

GOOD SEX

Week 3 – What The Bible Says About Sex

We've talked about distinguishing truth from lies in week one. In week two, distinguishing male and female differences. Last week was pretty funny.

Today's stuff we're talking about isn't necessarily funny. Today we're going to talk about sex. Most of the stuff you hear today you probably never, in your craziest dreams, thought we'd talk about at church.

When it comes to sex, television promotes it, commercials advertise it, Hollywood glamorizes it, schools instruct in it, parents often times tolerate it, but most churches avoid it.

I grew up in the church and nobody ever talked about sex. It was one of those taboo things you don't talk about. For 13 years, as I spend time with teenagers, they live in incredible confusion and mystery because we've been afraid to talk about it. I love you enough to say to you, "I'm not afraid to talk about sex." The Bible has a lot to say about sex. In fact, my prayer in this five-week series is that in the end, if you've come and you've listened, that you might walk out of here with some freedom and not confusion.

Jesus said in **John 8**, "**You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.**" So many messages that we've been hearing are confusing messages. One of the things I've been saying each week is really what it comes down to is you either believe the world's way – that says "Hey, sex is no big deal. Don't worry about it. Everybody's doing it. Go for it." Or you believe God's way. Sex is God's creation, God's idea, but it's saved for the context of marriage.

One of these two is right. Where are you going to base your life? What are you basing your life standard on? Where are you learning about sex? Magazines? TV? Music? Where are you getting your information? What are you making your decisions on?

If you and I sat down at dinner tonight and we sat face to face and I said, "Picture your dream life 10, 20 years from now." A lot of times we might not say it in a crowd because when we're in a crowd we want to be cool but it's just you and me – eye to eye, knee to knee and we're just talking at Chick-fil-A. Tell me what you want your life to be like. Chances are really good that you would describe something in the future that involves relational intimacy. That you could be intimate with another person, that you could be known and be real. I think one of the things that we all want is we want to be loved and we want to love and we want to be intimate with somebody.

One of the things that we have confused in our world is sex with intimacy. I think, ladies, you have a stronger desire for intimacy than most guys do. You have a desire for relational harmony and intimacy more than guys do. I think what happens a lot of times, especially in high school, is that you give up yourself sexually to get that intimacy and when you do it you realize that wasn't intimacy at all; that actually intimacy is being known fully. Not just standing before somebody naked physically but standing before somebody naked emotionally. That you can be known for who you are, that you can be real, that you don't have to hide. That you're emotionally open, that you're vulnerable, that you're trusting. That's intimacy. And that takes a long time to get there.

I've been married to Tonya for almost 4 years and there are still parts of our relationship that we're discovering new elements of intimacy. It takes a long time. When we say that

say sex is synonymous with intimacy, we're fooling ourselves. You don't have to have intimacy to have sex. If you did, prostitution wouldn't be around. For a small amount of money you could have sex but you wouldn't have intimacy. Sex and intimacy are not synonymous.

Love and intimacy become a masquerade. There are things that masquerade as love and intimacy that I want to talk about; three things that may take the desire that you and I have for love and intimacy and they fake them out.

LOVE & INTIMACY BECOME A MASQUERADE THROUGH...

1. Sex OUTSIDE OF marriage

The last couple of weeks, what we've been talking about how sex is God's idea. He created it. He created Adam and said, "Go ahead and name all the animals." Giraffe, gnat, rhino. None of them were suitable mates. The giraffe was too tall, the rhino was too big. God created Eve and he said, "*This is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh,*" which translated from Hebrew "Oh, baby, she's hot! I'll take her!" Then God says this, "Be fruitful and multiply." What's He talking about? Go out and have a snack and do some math? No. Not at all. He created sex to populate. But also not just to populate but to enjoy. Sex was God's idea. He's not down on it. He's up on life.

I said this a couple weeks ago. I didn't get specific but I'll get specific now. In God's design and mastery of sex he created to feel good when we have sex. In God's design it wasn't just to make babies but it was to be enjoyed and to be pleasurable.

I have been asked by parents before, "Why did you have to point that out?" Because it goes back to the mastery of God's design. God's not down on sex. That is a lie from the devil. God created it. He created it to be good, enjoyable; but in the context of marriage. Outside of that, it's a masquerade of love and intimacy.

Another passage **Hebrews 11:4, "Honor marriage. Guard the sacredness of sexual intimacy between husband and wife."** God draws a firm line between casual and illicit sex; the sexual standards of the Bible. I appreciate so much you coming to church. You know what I'm going to teach. You already know what the Bible says, but you come anyway. You're thinkers, you're smart. Reality is either the world's right or God's right. You know what I'm going to say and you come anyway. I appreciate that so much about you.

When you look at the Bible it says no premarital sex. God leaves no room for justification – "But we're in love." There's no room for that! No room for rationalization – "Why don't I just try it once so I can kind of be in the club and then I'll pray for forgiveness." In God's design, He sees sex outside of marriage as a serious distortion of his design and his will.

Imagine with me a second: I'm in the backyard with a chain saw. I've got a chain saw and I'm trimming the trees. When my six year old niece comes out and says, "Uncle Bryant, can I play with the chain saw?" So I say, "Sure!" and I hand it to her." It's heavy and all of a sudden she's cutting and ripping up her legs, blood spurting all over. In this scenario is the chain saw evil? Bad chain saw! No, of course not. It's a good thing. It's useful. It's a great tool. It's good and not bad. Would Haley eventually be old enough to learn how to use a chain saw? Yes. But it's not the right time. Does the chain saw have more power than she can handle? Yes. Could the chain saw hurt her if she doesn't follow directions? Yes.

My point is this. Sex is a lot like that chain saw. Is sex a wonderful tool? Yes. It's not evil. It's good. It can be powerful. But it can also rip you apart. It can also leave scars that will be with you for the rest of your life.

Any sex, no matter how nice it looks on the movie screen, if it's outside of God's parameter of marriage, it's called disobedience. When you know it, and you do it anyway, it's called willful disobedience. The reality is when you do that and you know what God says and do it anyway, it's like flipping off God and saying, "I know what's right. You designed it, you created it, you put boundaries around it but I'm god in my life." Even though over thousands of years, it's proven that what God says is true. You're trying to be God. It's a masquerade outside of how God created it; it's a masquerade of love and intimacy.

Some people live together, have sex together, and then want to get married in a church because they want God to bless their marriage. The thing about that is that will bless it when it's within his plan. God always does. God blesses marriages and weddings. But when you're outside of God's plan and you think that you'll do this one thing so that God will bless it. It doesn't work that way.

2. A SAME SEX physical relationship.

The big debate that goes on is: homosexuality, the result of nature or nurture? I'm sure in your classes you've had this discussion. Is a person homosexual because it's in their DNA? They have a genetic predisposition to be gay. Is it nature or is it nurture meaning there were environmental causes around it – a domineering mother, the absence of a male role model, a molestation, it might be that a kid opens the door and sees his mom naked, she slams the door and his hand is caught in it and so there's the association between pain and seeing a naked woman and he never wants to see that. That's called nurture.

Nature is saying I was created that way. People who study homosexuality say there is no one simple answer. It's not just one thing that causes somebody to be gay. It's a lot more complex. There are groups of people who bash homosexuals. Some people when they hear that I work in a church, they immediately withdraw. In their mind anybody that's a Christian has got to be holding a sign like these protesters "God hates gays!" I'm a pretty mellow guy, but when I see those signs I get so violent inside I want to grab somebody that's holding that sign and break it over his head. I go crazy.

You don't know God if you think that! You know what I say to my homosexual friend? God loves you. That's easy. When I look in the Bible it does not say – that famous verse that everybody learns John 3:16, it doesn't say "For God loves the world – except for the homosexuals – that He gave his only Son that whoever believes in him – except for the homosexual – should not perish but have eternal life – except for the homosexual." It doesn't say that at all. So I would say, "God loves you." That's the easy part.

The hard part is the next thing I would say. It is outside of God's design. I realize that sin is this ugly word that nobody likes to talk about, but a sin is an attempt to get our needs met outside of God's design. It's a sin because God has specifically said no. Two famous passages are **1 Corinthians 6** and **Romans 1:25-27**. God says no. It's in that list of things that is outside of God's design.

I would also say that homosexuality is not a heaven or hell issue. I'm asked, "If he's a homosexual is he going to go to hell?" The only thing that is a heaven and hell issue is not

trusting your life to Jesus Christ." That's it. What gets you into heaven is trusting God with your life.

If it is forgivable, is it worse than other sins? No, in the eyes of God, sin is sin. Sin separates us from God. Sin turns our backs to the presence of God. And sin is sin. It might come with greater consequences. Certainly there is a stigma with being gay. People make assumptions about people. Is it worse than any other sin? No. To God all sin is the same.

What about the debate between nature and nurture? Every one of us in here was born with a sin nature. When Adam and Eve sinned, it's called the fall of humanity, sin entered. We are born sinful people. I cannot die on the cross for you. You cannot die on the cross for me. That's why Jesus had to come to save us from our sin nature. I have a sin nature and that sin nature causes me to do things that I shouldn't do. It causes me to sin.

There is also a nurture part of sin. All of us in here have experienced this as well. We've done things that have been wrong but we did them because we were part of a group or a club or a gang or something like that. We're not necessarily thinking these up on our own, but still at the same time we kind of went along with the crowd. We've been nurtured into that.

So you've got nature and you've got nurture. Here's the bottom line: it's still my choice. The bottom line is it still becomes the person's choice. I can't go home tonight and say to my wife, "I've had an affair because I have this sin nature in me that wants to do wrong and I know three of my friends have had affairs so they've kind of nurtured me into the whole concept so really I'm not responsible at all. It was the sin nature and the nurture of others." The bottom line is life becomes a choice. I've got to become responsible for that choice and not blame other people. It's just another way that love and intimacy are masqueraded.

3. Through a FANTASY-FILLED life.

Last week we talked about the differences between guys and girls, that guys are more visual, girls are more verbal. This point will go after guys a little bit more. I'm not saying that girls don't fantasize. Girls fantasize more about a false love while guys fantasize more about sexual things. This is one of those things that we think only affects ourselves. One of the huge traps of sexuality is that in the fantasy world nobody knows about it. You can look one way on the outside and be trapped on the inside because nobody knows about it except you and God. So that's why for many people this is a trap.

So fantasy is what I call a snowball issue. It goes like this. You've seen the cartoons when you were little the guy at the top of the hill and he takes a little snowball and he rolls it down he hill. As it goes down the hill it begins to pick up more snow and some branches and the whole bit and it gets bigger as it rolls down the hill. By the time it gets down to the bottom of the mountain it's this monstrous snowball that's out of control and destructive.

That's a good picture of what fantasy is like. Fantasy starts small. Guys, you know you're watching some football and you see the cheerleaders and you think she's hot. Then what was able to turn you on a little bit there doesn't turn you on any more. Now it's a show and the girl is half dressed or in a bathing suit. Then that doesn't turn you on as much. It's a snowball. Then you know when you get on the Internet and you can access some porn – and you can type in just about any word and get access to a porn site – now you can see it right there. Then you can download the videos. Then you can get the videos. It gets into

other things like multiple partners and all this different stuff. Guys, you know what I'm talking about. It's this snowball that is destructive.

Here's what people say, "Leave it alone. It's my own issue. I'm not hurting anybody." Oh yes we are. When we fill our minds and move into that fantasy thing for love and intimacy not only are we hurting ourselves because sex addiction is one of the highest growing addictions there is starting with adolescents. Now when you can get almost anything over the Internet it's so much easier to get addicted. Used to you have to sneak a copy of the Sports Illustrated swimsuit edition. Now you have access that's available 24-7 and for some of you, it's right there in your room.

What happens is, your greatest sexual organ is not below your waste it's in your head. These images that you have stored, that you have filled in your mind fantasy-wise, that snowball that gets out of control, you move ahead ten or twenty years into that marriage, guess what, ladies. You are now being compared to the fantasy going on. You're now being compared to computer enhanced Barbie where every cellulite and hair out of place is manipulated off the screen and you're being compared to perfection.

Fantasy is not as simplistic and innocent, as it might seem. Guys, I know some of you in here are gripped in it. You can't find a way out of it. You know what I'm talking about. Jesus addressed this. The Ten Commandments, one of the commandments is "Do not commit adultery." That seems like a no-brainer. Again, it's not that God is down on sex he's up on life. He knows that adultery destroys families. He's not down on sex, He's up on life. These people during Jesus' time were going, "At least I haven't committed adultery." Jesus says, "Wait a minute!" Remember back to week one where I said God's more concerned about your heart than your actions. This is a great illustration.

In *Matthew 5* Jesus said, "You've heard the Law of Moses says, 'Do not commit adultery'. But I say anyone who even looks at a woman with lust in his eyes has already committed adultery with her in his heart. So if your eye, even if it's a good eye causes you to lust, gouge it out and throw it away. It's better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your hand, even if it's your stronger hand, causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It's better for you to lose one part of your body than your whole body to be thrown into hell."

Is Jesus talking literal here? Every guy in here would be like a blind stub! I think what Jesus is saying is, "Don't take this lightly. Go radical with this. Don't think 'I didn't commit adultery,' but you've committed all this stuff in your mind." God says, "I've created that computer in there. I know how it works. And, when you fill your mind with this, it's going to come out in your life."

The number one question I get asked over the last 13 years by guys has to do with fantasy and has to do with masturbation; number one question related to sex.

But I'm not afraid to talk about this. I know this is an issue – masturbation – that is controlling to guys. Statistics say that most guys think they're the only ones who struggle with it. You think you're alone in this and that creates all this fear and guilt. But the reality is that 95% of guys have masturbation experiences. The other 5% were lying. That doesn't mean that girls don't masturbate. It just means it's a lower percentage. This is a huge guy issue.

The Bible doesn't say anything about masturbation; not at all. It's silent. Does that mean God doesn't care? No. There are just some things of life that aren't covered in the Bible. It doesn't say anything about children being covered in pornography. Does God care about that? Of course he does. There are two theories of masturbation.

One theory is because it involves lust and fantasy that it's wrong, it's a sin. It's difficult to masturbate without that lust picture.

Another theory is that masturbation is God's gift to the person. Some say, "I'd rather my son masturbate and then go out on a date and have all this sexual tension and think it's got to be fulfilled with a woman."

There are two theories. The Bible is silent on it. That makes it a difficult thing and I don't have a simple answer. I wish I did. I would say, of all the conversations I've had with guys, that you can count on it being a struggle. If you can masturbate without lust, go for it. But you can't; so because of that I think it's going to be an issue.

I realize that not all of you are Christians. But those of you who have stepped across the line and said, "God, I want you to be Lord of my life," there is this cycle that guys have shared with me and we've talked openly about it. They've said, "When I do masturbate, I feel guilty about it." You feel guilty about it and then you want to bring yourself some pleasure so you masturbate more. So it becomes a cycle, a trap. My biggest fear is not so much experimenting but it being out of control. And that fantasy becomes a huge part of it and you can't control it. I say as long as you can steer clear of it.

And two: talk to somebody about it. I know that's the goofiest thing in the world. "Hey, my name's Tom. I masturbate. How are you?" That's a weird deal. But the revealing of feelings leads to healing. So find a guy you trust and say, "Let me ask you a question. Do you struggle with this, too?" All of a sudden you open up about it. There's some accountability and some communication. I've found that to be a very healing thing for guys. I realize that is a risky, risky step.

Let me try to bring this all together. Sex and intimacy are not synonymous. I don't care what the world tells you; they're not synonymous. You can have sex without intimacy. I think you care enough about your life to pursue intimacy. There are some masquerades of intimacy. Sex outside of marriage, same-sex relationships and fantasy-filled life that gives the illusion of sex and intimacy but they're not.

Imagine you just won a contest and, as the winner, you and your boy/girlfriend get to eat at a 5-star restaurant. Most of the great and incredible restaurants in the world are 4-star restaurants but there's one 5-star restaurant. It's not only the best service, it's the best food, and it's the best environment. Very few people get reservations. It's unbelievable that you get to eat there. And you have a reservation for 9:00 that's got your name on it. But about 7:00 you start thinking, I wish I could be there. I'm hungry. So you go to McDonalds and you pig out. You get a Big Mac, chicken McNuggets, fries and a sundae. You have all this stuff. You know it's fast food; not that good. It's McDonalds. You do that at 7:00. Then when 9:00 rolls around, guess what? You're not that hungry. Not only are you not that hungry, but you've kind of got a stomachache. You're a little full and every time you talk you burp a little Big Mac. Here you are at this incredible 5-star restaurant burping up your chicken McNuggets or whatever.

I think of this 5-star reservation is called marriage. It's called sex in marriage. God created it and it's intended to be incredible in the context of marriage. And here's what some of us

in here do. We don't want to wait until the 9:00 reservation. We want to take a short cut. We want to get there early. So we settle for fast food sex; a cheap imitation of the real thing. I think it's a masquerade. But again, you've got to decide. Is the world's way right or is God's way right? It's your choice.

Your life is too great, you're too good of people to live with guilt and "would have" "should-have". Make the decisions now. Make the commitments now.

How do you find the love and intimacy you're looking for? Some action steps. You might look at the passage in **Galatians 6:8 "Don't be misled. No one makes a fool of God. What a person plants he will harvest."** The point is this. Right now, as a teenager, you're planting. You're planting seeds in relationships. You're planting seeds in how you treat one another. You're going to harvest what you plant. I encourage you to plant the right stuff. So how do you find the love and intimacy you're looking for? Make these deposits in your life.

1. Begin by EXPERIENCING God's love.

I've met a lot of people who don't have a relationship with God and their life is like a cup. It's not full. I want it full and I'm going to go through life and try to get it full by experiences. I have a sexual experience and I think it's going to fill me up but it doesn't. It's not what I thought it was going to be. I try this drug, or this relationship or something to experience life to its fullest and I always wind up short. The Bible says that the only thing that can fill up the emptiness in your life is to be reconciled with the creator of life. Experience his love.

It says in **Ephesians 3, "That you may know, that you may have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love really is. May you experience the love of Christ though it is so great you never fully understand it. May you be filled with the fullness of life and the power that comes from God."** Instead of searching around and settling for "fast-food" cheap sex, start by experiencing God's love. Jesus said this **"The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy. But I came so that you might have life and life to its fullest."** Don't settle for second best when God's offering us the fullness that we can experience his love.

2. Learn to EXPRESS REAL love.

Real love is not necessarily sexual love. That is a part of love. But anybody can express sexual love. I told you a couple weeks ago my dog can have sex. I do not have to sit with my dog in the back yard with flip charts and teach him how to do it. He figured it out. Sexual love is not that difficult to figure out.

How many of you come from a family and you look at your parents' marriage – the mom and dad who gave birth to you (and I realize that excludes half of you in here because your parents aren't together any more) you look at your parents' relationship and you respect their love and intimacy and you want a relationship like that? It's great if you have that model.

Those of you who didn't raise their hand, do you know someone else who's been married for a while that you look at their life and you want a relationship like that? You want the love and intimacy they share? You probably have a model in your mind. That relationship is not built solely on sex. Some of you are grossed out at the thought that your parents ever had sex. If you respect their relationship, and you like the love and intimacy that you see,

they're having sex. I know that's a gross thought, but they are; but it's not built just on that.

Here's what I read this week: the average couple has sex less than two times a week. But let's move it up to two times a week. I realize that for some of you guys in here, that blows your whole fantasy. You're thinking "I'm having it every day – four or five times a day!" Let's think two times a week. And the average amount of time for intercourse is 5-7 minutes. Let's go the high side of 7. Now we've got two times a week times seven minutes. You I know how much sex is happening in that marriage? Fourteen minutes. There are 10,080 minutes during a week – 14 for sex.

My point is this: there's got to be a lot more than sex. Animals can figure out how to have sex. But a good relationship is built on more than that.

Some of you are thinking, "That may be the national average. I'm going to bust the curve!" Ok, let's say you are. Let's say you're going to do it everyday and it will last ten minutes, fifteen minutes. Guess what? You've still got 10,000 minutes left with that other person. You know why I think half the relationships in this world don't make it? Because they weren't built on the right foundation. If it's just built on a foundation of sex, then it's a masquerade of love and intimacy. That won't last over the long haul. It takes a lot more than that for a healthy relationship. Learn to express real love.

How do I learn to express real love? You watch how God loves people. You study the life of Jesus Christ, God in the flesh and see how he treated people. In **Ephesians 5 "Watch what God does and then do it. Like children who learn proper behavior from their parents."** Mostly what God does is love you. Keep company with him and learn a life of love. Observe how Christ loves us. His love is not cautious but extravagant. He didn't love in order to get something from us. He gave everything of himself to us. Love like that.

3. Pursue a lifestyle that VALUES and HONORS obedience.

Obedience to what? Obedience to God's design for sex. Value it. Are you going to live by the world's way or God's way? If you say, "I'm going to set my life on a course of God's way" then you value God's design and you honor it.

Imagine driving down the street and you see a sign that says No U – Turn or Do not enter or One Way. How many of you see these signs and say, "That sign is limiting my rights. I feel like my freedom is being stifled." No. You value them and honor them. Why? Because they keep you alive. They help set life in a course or direction.

I hope you hear this from my heart that God created sex. It was his idea. It is good in his context. Do I not give my niece the chain saw because I hate her? No. I don't give it to her because I love her. Do I sit down with you and explain to you what God's design for sex is for you to wait so that she can't have any fun during her high school years? No. I sit with you and tell you what God says so that you can spend the majority of your years this side of marriage so you can have great sex with no guilt with no comparisons, no fear of a haunted past and bringing someone else into the bedroom in those images. No, I tell you these things out of love. Then enjoy it. Go for it. That's where God intended it to happen. When you do it that way, you honor God. You honor God the way he created it.

Read the verse, **Romans 12:1-2**. One of the ways you honor God is not just by coming to church and singing a song; it's with your life. The way you live your life is an honor to God.