

**Sex: God's Way**  
*The Wonder of Godly Sex and the Horror of Its Abuses*  
1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday, Nov 7, 2012

**I. Sexuality Matters**

- A. The message the world is working very hard to sell right now is essentially the idea of an a-sexual being.
1. There are no distinctive characteristics, traits, roles, or callings upon a man, because he is a man.
  2. There are no distinctive characteristics, traits, roles, or callings upon a woman, because she is a woman.
  3. Instead, we are *merely human beings* who pursue whatever form of life, sexual expression, and even sexual orientation we personally believe will bring us the most freedom and happiness. Four states approved this kind of thinking yesterday.
  4. This is not our main topic for tonight so we cannot dwell here long, but the ramifications of this thinking on society are beginning to and will eventually cause pandemic confusion, frustration, heartache, and a breakdown of the biblical family unit. Cultures themselves can come apart over these kinds of issues.
- B. There is a better way: God says you are a sexual being, and that part of that very sexuality is what gives you the ability and privilege of being an image-bearer of God.
1. Men and women are different by design. There's a spectrum on the differences, and we need to beware of cultural characterizations, but the God-given differences are real nonetheless.
  2. And this design by God is a good, pre-fall, part of his plan from the very beginning.

3. Your sexuality – maleness and femaleness – whether married or single – is a sacred, holy, wonderful part of God’s good plan for his world.
4. Let’s take it right from the beginning: God made us as distinct image bearers

Gen 1:26-27 ESV Then God said, “Let us make man (mankind – generic) in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female (specific) he created them.

5. God gave us a role to fulfill

Gen 1:28 ESV And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

- a. This is the origin of sex. Sex was God’s idea. It was originally very, very good.
- b. Imagine a world where sex was only enjoyed between a committed husband and a committed wife for pleasure and procreation. Pure sex. No shame sex. Delightful sex. That’s what it was like originally. That was God’s design (Gen 1:31).

6. God created both men and women.

Men: Gen 2:7-8 NLT Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man’s nostrils, and the man became a living person.

SO if you’ve always wanted to call him dirt bag, now you know it fits!

Women: Gen 2:18-25 NLT <sup>18</sup> Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him." <sup>19</sup> So the LORD God formed from the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. He brought them to the man\* to see what he would call them, and the man chose a name for each one. <sup>20</sup> He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds of the sky, and all the wild animals. But still there was no helper just right for him.

<sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man's ribs\* and closed up the opening. <sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup> "At last!" the man exclaimed.

"This one is bone from my bone,  
and flesh from my flesh!  
She will be called 'woman,'  
because she was taken from 'man.' "

<sup>24</sup> This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.

<sup>25</sup> Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame.

c. A few quick comments here:

1. Man and woman are God's highest creation. The jewel on the crown. We have great responsibility as image bearers.
2. The story of the creation of Adam and Eve does not mean you are 'alone' or 'incomplete' if you are single.
3. God intends for the standard of beauty for a man to be his wife. God didn't parade 40 naked women in front of Adam and say, "Pick the one you like the best." No, he gave him one woman and Adam was thrilled with her.
  - a. Husbands, your standard of beauty must be your wife.  
Wives, your standard must be your husband.

- b. Is she skinny, man you are into skinny. Is she rather large, you are into large. If she used to be skinny and now she's large, your tastes have changed! If she homely, you are into homely. If she pristine, you are into pristine. To live as a biblical man, honoring God and leading your wife well, you must learn to have eyes only for her. Train yourself spiritually to take her as your standard of beauty.
- c. And wives, learn to have ears and hearts for your husbands only.

## II. Why Sex?

A. What in the world was God thinking when he came up with this idea?

B. Sex is often treated as either:

1. God
2. Gross
3. Gift

Sex is not worldly. It is not dirty. It is not shameful. It is not sinful. It is a gift of God upon humanity to be used in the contexts he designed it for.

C. What is sex for?

1. Procreation of the family (Gen 1:28, Mal 2:15)
2. Pleasure between a husband and a wife (Prove 5:18-19, Song of Solomon, 1 Cor 7:1-5)
3. An act that physically, emotionally, and spiritually, unites a man and a woman as husband and wife (Gen 2:24, see also Matt 19:4-6)

D. In the context of marriage, sex is to be winsomely, sacrificially, and creatively enjoyed often.

1. Christians get what sex is really all about, but it seems sometimes we act like we think it is the most boring thing in the world. We ought to be the experts in the field – we know what it is really for, what the designer designed it to be. Just read Song of Solomon!
2. Sex is a gift from God for married men and women to have a great time and enjoy a strong measure of intimacy.
3. So, don't let sex become boring. Don't make it something that has to be earned. Don't make it a bargaining chip – if he's been good I'll allow it and if he hasn't I won't. Treasure the gift that God has given you.
4. And don't go long periods of time without it as a married couple. To do so is not only foolish it's actually sinful.

1 Cor 7:5 ESV 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.

5. Sex, as God designed, is a loving expression of sacrifice and romance, and is therefore an enormous source of joy. Go for it!
  - a. If these statements are difficult for you to understand or believe, do the hard work of figuring out why.
  - b. Personal history can severely affect the bedroom
  - c. Relational conflict may affect the bedroom

- d. Whatever the issues are, get help and prayerfully seek healing from God; I cannot overemphasize the importance of working through sexual difficulties if they exist
6. Never pressure your spouse to do something sexually that he or she is not comfortable doing.

**E. But, God's good gift of sex can become distorted in an endless number of ways.**

Before we talk about these distortions, let me point out that the Christian sex ethic is really good news. It is for our good! Sex is amazingly wonderful in the right context, and terribly harmful in the wrong context. God knows this.

1. Whenever sex is utilized as a *mere activity* outside the covenantal relationship between a husband and a wife, you are heading down a path that promises liberation and freedom, but in the end will only lead to heartache and pain.

*Sexual sin has the power to destroy your life.*

2. Think of it like this:
  - a. Sex – God's way – is like drinking from a fresh spring, with brilliant clear and pure water. It is lovely and quenches your thirst.
  - b. Sex – in a distorted way – is like drinking water from the ocean. It looks terrific, but it's full of salt. You might enjoy it, but it does nothing to quench your thirst and will actually only make you sick if you drink too much of it.
  - c. The problem is, of course, that many of us have such an acquired taste for salt water that we've completely lost sign of what fresh spring water actually tastes like. But God can redeem even that!

3. In the remaining time we have today, I would like to focus on two things:
  - a. One of the preeminent ways sex is being distorted today is through pornography, so we need to deal with that extensively.
  - b. I'd like to end with some suggestions on how to move from a sinful addiction to distorted sex back into the good news of a Christian perspective on sex.

### III. Pornography: The Great Sexual Peril of Our Day<sup>1</sup>

- A. Pornography is a problem of epic proportion. It is changing the fabric of society right before our very eyes. It may be the preeminent moral problem of our day. Book after book after book is coming out demonstrating the massive destructiveness of porn on brain chemistry, relationships, sexual assault, and degradation of women.

#### Pornography Industry Revenue Statistics

- Size of the industry \$57.0 billion worldwide; \$12 billion U.S. (more than the combined revenues of ABC, CBS, NBC; more than the combined revenue of all professional baseball, football, and basketball teams)
- Adult videos \$20 billion
- Hotel chains report 50% of guests view porn
- Pornographic Web sites 12% of total Web sites

#### Internet Pornography Statistics

- All search engine requests 25%
- Monthly pornographic downloads 35% of all downloads

#### Children Internet Pornography Statistics

- 8 – 16 year-olds having viewed 90% (most while doing

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics are quoted from the following sources: *Porn Free Church*, e-book available <http://www.covenanteyes.com/porn-free-church/>; Stats on Porn, <http://marshall.com/2012/03/05/stats-on-porn>, accessed 1 Oct 2012, unpublished notes from Dr. Steve Tracy, TH 510 Biblical Sexuality – Phoenix Seminary, Fall 2012; and Tim Chester, *Closing the Widow*.

homework)

### College Pornography Statistics

- A major study of college students

63% of men  
18% of women; said they  
spend some time every  
week online for sexual  
purposes

### Adult Internet Pornography Statistics

Percentage of internet users  
who access porn

77% view porn monthly  
19% view porn daily

28,258 people view porn

Every second of every day!

### Women and Pornography

- 1 of 3 visitors to all adult websites are women.
- Enormous success of books like *Fifty Shades of Grey*

“50 percent of Christian men and 20 percent of Christian women are  
'addicted to porn'”<sup>2</sup>

#### B. What's the big deal?

1. “I’m not hurting anyone else. It’s just a private thing. I’m not acting out in sexual sin with others. No one even has to know!”
2. “It’s just a human impulse. This keeps me from treating real women badly. It’s no big deal.”
3. “My husband never takes the time to truly love me for who I am. *Fifty Shades* allows me to dream about it being different, but I am not actually sleeping with anyone else so I don’t see the problem.”
4. “Pornography isn’t bad. It celebrates the human body.”

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<sup>2</sup> Tim Chester, *Closing the Widow*, pg. 9.

What's wrong with these statements? In our setting with our cultural view of truth, they actually make perfect sense. They are consistent with a relativistic, post-modern culture. We got what we asked for. What we claimed would bring human freedom, liberation, and hope has merely done the opposite.

While there are many passages of Scripture we could use to demolish this foolishness, but let me take a more pragmatic approach:

**[Here are 9 proven facts about the destructive results of porn:<sup>3</sup>](#)**

1) Porn wrecks your view of sex

If sex is for procreation, pleasure, and uniting a husband and wife, porn offers none of these. Instead it corrupts the intimacy that sex provides.

2) Porn wrecks your view of the opposite sex (depersonalization and objectification of women)

3) Porn wrecks women's views of themselves

4) The porn industry abuses women

5) Porn users experience rapid relational dissatisfaction

6) Porn causes an altered sense of what is sexually appropriate and should be pursued with your spouse

7) Porn users eventually experience an inability to perform sexually (ED, lack of interest)

8) Porn is enslaving and may destroy your family

9) Porn is offensive to God and is adulterous.

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<sup>3</sup> Chester, 17-35; Tracy, Biblical Sexuality Course.

In all of this I hope you get this message: **Porn is a liar! It promises what it simply cannot deliver – joy, lasting pleasure, fulfillment.** It is a liar. It always over promises and under delivers.

C. How has this happened?

1. Two things: *Availability of Porn* - porn is much more accessible today than it has ever been in human history.
  - a. What used to require driving to a sleazy store on the wrong side of town, can now be seen in the privacy of your own home with the click of a button
  - b. And it is getting worse and worse. 10 years ago, if you searched for porn on the internet you were most likely to get pictures of naked people. Today, you are most likely to get a menu of videos you can choose from to watch live or pre-recorded any sexual act of your choice.
2. *Two massive shifts in cultural worldview* - This sexual environment has certainly been made prolifically popular by the internet but it has been driven by two massive cultural changes:
  - a. The sexual revolution of the 1960's promised sexual utopia. Have sex with whomever you wanted whenever you wanted. It's not about commitment and mutual submission and sacrifice for the good of another. *The sex act.*
    - i. 50 years later, I'd ask you, has that social experiment panned out well? Were the promises of utopia been delivered? Of course not.
    - ii. Many of us in the room have been harmed by the sexual sin of others.

- b. Our society's disdain for absolute truth: truth is now defined as what's right for the individual. The way that really plays out is that the rights of the powerful, elite, popular, intelligent, and attractive become the accepted norms thought good for all people. If they view free sex as good for all, that's the way we tend to view it.
  - i. So there's still a source of faith and authority, it's just not the Bible. But we have no reason to fear as Christians – a culture running away from God gives us the opportunity to live distinctively different for the cause of Christ.
  - ii. And the Bible's teaching on sex is good news!

#### IV. Porn and Addiction

##### A. Any sexual sin can become an addiction

1. People get hooked on porn for lots of different reasons. It's not just perverts dissatisfied with their wives or single people looking for release. It's much more complex.
  - a. It might be tied to relational conflict at home that has spilled over into the bedroom.
  - b. But many times it has to do with the pressures of life and this sin serves as a way of escape.
    - i. I've sat with many couples and told the wives, "This isn't about you." Many times it simply is not.
    - ii. "It is in the deep and fertile ground of chaos, dysfunction, silence, and abuse that the seeds of sexual addiction are sown."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Mark Laser, *Healing the Wounds of Sexual Addiction*, 88; quoted in Vickie Tiede, *When Your Husband is Addicted to Pornography*, 136.

- c. Sometimes people look for acceptance and love through giving themselves sexually to others.
  - d. In other words, we look to porn and sex to give us what only God can.
2. Sexual sin is progressive sin. It moves from mere interest, to viewing, to fantasy, to acting out, to an addiction/slavery of sin.

2 Pt 2:18-19 ESV “For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error. <sup>19</sup> They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved.”

Eph 4:17–19 NLT With the Lord’s authority I say this: **Live** no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused. <sup>18</sup> Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him. <sup>19</sup> They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity.

## B. The Cycle of Sinful Sexual Addictions<sup>5</sup>

1. There is an addiction cycle: Compulsive sexual behavior is complex, but research reveals that consistent, predictable patterns can be identified. This is a cycle, which is self-perpetuating.
2. Stages of the sexual addiction cycle
  - a. Pain

Ultimately, sexual addiction is much more about pain than about pleasure. Sexual addicts lives revolve around their attempt anesthetize their pain. This pain includes emotional discomfort (shame, fear, hopelessness, etc.), unresolved conflict (from childhood abuse, family conflict, etc.), stress, and the need to connect with others. It’s about covering up things inside of us to get some temporary release. Masking the pain with something that feels good.

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<sup>5</sup> I am indebted to Dr. Tracy’s excellent description of the addition cycle.

b. Disassociation

This is the internal mental process in which the addict begins to disconnect from himself, and hence lessens the emotional pain. Instead of dealing with the real issue, we 'check out' mentally.

c. Pursuing Behavior

Having entered the sexual fantasy world, the addict now heads toward his destination of sexual orgasm on a well-traveled route. Often the pursuing behavior involves certain rituals and behavioral patterns. Often the pursuing behavior can become the greater rush even than the actual behavior. Some say this is the greatest excitement (because of the anticipation). These can be very subconscious that don't look on the surface like a real strategy (i.e. Picking a fight with your wife so you can stay up while she goes to bed – so you can view pornography.) Often, we never recognize these patterns in ourselves. *Identifying these is very helpful! Can you pinpoint your kryptonite?*

d. The Sexual Behavior

This is the culmination of the sexual addiction cycle in which the addict acts out sexually. Maybe this is a single occurrence, or it might start a binge that lasts days or even weeks.

Again, note that this is not really about sex. For a man with a pornography problem, it's about masking pain. For a woman who gives herself sexually to men to find their acceptance, it's not about sex but about masking pain.

a. Shame - Shame is pain, taking us right back into the cycle again.

## V. Defeating Sexual Distortions: The Road to Recovery

A. A person in chronic sexual sin must find brokenness over their sin, genuinely repent, and discern and resolve the issues that found fertile soil to grown in.

B. A person must then begin to realign their identity from a life of distorted sex to a life of joy in God.

1. If you don't learn to enjoy Jesus more than the rush that comes from sexual sin, you will be defeated or you will merely modify behavior.
  - a. The issue really is not a life with porn versus a life without porn. **The issue is a life with porn or a life enjoying God.**
  - b. Sexual sin is ultimately an idolatry problem.
  - c. Worship of porn must be replaced by worship of God
  - d. This starts by becoming genuinely saved, but must continue as we constantly submit ourselves to God
2. Learning your identity in Christ is paramount.

C. A rubric for learning to live free in a sex-saturated world<sup>6</sup>

1. Abhorrence of porn – “A hatred of porn itself (not just the shame it brings) and a longing for change”

Matt 5:27-30 ESV “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’<sup>28</sup> But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.<sup>29</sup> If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell.<sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

2. Adoration of God – “A desire for God, arising from a confidence that he offers more than porn”
  - a. The pain you've tried to mask can be brought out into the light
  - b. Jesus can heal!

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<sup>6</sup> Chester, 45.

3. Assurance of grace – “An assurance that you are loved by God and right with God through faith in the work of Jesus”
4. Avoidance of temptation – A commitment to wisely build protections into life that can limit the type and amount of temptation you face

1 Cor 10:13 ESV No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

a. Clean house

- i. All illicit sexual sin must be stopped immediately, including masturbation
- ii. End subscriptions. Change email addresses and credit cards. Start new email addresses. Call and end it tonight.
- iii. Delete history, throw out movies, remove everything sinful. Get rid of the I-pad if necessary.

This will involve even eliminating many things which are not inherently bad, but which are nevertheless connected with a pattern of sin.

b. Keeping the house clean

- i. Make a commitment to share with someone if you fail or if you are really struggling
- ii. Build safeguards to limit temptation – internet filters, internet email programs, routers that block, cancel cable, illuminate online activity after 9pm, drop internet all together, simply refuse to go back to that certain coffee shop or bar, whatever it takes

- iii. PLEASE install accountability software  
<http://www.x3watch.com/x3watchfree.html>

c. Seeking purity in daily life

- i. Pray daily for purity
- ii. Seek the God of the Bible and live a missional life
- iii. Rom 6: Know, Consider, Present when you are tempted
- iv. Break old sinful habits, in part, by breaking the habits around the addictive sinful cycle
- v. The commitment to stop mental fantasizing must begin and the commitment to fight it in a gospel-saturated way must be present. The moral battle is won and lost in the mind, for all sexual sin begins here (Matt 5:28).

Eph 4:21-24 NLT Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, <sup>22</sup> throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. <sup>23</sup> Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. <sup>24</sup> Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

- 5. Accountability to others - "A commitment of Christians who are holding you accountable and supporting you in your struggle"<sup>7</sup>
  - a. People with chronic sexual sin must face their sin honestly, without excuse, and seek public help from fellow trusted believers.
  - b. This accountability should be both proactive and reactive

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<sup>7</sup> Chester, 43.

- i. Proactive – help your friend recognize the extent of their sin and demolish the shame he or she feels by taking them often to the cross
- ii. Proactive – in helping you find intimacy and identity in God, instead of false images of naked women
- iii. Reactive – when there is a sinful relapse, the one who sinned should know what to tell you and how you'll respond (grace and truth)

## **VI. Recommended Resources**

### The Church on Mill Family

(There is no replacement for your church family in breaking addictive sexual behavior. Don't try to change alone. Invite others into the process.)

### Timothy Keller – *Counterfeit Gods*

(When we look for what only God can provide elsewhere, we always are disappointed. Outstanding book helping to set our hearts away from idolatry back to God.)

### Mike Wilkerson – *Redemption*

(Terrific for breaking any sin pattern; curriculum for our Redemption Groups)

### Justin Holcomb – *Rid of My Disgrace*

(Great for those harmed by the sexual sin of others)

### Tim Chester – *Closing the Window: Steps to Living Porn Free*

(Good general book on porn)

### David White – *Sexual Sanity for Men*

(A gospel-driven daily devotional for men)

### Laaser, Deborah – *Shattered Vows*

(When your husband has fallen sexually)

### Vicki Tiede – *When Your Husband is Addicted to Pornography*

(A daily devotional for women whose husbands have sexual sin)

<http://www.pureintimacy.org>

<http://www.xxxchurch.com>

<http://www.x3watch.com/x3watchfree.html>