

9AM & 11:15 Notes Sunday 6/9/19 – Jeff Lyle

“The Day Jesus Talked About Sex” Matthew 5:27-30 | 9AM

Most of us would be surprised to do a survey of the Bible with our goal to be to discern what is written therein about human sexuality. Scripture is filled with references about sex. These references include the beauty of marital intimacy, the prohibition from God of sex outside of marriage, and the consequences that arise when we lean to our own understanding concerning sexuality. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus called His audience to develop and guard a holy attitude about sexual desire. There is one God-blessed outlet for human sexuality, and there are countless other outlets that people, even Christians, choose which lead to heartbreak, sin and personal loss. What did the Son of God have to say about sex? In the current generation that has much to say about sexuality, we need to listen carefully to Jesus and let His voice be the one which guides us.

I. Clear Boundaries Are Established (27)

A. Boundaries for the married: heterosexual monogamy - “You have heard that it was said, You shall not commit adultery.”

In the heart of God, the plan has never been complex. From the beginning, it has been the design of God to give one woman and one man to each other. They enter into covenant with one another as husband and wife. Within the context of that marriage, they give themselves to each other in physical intimacy. God designed male and female anatomy to offer deep pleasure to one another. Sexual intimacy fosters a deep oneness in spirit between husband and wife. Children often come forth from the sexual union of husband and wife, therefore the social anchor of the family unit is also hinged to the sexual intimacy of a husband and wife. Within the confines of marriage, sexual intimacy is blessed and broad. Whatever two (and only two!) people decide fulfills them in the marriage bed is blessed by God. Each wife has her own husband. Each husband has his own wife. Adultery occurs when someone steps outside of that marriage covenant and engages in sexual intercourse with another person who is not their spouse. For all of time, this has been considered sin by God. Though times have changed along with views on sexuality, God's heart is forever fixed. Sex is gloriously good, even spiritual, when experienced within the protective and holy confines of martial covenant.

B. Boundaries for the unmarried - There is no lawful outlet for the unmarried concerning sex

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Any sexual activity outside of the confines of marriage constitutes fornication. The English word fornication comes from the Greek word *porneia*. This word is broadly used to describe any sexual contact outside the bounds of marriage. You can easily see that we derive the word pornography from this Greek word. Fornication occurs through a whole host of activities which are more than can be listed here. These activities would include pre-marital heterosexual sex, any type of sexual stimulation and/or climax that does not include penetration, any and all homosexual activity, masturbation, pornography, pedophilia and bestiality. The Church has long been silent in discussing these issues. Because we have chosen silence because of the awkwardness of speaking on these sensitive topics, the voice of authority in our culture concerning sex has fallen to unbiblical, even depraved, sources. The verses below clearly reveal the heart of God concerning sexual activity in the lives of the unmarried.

1. Christians in the early Church were commanded to abstain from fornication (Acts 15:20)
2. Fornication is condemned by the Apostle Paul (Romans 1:29)
3. Fornicators are seen to be disciplined in the local assembly (1 Corinthians 5)
4. Those who engage in fornication degrade Christ Himself (1 Cor 6:15-19)
5. Fornication is a characteristic of those who are unsaved (Galatians 5:19)
6. Christians are called to repent of the sin of fornication (2 Corinthians 12:21)
7. The will of God is that Christians completely abstain from fornication (1 Thessalonians 4:3)

C. Blessings for the married

The other element of the Church's failure to communicate biblically about sex is that the silence has led many to associate sex as being unclean, dirty, unnecessary or shameful. A puritanical view of sex is not the biblical view. For those in a heterosexual marriage union, sexual intimacy is meant to be deeply fulfilling. Consider these unapologetic references to marital sex from Scripture.

Proverbs 5:15-19

**“Drink water from your own cistern, flowing water from your own well.
16 Should your springs be scattered abroad, streams of water in the streets?
17 Let them be for yourself alone, and not for strangers with**

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you.18 Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, 19 a lovely deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always in her love.”

Yes, you read that rightly. The Holy Scriptures teach a man to always stay satisfied in his wife's body, and hers alone. The primary call here is for a man to delight himself only in his wife, never looking elsewhere for his sexual needs. While it is written to man, the application is for both husbands and wives. Married couples should want to give themselves physically to one another over the course of their marriage. Sex is not dirty. Between husbands and wives, it is to be gloriously good.

1 Corinthians 7:2-5

“Because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. 3 The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4 For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise, the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5 Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.”

Paul teaches about different aspects of our sexual desires in First Corinthians chapter 7. Part of his teaching is that young men and women should seek a spouse early in life, lest they be tempted to sexually sin before marriage. Paul adds the biblical command to husbands and wives not withhold sexual intimacy from their spouse, except during consecrated times of prayer and fasting. Also noteworthy is Paul's clear statements that there is a mutual entitlement to each other's bodies within the confines of marriage. A healthy, active sex-life between husbands and wives connects spouses to one another in physical pleasure, spiritual oneness and selfless surrender. Any denying of access to each other sexually leaves an open door for Satan to come in and tempt one or both partners to sin against God and each other by seeking sexual fulfillment elsewhere.

Hebrews 13:4

“Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.”

Church, we must listen to what the writer of Hebrews says here! Honor the marriage bed. Keep it sacred and holy, always honoring God in a monogamous commitment. To alter any of what God says about human sexuality is to dishonor Him. Between a husband and wife, the marriage bed

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is undefiled as a place for them to enjoy one another. Sex is sacred within marriage. We must not defile or dishonor the sanctity of our marital sex-life by discussing it with others, complaining about it, joking about it or speaking of it in any manner that does not uphold the honor of God and our spouse. God has given married couples great liberty to enjoy one another sexually! There is a place for mutually pleasing experimentation and there should be a growing comfort level with one another as the marriage progresses. Again, as a footnote, the writer of Hebrews warns that those who step out of the boundaries that God gives for our sexual expression. He simply says that those who live in immorality or adultery will be judged if they do not repent.

II. Carnal Behaviors Are Exposed (28)

A. There is a look - “But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman...”

Jesus takes this issue of sexual activity beyond what the normal teaching of His day communicated. The religious Hebrews all understood that committing sexual adultery was sinful. They modified their behavior accordingly as an expression of their desire to keep the Law and honor God. Jesus goes much deeper than their bodies in what He says here. He goes after their hearts. In a strong move, Jesus takes the *don't touch* prohibition and introduces a *don't look* command. Imagine the men in the crowd feeling a grip on their hearts as Jesus begins to instruct them about how they view women.

B. There is a longing - “...with lustful intent...”

There is a way in which we can note and appreciate the attractive features of another person. To admire beauty in someone is not necessarily lustful. However, with most men and many women, a momentary glance which becomes a lingering stare almost always ends in some form of sinful thought. Jesus speaks of our experiencing a lustful intent when we look at someone. While this is common among men, it is not exclusively male. Pornography has numbed us to the issue of lust. We have become accustomed to seeing more of people's bodies than any generation before us. Lust is woven into our culture. The strong inner impulse rooted in sinful, selfish desire describes what it means to lust. We can be tempted to look, to linger and then to selfishly want that person for our own purposes. Jesus is amplifying that adultery is an issue within the heart, not just the body.

C. There is a lie - “...has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

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Adultery is a sin of the heart which is merely carried out by the body. Jesus, inviting us to experience more of the Kingdom of God, highlights that we must not be satisfied with tempering what we do in the body, but we must bring our hearts in full surrender and submission. He wants us to love Him enough to protect our hearts from defilement which produces a sense of distance from Him in us. Lust is the seed of adultery. Jesus calls us to never plant that seed. He calls us to high honor in our hearts - honoring Him first and then honoring the person for whom we might be tempted to lust. As lust is fed, it grows. As it is starved, it shrivels. When we become people of kingdom love, we will exit the world of earthly sexual lust. Jesus provides guidance, power and breakthrough for all who determine not to live in lust. Yet this breakthrough may call for some radical steps by us. That is what He highlights next.

III. Consecrated Bodies Are Expected (29-30)

A. Diagnose yourself - "...If your right eye causes you to sin... if your right hand causes you to sin..."

Do we have an issue of sexual lusting in our hearts? We must get honest and focused on this subject. Jesus wants us completely free in our hearts from lust. He mentions the eye that looks at the forbidden and the hand that moves to grasp after some momentary pleasure. He calls us into honesty about this issue. The answer to be discerned is not whether or not we are managing our potential lust. The issue is whether or not we have been freed from it. We must diagnose ourselves.

B. Enter a radical heart-posture - "...tear it out and throw it away... cut it off and throw it away..."

While Jesus is not actually advocating self-mutilation here, He is calling us to think radically about the issue of a lustful heart. Regularly, in the sermon on the Mount, Jesus calls us to take a radical viewpoint about our lives. Here, He is teaching us to take extreme steps to become free from lust. There is so much on the line concerning this sin. We lose fellowship with Jesus when we live in any sin. Lust is no different. Shame creeps in and stays when we are bound to sexual lust in our hearts. We hurt people when we lust. Pornography is fueled by demonic power which perverts people made in the image of God and makes them tools of selfish, sexual gratification. Jesus tells us to take extreme measures to forbid any of that from finding a home in our hearts. Throw away every point of access for lust

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in your life. Cut off any outlet that you know feeds your potential lust. Married couples should declare war on lust by satisfying each other in regular sexual intimacy. No person belongs to the appetite of our eyes. They belong to God. Honor them as such and welcome the Holy Spirit to free you from the bondage of lust.

C. Become sobered on this issue - “For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. 30...For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.”

In case we underestimate the seriousness of this matter of how we give expression to our natural sexual desires, Jesus removes all doubt. He teaches here that an unwillingness to align ourselves with His views on sex likely indicates that we are not His. Hell becomes the warning for His audience. If we cherish our lust, our sexuality, our presumed autonomy more than we desire holiness, Jesus indicates that we are in danger of everlasting judgment in hell. How far we have fallen from this kind of extreme views on sexuality, adultery and lust. Paul wrote that we are the servants of the one we obey and yield ourselves to (Romans 6:16). If we live a lifestyle of obeying Jesus, we belong to Him. If we choose a lifestyle of obeying lust, we belong to lust. May God grant the Church the loudest, most loving and most faithful voice on this matter of sex. May all of us repent from lessening the intensity of what Scripture says on the matter. For some, eternal destination hangs in the balance.

11:15 Notes Below

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"That Time Paul Wrote About Sex" 1 Corinthians 6:9-18 | 11:15 AM

Some may find it interesting that much of the New Testament's teaching about biblical sexuality came from two men who were not married. Obviously, Jesus never had a wife. Paul may have never been married but, at the very least, we know that he was single when his apostolic ministry was taking place. What did this amazing apostle have to say about sex? In this message, we find a strong pushback against the anything-goes mindset concerning human sexuality. Paul connects our views on sex with the genuineness of our salvation. Far from being a side issue, biblical sexuality is addressed frequently in scripture, and the Church must remain informed, vocal and committed to the heart of God concerning our views and practices in the realm of human sexuality. Paul seizes our attention in 1 Corinthians 6:9-18.

I. Paul's Strong Words About Our Behavior (9-14)

A. He addresses a deception (9-10) - "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God."

Modern readers may be shocked at dogmatic statements like this in the Bible. Clearly, Paul states that those who live in patterns of unrighteous behavior have never been made righteous by Christ. Simply put, those who live in sin are not saved. Paul unpacks some characteristics of unrighteous behavior that should be viewed as the manifestation of one's true character. While he includes non-sexual sins in his list above, our focus in this message is on the topic of sex. We read here that sexually immoral people, both heterosexual and homosexual, have not gained entrance into the Kingdom of God. Our normal patterns of behavior reveal the spiritual position in relation to God. Those who habitually practice patterns of sinful behavior (not the occasional sin) reveal that they need salvation and deliverance through Jesus sacrifice.

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B. He emphasizes a transformation (11) - "And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."

The glorious news for many at the Church in Corinth was that they had been transformed by the power in the blood of Jesus. Some of them had been sexually immoral prior to being saved. Some of them had been drunks and cheats. Others had lived in greed and materialistic idolatry. Among them were men and women who had been homosexuals prior to being born again through faith in Jesus. Salvation changed their eternities and also their present-day lifestyles! Paul uses several terms to describe what happened to them when Jesus became their Lord. They were washed, sanctified and justified through faith in Him. They became new creations in Christ for whom old patterns of behavior passed away and a new way of life found them (2 Corinthians 5:17). Note that those who are washed, sanctified and justified cannot be the same as those described in vs. 9-10. These are two completely different people groups. We can rightfully deduce that those who live in patterns of sinful behavior have never been washed. They have never been sanctified. They are not justified before God. We would simply say that those who can live in patterns of sinfulness have not yet been saved but, Hallelujah, they can be if they will repent of their sin and trust in Jesus!

II. Paul's Instructional Words About Our Bodies (12-14)

A. Live with restraint (12) - "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be dominated by anything."

Paul now addresses some common mindsets of this day. Some were protesting that God is interested in spiritual things, not physical things. They concluded that it did not really matter what they did with their bodies as long as their spiritual faith rested in Jesus. Paul lets them know that there are, indeed, some things that may be permissible (sexual immorality is not one

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of these things), but that those things are not helpful in a life that has been redeemed and has been surrendered for the glory of God. Wisely, Paul declares that he would never risk participating in activities that could potentially lead to him being dominated by their influence. Christians would do well to appropriate Paul's approach to these types of things. Paul wanted every component of his life to be freed up to glorify Jesus. Anything that might enslave him was viewed as a thing to be avoided at all costs. While certain things may not be technically sinful, the question that should be asked is whether or not those things increase or reduce one's potential to bring glory to Jesus. We must discern whether something is profitable, not just permissible. This is a mark of spiritual growth.

B. Live for eternity (13-14) - "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"- and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14 And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power."

This is one of the peculiar parts of what Paul is communicating to the Church at Corinth. The phrase **"food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"** was likely a common phrase that was used to express the cultural philosophy that the body was for sex and sex was for the body. The common saying merely replaced stomach and food with body and sex. Paul refutes this error by reminding these Jesus-followers that their bodies have an eternal honor on them via the Lord's ownership of them, and also an honor that is attached to their destiny for resurrection. Sex is spiritual - either for spiritual good or spiritual demise. When sexuality is expressed in God-honoring ways between a husband and wife, sex is spiritually edifying for both. When sex is engaged outside of marriage, unholy bonds are formed which result in eventual spiritual struggle. Far from the base notion that sex is merely gratifying a physical appetite, God places sublime honor on sexual union between a husband and wife. Treating the body according to its sexual appetites reveals that we do not regard our eternal standing in Christ with honor. Jesus is going to fully redeem our bodies, therefore we honor Him by agreeing with His plans for the expression of our sexual desire.

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III. Paul Releases Enlightening Words About Our Belonging (15-20)

A. We belong to the Son (15-17) - "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh." 17 But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him."

This is, perhaps, one of the most cringe-worthy statements Paul ever wrote. Because cultic prostitution was common in Corinth, Paul addresses the issue of having sex with someone that is not your spouse, specifically, a prostitute. Through his reasoning we learn that, because the Christian is eternally joined to Jesus at the moment of salvation, He is with us wherever we go. In a nauseating manner that is meant to cause dread to arise within us, Paul states that those who commit sexual immorality actually bring Jesus into the setting where the sexual sin occurs. The plainest way to say it would be to say that the one who is committing sexual sin brings Jesus into the room and forces Him to watch. While it is a horrific thought, it is the spiritual reality. Sexual activity creates an intertwining of souls between the two individuals engaging in sex. They become "**one flesh**". These soul-ties are formed through sexual union. While this is beautiful in the context of marriage, it is extremely damaging to those who engage in any sexual activity outside of the bounds of marriage. Because we are joined to Christ when we are saved, it should be unthinkable to take what is joined to Christ and join it to another person in sexual sin.

B. We belong to the Spirit (18-19) - "Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own..."

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Having stressed our union with God the Son, Paul now teaches us that we are joined to God the Spirit. We are the temple of God and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. He lives within our physical bodies. He is to be the master of our inner life which means that He is reigning over our outer life. We are taught here that, if we engage in sexual sin, we sin against our bodies which are the temple of the Holy Spirit. All of us would recognize the utter sinfulness and sacrilege of taking gasoline and a lighter to the local church-house and setting it ablaze. In fact, there are special human laws against vandalizing houses of worship. Even an unredeemed culture currently venerates buildings dedicated to God. Yet, how is it that Christians, who themselves are the house of God, can allow for any acceptance of taking the spiritual fire into the midst of their hearts through sexual sin. When this happens, Holy Spirit is deeply grieved and ultimately quenched. If this kind of lifestyle is patterned in those who call themselves Christians, they prove by their behaviors that they may have a mental understanding of the Gospel, but they have never been truly converted. They are still in their sin. We belong to the Spirit of God and we are no longer our own. We cannot dedicate the temple of our bodies to the worship of sex by engaging in sexual activity outside of marriage.

C. We belong to the Father (20) - "...for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."

Paul concludes his teaching on human sexuality with a concise reminder that we belong to the Father. Our sexuality is to glorify God, not gratify us. Marital sex can be extremely gratifying to both spouses. It is not unholy. It is holy, right and good and it was the original idea and design of God the Father for husbands and wives. Any attempt to satisfy ourselves sexually outside of the marriage bed qualifies as sin. Culture has gotten it wrong. The Scriptures remain true and we are accountable to live within the power and provision of God's truth. When we decline ourselves unlawful sexual pleasure - we are glorifying God and putting the flesh to death through the Spirit. Paul teaches elsewhere that it is better to go ahead and get married than to risk burning in lust (1 Cor. 7:9) and finding yourself in the regrettable and painful backwash of sexual sin. For married couples there should be a shameless enjoyment of God's provision of a spouse as the holy and

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beautiful place for our sexual fulfillment. The one-flesh reality is God's design and sexual intimacy is what brings about this reality. Nearly everything our culture declares, offers and endorses about human sexuality is wrong. God's design is the non-negotiable standard and the Church has to maintain this position as the wo