

Last week, we talked about Absolute Morality and how God is the determiner for what is right and wrong for humanity since He is our Creator. This week, we will be talking about sex. What does God have to say about sex?

Let's look at some scriptures to see what the Bible says about sex (all the passages are taken from the New Living Translation):

Regulations for the Israelites under the Old Covenant

The Seventh Commandment:

Do not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)

Old Covenant Law – Restrictions (Leviticus 18):

- You must obey all my regulations and be careful to keep my laws, for I, the LORD, am your God. If you obey my laws and regulations, you will find life through them. I am the LORD. (4-5)
- Do not have sexual intercourse with:
 - A close relative, including:
 - Mother (6-8)
 - Sister (9)
 - Half sister (9)
 - Granddaughter (10)
 - Daughter (11)
 - Aunt (12-13)
 - Great Aunt (14)
 - Daughter-in-law (15)
 - Sister-in-law (16)
 - Both a woman and her daughter (17)
 - An animal (23)
- Do not violate a woman by having sexual intercourse with her during her period of menstrual impurity. (19)
- Do not practice homosexuality; it is a detestable sin. (22)
- Do not defile your daughter by making her a prostitute, or the land will be filled with promiscuity and detestable wickedness. (Leviticus 19:29)
- No Israelite man or woman may ever become a temple prostitute. Do not bring to the house of the LORD your God any offering from the earnings of a prostitute, whether a man or a woman, for both are detestable to the LORD your God. (Deuteronomy 23:17-18)
- Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, because this is how the people I am expelling from the Promised Land have defiled themselves. As a result, the entire land has become defiled. That is why I am punishing the people who live there, and the land will soon vomit them out. (24-25)
- Whoever does any of these detestable things will be cut off from the community of Israel. So be careful to obey my laws, and do not practice any of these detestable activities. Do not defile yourselves by doing any of them, for I, the LORD, am your God. (29-30)
- Say this to the entire community of Israel: You must be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy. (Leviticus 19:2; 20:26)

Old Covenant Law – Punishments (Leviticus 20):

The following was punishable by death:

- Adultery (10)
- Sex with father's wife (11)
- Sex with daughter-in-law (12)
- Homosexuality (13)
- Sex with mother and daughter (14)
- Sex with an animal (15-16)

The following was punishable by expulsion:

- Sex with sister (17)
- Sex with hemorrhaging woman (18)
- Sex with aunt (19-20)
- Marrying brother's wife (21)

Regulations for Christians under the New Covenant**Sermon on the Mount**

You have heard that the law of Moses says, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I [Jesus] say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust in his eye has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matthew 5:27-28)

1 Corinthians 6

Don't you know that those who do wrong will have no share in the Kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, who are idol worshipers, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, greedy people, drunkards, abusers, and swindlers – none of these will have a share in the Kingdom of God. There was a time when some of you were just like that, but now your sins have been washed away, and you have been set apart for God. You have been made right with God because of what the Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of our God have done for you. You may say, "I am allowed to do anything." But I reply, "Not everything is good for you." And even though "I am allowed to do anything," I must not become a slave to anything. (1 Corinthians 6:9-12)

1 Corinthians 6

You say, "Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food." This is true, though someday God will do away with both of them. But our bodies were not made for sexual immorality. They were made for the Lord, and the Lord cares about our bodies. And God will raise our bodies from the dead by his marvelous power, just as he raised our Lord from the dead. Don't you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ? Should a man take his body, which belongs to Christ, and join it to a prostitute? Never! And don't you know that if a man joins himself to a prostitute, he becomes one body with her? For the Scriptures say, "The two are united into one." But the person who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Run away from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. Or don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:13-20)

1 Thessalonians 4

God wants you to be holy, so you should keep clear of all sexual sin. Then each of you will control your body and live in holiness and honor – not in lustful passion as the pagans do, in their ignorance of God and his ways. Never cheat a Christian brother in this matter by taking his wife, for the Lord avenges all such sins, as we have solemnly warned you before. God has called us to be holy, not to live impure lives. Anyone who refuses to live by these rules is not disobeying human rules but is rejecting God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you. But I don't need to write to you about the Christian love that should be shown among God's people. For God himself has taught you to love one another. (1 Thessalonians 4:3-9)

Other Verses

- Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people. (Ephesians 5:3)
- So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual sin, impurity, lust, and shameful desires. (Colossians 3:5a)
- Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to its lustful desires. (Romans 6:12)
- Run from anything that stimulates youthful lust. Follow anything that makes you want to do right. Pursue faith and love and peace, and enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts. (2 Timothy 2:22)
- When I wrote to you before, I told you not to associate with people who indulge in sexual sin. But I wasn't talking about unbelievers who indulge in sexual sin, or who are greedy or are swindlers or idol worshipers. You would have to leave this world to avoid people like that. What I meant was that you are not to associate with anyone who claims to be a Christian yet indulges in sexual sin, or is greedy, or worships idols, or is abusive, or a drunkard, or a swindler. Don't even eat with such people. (1 Corinthians 5:9-11)

OBSERVATIONS

Now that we have reviewed what the Bible says, let's dissect this and try to understand it better.

Observations:

- God views sexual sin as a very serious offense.
- Sex is restricted to the confines of marriage.
 - We can't talk about sex without talking about marriage.

What is Marriage?

- Holy covenantal union rooted in Love, made between male and female under God, and honored by all. It is the smallest unit of community - two different equals united as one. The two are still two, but at the same time one. They are not two of the same, but two different come together as one.
- Marriage is a union of diversity among equals.
 - So God created people in his own image; God patterned them after himself; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27)
 - And the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a companion who will help him." So the LORD God caused Adam to fall into a

deep sleep. He took one of Adam's ribs and closed up the place from which he had taken it. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib and brought her to Adam. "At last!" Adam exclaimed. "She is part of my own flesh and bone! She will be called 'woman,' because she was taken out of a man." This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one. (Genesis 2:18; 21-24)

- God created male and female. They are equal and of the same kind. A man is not better than a woman. Both are human. And yet, they are diverse. A man is not a woman. Together, when united as one in community, they are the image of God.
- Marriage is a covenantal union under God.
 - "Haven't you read the Scriptures?" Jesus replied. "They record that from the beginning 'God made them male and female.' And he said, 'This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.' Since they are no longer two but one, let no one separate them, for God has joined them together." (Matthew 19:4-6)
- Marriage is a covenantal union honored by all.
 - Marriage is a social institution which includes a legal contract.
 - You cry out, "Why has the LORD abandoned us?" I'll tell you why! Because the LORD witnessed the vows you and your wife made to each other on your wedding day when you were young. But you have been disloyal to her, though she remained your faithful companion, the wife of your marriage vows. (Malachi 2:14)
 - A man who makes a vow to the LORD or makes a pledge under oath must never break it. He must do exactly what he said he would do. (Numbers 30:2)
 - A wife is married to her husband as long as he lives. If her husband dies, she is free to marry whomever she wishes, but this must be a marriage acceptable to the Lord. (1 Corinthians 7:39)
- Marriage is holy.
 - One man to one woman.
 - Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage. God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery. (Hebrews 13:4)
 - ...each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband. (1 Corinthians 7:2b)
- Marriage is rooted in love.
 - Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her (Ephesians 5:25)
 - So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body. (Ephesians 5:28-30)
 - Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them. (Colossians 3:19)

What is Sex?

- Sex is the intimate expression of marriage.

Sex & Marriage

- Marriage is a union. Therefore...
 - Sex is about unity.
 - Sex involves intimacy.
 - Not about pleasure, though, it is pleasurable.
 - Pleasure is a benefit from pleasing one another.
 - Not about reproduction, though, it does lead to reproduction.
 - Children are the fruit of sex.
- Marriage is a union of diversity among equals. Therefore...
 - Sex is between a man and a woman.
 - No homosexuality.
- Marriage is a covenantal union honored by all. Therefore...
 - Sex is reserved for marriage and is restricted to marriage.
 - No fornication. No Adultery.
- Marriage is a covenantal union under God. Therefore...
 - Sexual sin is a violation against God.
 - Sex is binding. By having sex, your body is bound by God to that person.
- Marriage is holy. Therefore...
 - Sex should reflect holiness.
 - No sexual immorality. Honor God with your body.
 - No pornography.
 - One man to one woman.
- Marriage is rooted in love. Therefore...
 - Sex should express love.
 - What is love? Love is the willful and joyful offering of oneself for the good of another in seeking to be one in community. Therefore...
 - Sex is willful.
 - Rape is wrong.
 - Sex is joyful.
 - Sex is an offering of the body to the partner.
 - Sex is for good.
 - Sex involves another.
 - Sex is seeking unity.

1 Corinthians 7

Now about the questions you asked in your letter. Yes, it is good to live a celibate life. But because there is so much sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband. The husband should not deprive his wife of sexual intimacy, which is her right as a married woman, nor should the wife deprive her husband. The wife gives authority over her body to her husband, and the husband also gives authority over his body to his wife. So do not deprive each other of sexual relations. The only exception to this rule would be the agreement of both husband and wife to refrain from sexual intimacy for a limited time, so they can give themselves more completely to prayer. Afterward they should come together again so that Satan won't be able to tempt them because of their lack of self-control. This is only my suggestion. It's not meant to be an absolute rule. I wish everyone could get along without marrying, just as I do. But we are not all the same. God gives some the gift of marriage, and to others he gives the gift of singleness. (1 Corinthians 7:1-7)

Staying Pure

Why wait until marriage?

- To honor God.
- To honor your future partner and remain pure for them.
 - You will be able to offer yourself as a special and unique gift.
 - You will compare or be reminded of others with your partner.
- To honor your future commitment.
 - If you can remain committed now, you will remain committed when married.
- To honor your body.
 - When you have sex outside of marriage, you dishonor your body. You make your body worthless and not worth the wait.
- For love.
 - Sex without love leads to hurt. Someone always gets hurt.

How to stay pure?

- Resist.
 - Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to its lustful desires. (Romans 6:12)
 - So humble yourselves before God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)
- Run
 - Run away from sexual sin! (1 Corinthians 6:18)
- Take extreme measures.
 - So if your eye – even if it is your good eye – causes you to lust, gouge it out and throw it away. It is 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 is your stronger hand – causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. (Matthew 5:29-30)
- Rely on Jesus Christ to give you strength to resist.
 - Since he himself has gone through suffering and temptation, he is able to help us when we are being tempted. (Hebrews 2:18)
- Be controlled by the Holy Spirit.
 - Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. (Romans 8:5)
 - So I advise you to live according to your new life in the Holy Spirit. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. (Galatians 5:16)
- Keep your thoughts on good things.
 - Let heaven fill your thoughts. Do not think only about things down here on earth. (Colossians 3:2)
 - Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. (Philippians 4:8b)
- Keep yourself from compromising situations.
 - When I wrote to you before, I told you not to associate with people who indulge in sexual sin. But I wasn't talking about unbelievers who indulge in sexual sin, or who are greedy or are swindlers or idol worshipers. You would have to leave this world to avoid people like that. What I meant was that you are not to associate with anyone who claims to be a Christian yet indulges in sexual sin, or is greedy, or worships idols, or is abusive, or a drunkard, or a swindler. Don't even eat with such people. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)
- If you do sin: repent, confess, and renew.
 - But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong. (1 John 1:9)
 - Instead, there must be a spiritual renewal of your thoughts and attitudes. (Ephesians 4:23)
 - Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a right spirit within me. (Psalms 51:10)

Is homosexuality wrong?

- That is why God abandoned them to their shameful desires. Even the women turned against the natural way to have sex and instead indulged in sex with each other. And the men, instead of having normal sexual relationships with women, burned with lust for each other. Men did shameful things with other men and, as a result, suffered within themselves the penalty they so richly deserved. When they refused to acknowledge God, he abandoned them to their evil minds and let them do things that should never be done. (Romans 1:26-28)
- Don't you know that those who do wrong will have no share in the Kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, who are idol worshipers, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals... (1 Corinthians 6:9)
- Do not practice homosexuality; it is a detestable sin. (Leviticus 18:22)

Homosexuality is a sin just like adultery, lying, stealing, and murder.

Why is homosexuality wrong?

Sex is reserved for marriage which is a covenantal union between male and female made before God. In creating humanity, God made sex for males and females. The reason sex is reserved for males and females because it is a union between two creatures who of the same kind (humans) and yet are different (male and female). It is university—union of diversity. To deny this is to deny God's purpose for sex. It is a sin against God as our Creator.

Homosexuals are born that way. Didn't God create them that way?

God did not create anyone as a homosexual. Rather, humans are prone to homosexuality due to the fall of Adam and Eve. Sin corrupted us. We are prone to sin. God's goal is to renew us from our sinful state to a new glorious state that fulfills the true purpose for which we were created.

So what, adultery is wrong and it's not a big deal. Why is homosexuality such a big deal?

The church has a message of forgiveness for the world. In order for anyone to be forgiven, however, they must first admit guilt. So while we have a message of forgiveness, we also have a message about sin. In order for people to know that they have sinned, they must know what God finds wrong. So, we preach the commands of God.

The problem that the church incurs is that people are standing up and saying that nothing is wrong with homosexuality. As such, the church is responding by declaring that homosexuality is a sin (so that people can be forgiven.) No one is protesting or arguing that lying, steal, murder, or adultery is a sin. Therefore, those are not controversial issues. However, people are saying that homosexuality is not a sin. The church, therefore, has a responsibility to God to proclaim the truth. And so, this has become a big issue.

For more on homosexuality:

<http://bible.org/article/homosexuality-christian-perspective>

<http://www.carm.org/homosexuality>

<http://www.contenderministries.org/articles/christianliving/homosexuality.php>