sexual sins have blinded him to true intimacy and have skewed his view of his wife's sexuality, sexual hurts must be honestly dealt with before the Lord if oneness is to be achieved.**
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QUOTE

“The sexual health of your marriage is worth fighting for.

CONCLUSION

QUOTE

“Great sex is a lifelong journey. It's not a destination you reach but an ongoing experience you continually strive to enhance and enjoy.”

Kevin Leman, Sheet Music: Uncovering the Secrets of Sexual Intimacy in Marriage
