



KICK OFF

We struggle as a society to sort out thoughts about sex. Discuss.



KEY VERSE

Matthew 5:28 ‘but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.’



BIG IDEA

Sex has an appropriate context, and we are to strive for purity.



INVESTIGATE

SEXUAL PURITY

Read Matthew 5:27—30

- To what had the Pharisees reduced the seventh commandment?
- Jesus does not stay away from sex. How does Jesus affirm the central importance of sex in our lives?
- What does ‘adultery’ mean? What does Jesus say is the context for sex? (read the sidebar)

SEXUAL PASSION

- Literally, the text says ‘any who looks in order to lust’. What are the two parts here? What is sexual lust?
- What is the difference between lust and love?
- Principles for dealing with lust:
Identify the thought and differentiate it from fantasy.
Give your sexual desires to God (Lord, I will not have sex with somebody outside of marriage and I won’t complain about it. Everything is necessary that He sends. Nothing is necessary that He withholds).
Don’t feel guilty about your sexual past—remember God’s grace.

Tim Keller in his sermon says ‘When you open yourself physically, when you’re naked, you’re vulnerable, aren’t you? When you’re physically vulnerable, there’s



DIG DEEPER

something in the soul that wants to be personally and socially in every other way vulnerable, so when you’re giving yourself to somebody physically, you say ... There’s something that has a natural force to it that makes you want to say, “I belong to you. I am no longer my own person. I am no longer my own individual. I no longer have my own rights. I give up my rights to serve you and to become part of you.”

When you give your body, you should be giving your whole self. When you are physically one with somebody without being personally, socially, legally, and every other way one with somebody, you are doing violence to something which naturally goes together.

Sex has a natural inclination, force, to make you want to give yourself to somebody. When you say, “I want to have sex, but I do not want to be married,” what you’re saying is, “I want to have sex, I want to have physical oneness, but I do not want to become vulnerable to you actually. I don’t want to really have to make decisions with you. I don’t want to be tied to you.” In other words, “I don’t love you enough to marry you.”

cont’d

SAYING 'NO' TO SIN (Puritan terminology: Mortification of Sin)

7. How are we to deal with this problem of sin? Lloyd-Jones suggests the following framework: how does this passage help with this framework?

We must realize the nature of sin and also its consequences.

We must realize the importance of the soul and its destiny

We must hate sin, and do all we can to destroy it at all costs within ourselves.

The ideal in this matter is to have a clean and pure heart.

The importance of the mortification of sin.

When you use sex not as a unitive act but as fun, you really do violence to your soul. When sex is operating in marriage, do you know what it is? It's a covenant renewal ceremony. Every time you have sex in a good marriage, what happens is you are re-creating your ability to trust somebody else totally. You're making yourself vulnerable again. You're putting yourself completely in their arms. But every time you have sex outside of marriage, you actually are destroying that commitment apparatus. You're destroying the thing God gave you that is deeper than any other thing he gave you to enable you to trust yourself with somebody else. You're separating yourself from your body. As time goes on, as John White says, it gets harder and harder and harder for you to trust yourself to anybody. That's why Jesus says eventually it leads you to the hardness of hell. Why is adultery wrong? Because sex is a unitive act. It's for covenant only. It's a glorious thing. It creates in you the ability to trust yourself. If you abstract it, you do violence to sex and yourself. That's why God says to be pure. Okay?

THINK THROUGH FURTHER

8. What are the practical implications of this passage?



PRAISE GOD for Jesus' teaching on sex.

CONFESS to God our discontentment.

ASK GOD to help you to trust him in our daily life— for everything is necessary that he sends, nothing can be necessary that he withholds.

PRAY ALSO for our congregation—a godliness in our single and married lives.

PRAYER

Praise God for the challenges raised by God's Word through this study.



Praying for others in your group:



For next week's study read Matthew 5: 31-32



How does this passage apply to our daily life?

