




THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE

Sex and Marriage – Part One



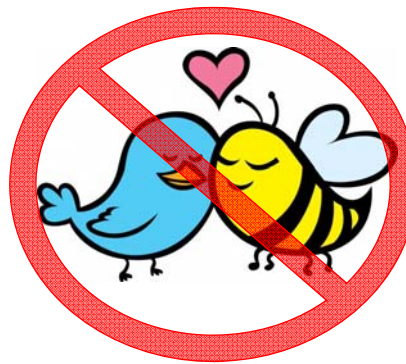
THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE

Sex and Marriage: Introduction



Small Group Discussion

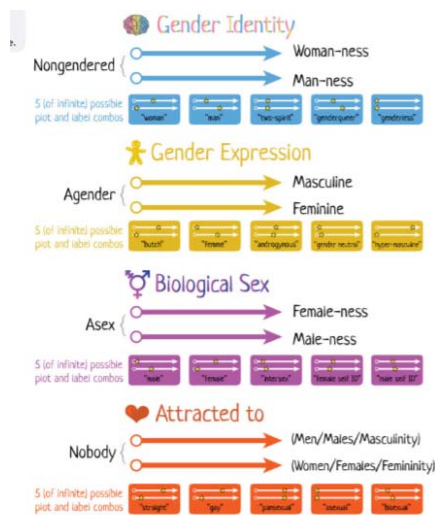
- When you were young, did an adult have the “sex talk” with you?
 - How did “The Talk” go? On a scale of 1-10 (“1” = entirely comfortable; “10” = terribly awkward) how would you rate your experience of that conversation?
- If you want (**no obligation!**), feel free to share your story of “The Talk”. (How did you learn about sex? Or if you've had “The Talk” with your children, how did *that* go?)



Sex Is Just an Appetite; No, It's Not

Four Attitudes about Sex:

1. Sex is a natural appetite.
2. Sex is part of our lower, physical nature, distinct from our higher, rational more “spiritual” nature.
3. Sex is a critical form of self-expression, a way to be yourself and find yourself.
4. Christian sex ethic: Sex is for use within marriage between a man and a woman.



Sex Is Dirty; No, It's Not

- “³The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. ⁴ The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife. ⁵ Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.”

1 Corinthians 7:3-5



Sex Is Strictly a Private Matter; No, It's Not



The Christian teaching is that sex is primarily a way to know God and build community, and, if you use it for those things rather than for your own personal satisfaction, it will lead to greater fulfillment than you can imagine.



Sex as a Uniting Act

"Do you not know that a person who is united in intimacy with a prostitute is one body with her? For as it is said, "The two shall become one flesh." ... Keep away from sexual immorality... for you do not belong to yourselves. You were bought with a price. Show forth God's glory, then, in how you live your bodily life."

1 Corinthians 6:17,18, 20



Sex as a Commitment Apparatus

The Bible does not counsel sexual abstinence before marriage because it has such a low view of sex but because it has such a lofty one. The Biblical view implies that sex outside marriage is not just morally wrong, but also personally harmful. If sex is designed to be part of making a covenant and experiencing that covenant's renewal, then we should think of sex as an emotional 'commitment apparatus.'



Sex as a Commitment Apparatus

Even if you are not legally married, you may find yourself very quickly feeling marriage-like ties, feeling that the other person has obligations toward you.



Practical Chastity

[Chastity] will be difficult, especially in a culture that gives you not support for your conviction. But you can be successful if you rely on the following resources:


- First you need the "spousal love" of Jesus in your life.
 - So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.



THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE

Practical Chastity


- Speak the truth to your heart
 - Sex simply cannot fill the cosmic need for closure that our souls seek in romance. Only meeting Christ face to face will fill the emptiness in our hearts that sin created when we lost our unbroken fellowship with him.



THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE

Practical Chastity

- Christian Community
 - Singles who are neither too hungry to be married nor too fearful of it.
 - Singles who don't use the world's standards—physical beauty and wealth—as a basis for making partner choices.
 - Christian families who do not make family an idol or make singles feel superfluous.
 - Christian community that feels free to discuss how the Bible's perspective on sex plays out in life and relationships.
 - Single who want romantic involvement without mandatory sexual intercourse.



Practical Chastity

- Strike a balance with regard to your sexual thoughts and desires.
 - “You can't stop birds from flying over your head, but you can stop them from making nests in your hair.”



The Inner Dialogue

“I care for myself. The more solitary, the more friendless, the more unsustained I am, the more I will respect myself. I will keep the law given by God; sanctioned by man. I will hold to the principles received by me when I was sane, and not mad—as I am now. Laws and principles are not for the times when there is no temptation: they are for such moments as this, when body and soul rise in mutiny against their rigour.”

“Jane Eyre”



Wrap-Up for Today

- **Home Study:** Take some time over the next week to work through the home study on your journal page.
- **Questions:** Earlier in our study you were given the opportunity to ask questions about sex and marriage. We will be talking through those questions during class next week. Take some time to jot down any additional questions you have:
 - About today's topic: Sex and Marriage
 - Questions about marriage in general



WE'LL SEE YOU
NEXT WEEK!



Sex and Marriage – Part 2
and Epilogue

