

# Human Sexuality and the Sovereignty of God

## Introduction

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July 19, 2015

**Matthew 5:27-32**

**27 "You have heard that it was said, '*YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY*';**

**28 but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.**

**29 "If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.**

**30 "If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell.**

**31 "It was said, '*WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE*';**

**32 but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for *the* reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.**

To the Glory of God

Now every so often there arises an issue that is so important and so serious and one that has such far reaching ramifications- that it warrants an examination by the Church. I stand before you this morning to say that we are faced with just such an issue in our day. The recent ruling by the Supreme Court of the United States institutes a radical departure from almost 240 years of history and jurisprudence, and it *imposes* upon this nation a "standard" for Marriage that is based upon a logic that is patently *unbiblical* and *ungodly*.

Now all through history- every generation of leaders in the Christian Church have been faced with very *unique* issues that *required* them to return to the Scriptures to seek out a solution and an

answer that would not only solve the *immediate* problem- but which would last forever.

During the first 1,000 years of its existence- Christianity was bombarded with a whole host of heresies and false teachings that centered around three main issues:

1. The Character and Nature of God the Father
2. The Character and Nature of God the Son
3. The Essence of Grace

The first three major attacks are recorded for us in Scripture as the Apostles themselves dealt with the first three heresies:

- ✓ The Heresy of the Judaizers (Legalism)
- ✓ The Heresy of the Antinomians (Lawlessness)
- ✓ The Heresy of the Gnostics

The first two- Legalism and Lawlessness were the “twin evils” that attacked the Grace of God. Legalism *ignored* Grace by teaching that we have to do various things to earn our Salvation while Lawlessness *abused* Grace by teaching that since we are saved by Grace through Faith alone- it doesn’t matter how we live after we are saved. And God used James and the Apostles Paul and John to defeat these two false teachings.

The heresy of the Gnostics attacked both God the Father and God the Son by “adding to” and “taking away from” what the Scriptures revealed about the Character and Nature of God. And God used Paul, Peter, and John to silence these wicked men.

And even *after* the final, full, and completed Revelation of God to Man was articulated and finished, and the New Testament was formulated and written down and compiled- the Church *continued* to be faced with a whole host of heresies and false teachings that were confronted, examined, and thoroughly defeated by Scripture and by Scripture alone.

And as each battle was fought and won- a clearer and more precise understanding of Divine Truth emerged. So, for example- God used Tertullian to do battle against those who would malign the Deity of Jesus Christ and he hammered out “The Doctrine of the Trinity”, and

God raised up Athanasius to allow us to see "The Nature of Christ" more Biblically as he did battle against the heresy of Arius. God empowered Augustine to give us a more Scripturally accurate understanding of "Original Sin" and "Sovereign Election" and "Human Depravity" and "The Fall" and "God's Grace" as he defeated the attacks against the Church by Pelagius, and God used the Reformers to call the Church back to Scripture alone (Sola Scriptura) and the understanding that we are made Righteous by Faith alone (Sola Fide) and *not* through the Sacraments of the Church as they successfully confronted the most powerful religious institution on the face of the earth and utterly defeated them.

And so we see that God did not sovereignly and actively *cause* evil men to align themselves with demons to concoct false teaching to seek to overthrow the Truth of God- but He sovereignly and passively *allowed* these heresies and false teachings and crisis- to come to the door of the Church. And by doing that- in His Divine Wisdom- God *forced* the Church to stand up and speak out and to go back to the Source and to find out what God said about that issue in infallible Scripture. And then God the Spirit moved upon certain men to rise up and engage the enemy head on and fight to preserve the integrity and glory and beauty and clarity of Biblical Christianity and to do what the half-brother of Jesus said in **Jude 3:**

**... contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.**

And so it is *our* time now. God has moved *providentially* to bring the fight to us at this time. We did not seek this fight and did not want it- but it is here. And so now the world turns to us for a response that is both Biblical, and, therefore, eternal about the evil that God has allowed wicked men to bring to the door of the Church here in the first few years of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The issue that we face today is *not* the Nature of God the Father or God the Son, it isn't the Essence of Grace- but, it is no less serious. We are faced with the issue of Human Sexuality and whether sexual deviance and perversion- in *any* of its manifestations- can become *less* sinful and *less* egregious, and, therefore, more acceptable to God and His Church than Scripture declares.

But there are several *secondary* issues that are also affected by the issue of Human Sexuality such as: "The Institution of Marriage", "Qualifications for Church Membership and Leadership", and "The Relationship between Church and State". And so this warrants me to take a "vacation" from our verse by verse "journey" through the Gospel of Luke and to examine just what God has revealed in sacred Scripture about "Human Sexuality and the Sovereignty of God".

So this series will be a serious, thoughtful, honest, and thorough look at what God has said about the subject of Human Sexuality in Scripture, and how we – as God's children- should believe and teach and speak and live as a result of that.

This series will result in us adopting the findings into our Doctrinal Statement and By-Laws- which will necessitate every single member to sign a *new* Membership Covenant that reflects this addition. I am also mindful that for the first time in my life- I, personally, and this Church will officially be at odds with the Government of the United States. And we will also be at odds with the general direction that American society is heading- even though *that* has been true for quite some time.

And that also means that the Christian Church is on a collision course with the Government of this country that will manifest itself in *some* way the future. And how much or how big or how small that collision will be- is up to God- Who alone is Sovereign over all things- including the decisions of evil men. So this is a real big deal. And, therefore, I approach this series with great seriousness and great trembling because I realize what all is at stake.

But one thing I will *not* do- and that is I will *not* be silent about this subject. I will *not* hesitate to publicly and openly and formally and officially state with absolutely no equivocation what God has said in Scripture about this subject. Because, I am not ashamed of the Gospel. And so I will stand on that with full assurance that God is able to protect and deliver us out of the hand of anyone who would seek to undermine Biblical Truth. But if God chooses *not* to rescue us- and He *allows* the actions of evil men to negatively affect us- then know this- I will *not* bow my knees and I will *not* submit to any law or any ruling or any order by any man or any Government that seeks to discount or change or distort what God has already said about Human Sexuality. These messages will be recorded and will be put on our Church's Website,

and they will be transcribed and recorded into both 15 and 30 minute radio broadcasts that should begin airing in just a few weeks.

Now the goal of this series will *not* be in analyzing the Supreme Court's decision or in discussing the encroachment by the Federal Government onto individual rights. I will leave that for others to do. My focus on this subject is on the grammatical, linguistic, contextual, and theological Truth recorded in sacred Scripture concerning Human Sexuality that will form the foundation of what we believe and teach at the Covenant of Peace Church.

For example- The United Church of Christ, the Episcopalian Church USA, the Presbyterian Church USA, and other religious groups have made a *theological* argument as to *why* they have acquiesced about this issue and have officially, formally, and publicly changed their position on this issue- disregarding 500 years of their own history. And that theological argument is based in a particular logic that they have used that is either correct and is in alignment with Scripture, or it isn't. I will examine both the logic and the theology of those decisions in this series.

Now you are free in the United States to be a citizen in good standing and completely disregard the Bible. You are also free in this country to know what the Bible says and then ignore it and rebel against it without suffering any negative response from the Government. Now those who do this will stand before God to give an account as their life comes to an end or when Jesus returns- but you may do this without any negative reaction by the Authorities of this country.

But what *no one* is free to do is to say that the Bible says something that it *doesn't* say or to teach that Scripture does *not* say something that it manifestly *does* say and still remain honest and scholarly and correct. Those who twist the Scriptures to make them say whatever it is that they *want* them to say are the very worst of all deceivers- because they have obfuscated the only Source of Divine Truth. This series is conducted in such a way that *assumes* that the 66 Books of the Holy Bible that you hold in your hand are a true and reliable *copy* of the original autographs that were written down by the 40 writers over a 1500 year time frame as they were moved along by God the Holy Spirit. So my statements and agreements and arguments and condemnation will come from *that* assumption.

500 years ago, God sovereignly ignited the heart of a Roman Catholic monk ablaze with the Truth concerning Justification by faith alone in response to his verse by verse study through Paul's **Epistle to the Romans**.

And this man was bewildered at the response of the leadership of the visible Church of that day as they did everything they could to get him to recant and stop talking about it. And as he stood trembling before a Council in the city of Worms made up of all the ecclesiastical powers of the visible Church on earth- Martin Luther said:

“Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. Here I stand I can do no other. May God help me. Amen.”

Dear friends, I do not believe that every battle is worth fighting over. I do not believe that I need to waste my time fighting every battle that is out there. But there are *some* issues that are so serious and that have such important foundational impact that they are not only worth fighting over, but they are worth dying over- and the issue of Human Sexuality is one of those issues. So here we go. Here I stand- I can do no other. May God help me. Amen.

Now this series of sermons has to do with *why* tearing out your eye or cutting off your hand like Jesus said here in **Matthew 5** is “better” than committing sexual sin. Jesus said at the end of **Matthew 5:29**:

**... it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell.**

... and then He repeated it again at the end of verse 30- showing us that He really meant what He said. Really? Jesus Christ- the Love of God personified- He really means what He said here? Literally? Seriously?

Now there may be some brave souls here today that would actually say they believe what Jesus said here and yet if I was to take a poll- they all probably have both eyes and both hands. And so are we to

assume then that because they have *not* cut off their hand *nor* torn out their eye that this means that they have all *refrained* from sexual sins, themselves?

So how many people do you know that actually believe this- that it would really and truly be “better” to maim yourself and to live every single day thereafter as a cripple than it would be to burn in hell because of sexual sins? And before you begin to remind me that Jesus was talking about the horrors of hell in this Passage rather than the particular sin that got you there- are you aware of any *other* sin that Jesus made such a fantastic claim about?

For example- did Jesus ever say that it would be “better” for you to cut out your tongue than it would to burn in hell because you cursed your mother and father? Can you recall the verse where Jesus said it would be “better” to cut off your hand than to build idols or to cut off your feet than it was to run to the places of sin? Why was Jesus so dramatic here? *Why* did He say something so outrageous about *this* particular part of the “broad way” that leads to eternal damnation?

In other words, The Lord Christ is telling us that there is something far more important than keeping your eye or your hand. Jesus is teaching here that receiving eternal life and not perishing in hell is *better* than losing a hand or an eye.

And Jesus links this with the war that we are waging every day- not in Iraq- but, in our own hearts. And so the issue at stake here is sexual desire and what we do with it.

Now almost everywhere you look in the world today, it seems, there are reminders that all life is war. The language of the New Testament concerning born again people living in a lost and fallen and pagan world –is the language of war. And so we have *not* gathered together here this morning because we are playing games or because we are not serious or because we are seeking some way to appease the fallen world- but because we *are* serious and we seek to faithfully live in *opposition* to it and what it says. And the Lord of the Church says that Heaven and Hell are in the balance concerning sexual sins.

Now I have two very simple but weighty points that I want to make this morning in this Introduction about Human Sexuality and the Sovereignty of God:

1. Human sexuality was designed by God on purpose as a way to know God in Christ more fully
2. Knowing God in Christ more fully was designed by God as a means of guarding and guiding our sexuality

Now I want to state these two points again- only *negatively* this time:

1. All the misuses of human sexuality *distorts* the true Knowledge of Jesus Christ
2. All misuses of our sexuality derive from *not* having the true Knowledge of Jesus Christ

or to put it one more way:

1. All sexual corruption serves to either *warp* or *conceal* the true Knowledge of Christ
2. The true Knowledge of Christ serves to *prevent* sexual corruption

So, I am *connecting* sexual sins with the lack of a true knowledge of God. So let's examine these briefly.

## **1. Human Sexuality was Designed by God as a Way to Know God More Fully**

### **Ezekiel 16:1-22**

Now as you are turning to the prophecy of Ezekiel- I want you to hear this. The Bible repeatedly and clearly says that God created human beings in His Image and Likeness. So it isn't true- as some suggest- that we do *not* know how human beings came to be. We *do* know. God has revealed that to us in Scripture and the only record that exists about Creation is a *theological* record and not a *scientific* record.

And then the Bible goes on to say in **Genesis 1:27:**

**God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.**

... and God created the male and female with capacities for intense sexual pleasure, and with a Calling- to faithful *commitment* in Marriage and faithful *continence* in singleness.<sup>1</sup>

And so the first addition to the Doctrinal Statement and By-Laws of the Covenant of Peace Church says:

**We believe and teach** that God wisely, purposefully, instantly, and miraculously created Mankind uniquely Male and Female with specific sexual attributes and qualities for the Glory of God and the enjoyment of themselves when conducted in a manner consistent with God's revealed Will in Scripture, and thus, it is God and God's revealed Will in Scripture alone that is qualified to define what is and what is not sexually helpful, fulfilling, satisfying, and acceptable. (**Genesis 1:26-30; 2:7; 15-25; 1Kings 3:14; Psalm 95:10; Proverbs 8:32; Isaiah 55:8-11; Mark 10:6; Hebrews 13:4; 2Peter 1:3&4**)<sup>2</sup>

In other words, God did *not* create human sexuality as an end to itself. *Everything* that God made is designed on purpose to display His Glory- including human sexuality. And so I say to you that the *ultimate* Reason (not the *only* reason- but the *ultimate* Reason) *why* God *purposefully* created us as sexual beings and *not* as emotionless stoics- was to make God more deeply *knowable*. So, therefore- because that is true- the language and the imagery of sexuality in sacred Scripture is not there to simply shock us- but is *the* most graphic and *the* most powerful that the Bible uses to describe the Divine Relationship between God and His people- both in a *positive* way (when we are faithful) and in a *negative* way (when we are not). In other words- human sexuality is a natural and tangible and visible and earthly example of a far deeper and infinitely more glorious spiritual Truth.

For example, read and listen- if you can without embarrassment- to both the *positive* and the *negative* in God's Words spoken through the Prophet Ezekiel. Keep in mind that at that time- God had chosen Israel from all the peoples on the earth to experience His special, unique Covenant Love, until the day when the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ, would come and live and die in the place of sinners, so that the Gospel of Christ would *overflow* the banks of Israel and flood the nations of the

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<sup>1</sup> I would suggest that Scripture teaches that when God wills singleness for any person- that this doesn't in and of itself denote some failure. But God designs singleness in such a way that the single person may know Him more fully. There are *unique* ways of knowing God through sexual continence in singleness and *unique* ways of knowing God through sexual intimacy in Marriage. I would suggest that *both* are true.

<sup>2</sup> The new addition to the By-Laws and Doctrinal Statement on "Human Sexuality" #1

world. So what we hear God say about His Love for Israel in the Old Testament is all the more true of His Relationship to all those who believe in His Son, the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Look at how God describes that Relationship with Israel according to the Prophet **Ezekiel 16** as He speaks to Jerusalem as the *embodiment* of His people and rehearses over a thousand years of history. Read with me- **Ezekiel 16:4-14:**

**4 "As for your birth, on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water for cleansing; you were not rubbed with salt or even wrapped in cloths.**

**5 "No eye looked with pity on you to do any of these things for you, to have compassion on you. Rather you were thrown out into the open field, for you were abhorred on the day you were born.**

**6 "When I passed by you and saw you squirming in your blood, I said to you *while you were* in your blood, 'Live!' Yes, I said to you *while you were* in your blood, 'Live!'**

**7 "I made you numerous like plants of the field. Then you grew up, became tall and reached the age for fine ornaments; *your* breasts were formed and your hair had grown. Yet you were naked and bare.**

**8 "Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine," declares the Lord God.**

**9 "Then I bathed you with water, washed off your blood from you and anointed you with oil.**

**10 "I also clothed you with embroidered cloth and put sandals of porpoise skin on your feet; and I wrapped you with fine linen and covered you with silk.**

**11 "I adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your hands and a necklace around your neck.**

**12 "I also put a ring in your nostril, earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head.**

**13 "Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your dress was of fine linen, silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour, honey and oil; so you were exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty.**

**14 "Then your fame went forth among the nations on account of your beauty, for it was perfect because of My splendor which I bestowed on you," declares the Lord God.**

Now this is a picture of God's utterly free and undeserved Mercy and Grace. And not only is it a picture of how Israel was chosen- it also shows *how* every single one of us were brought from spiritual death to everlasting Life, and from darkness to light, and from unbelief to faith. God said to us- when we were polluted in our own sinfulness- "Live!" and He made you flourish and He "married" you because He "set His Love upon you" so that you would become His.

And that's how Israel began, but it is also how the Christian life begins. The Mighty Mercy of God. Then the Prophet goes on with the imagery- and it is almost exclusively sexual in nature. Look at **Ezekiel 16:15-34:**

**15 "But you trusted in your beauty and played the harlot because of your fame, and you poured out your harlotries on every passer-by who might be *willing*.**

**16 "You took some of your clothes, made for yourself high places of various colors and played the harlot on them, which should never come about nor happen.**

**17 "You also took your beautiful jewels *made* of My gold and of My silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself male images that you might play the harlot with them.**

**18 "Then you took your embroidered cloth and covered them, and offered My oil and My incense before them.**

**19 "Also My bread which I gave you, fine flour, oil and honey with which I fed you, you would offer before them for a soothing aroma; so it happened," declares the Lord God.**

**20 "Moreover, you took your sons and daughters whom you had borne to Me and sacrificed them to idols to be devoured. Were your harlotries so small a matter?**

**21 "You slaughtered My children and offered them up to idols by causing them to pass through *the fire*.**

**22 "Besides all your abominations and harlotries you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare and squirming in your blood.**

**23 "Then it came about after all your wickedness ('Woe, woe to you!' declares the Lord God),**  
**24 that you built yourself a shrine and made yourself a high place in every square.**  
**25 "You built yourself a high place at the top of every street and made your beauty abominable, and you spread your legs to every passer-by to multiply your harlotry.**  
**26 "You also played the harlot with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbors, and multiplied your harlotry to make Me angry.**  
**27 "Behold now, I have stretched out My hand against you and diminished your rations. And I delivered you up to the desire of those who hate you, the daughters of the Philistines, who are ashamed of your lewd conduct.**  
**28 "Moreover, you played the harlot with the Assyrians because you were not satisfied; you played the harlot with them and still were not satisfied.**  
**29 "You also multiplied your harlotry with the land of merchants, Chaldea, yet even with this you were not satisfied.""**  
**30 "How languishing is your heart," declares the Lord God, "while you do all these things, the actions of a bold-faced harlot.**  
**31 "When you built your shrine at the beginning of every street and made your high place in every square, in disdaining money, you were not like a harlot.**  
**32 "You adulteress wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband!**  
**33 "Men give gifts to all harlots, but you give your gifts to all your lovers to bribe them to come to you from every direction for your harlotries.**  
**34 "Thus you are different from those women in your harlotries, in that no one plays the harlot as you do, because you give money and no money is given you; thus you are different."**

So here is the picture of faithless Israel- committing "spiritual adultery" in turning *away* from the one, true, living God toward the gods of the pagans, and is pictured here as her acting- not as merely sinful- but as a "harlot". Now why did God describe the sin of faithlessness in sexual terms? Because God created us with sexual passion so that there would be language to describe what it means to cleave to Him in love and what it means to turn *away* from Him to others. And now comes the Word of Judgment. Look at **Ezekiel 16:35-40:**

**35** Therefore, O harlot, hear the word of the Lord.

**36** Thus says the Lord God, "Because your lewdness was poured out and your nakedness uncovered through your harlotries with your lovers and with all your detestable idols, and because of the blood of your sons which you gave to idols,

**37** therefore, behold, I will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, even all those whom you loved *and* all those whom you hated. So I will gather them against you from every direction and expose your nakedness to them that they may see all your nakedness.

**38** "Thus I will judge you like women who commit adultery or shed blood are judged; and I will bring on you the blood of wrath and jealousy.

**39** "I will also give you into the hands of your lovers, and they will tear down your shrines, demolish your high places, strip you of your clothing, take away your jewels, and will leave you naked and bare.

**40** "They will incite a crowd against you and they will stone you and cut you to pieces with their swords.

Now at this point- it sure looks like God was finished with Israel. Judgment has fallen. The wife was "put away". But this Judgment is *not* the last word because God hates divorce. Therefore, though He judges and separates- He will not utterly forsake His Covenant people- His wife. And so God will make with her a *new* Covenant and bring her back to Himself at the Cost of His Son and by the unquenchable Power of His Spirit. Now look down at **Ezekiel 16:59-63**:

**59** For thus says the Lord God, "I will also do with you as you have done, you who have despised the oath by breaking the covenant.

**60** "Nevertheless, I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you.

**61** "Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you receive your sisters, *both* your older and your younger; and I will give them to you as daughters, but not because of your covenant.

**62** "Thus I will establish My covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the Lord,

**63** so that you may remember and be ashamed and never open your mouth anymore because of your humiliation, when I have forgiven you for all that you have done," the Lord God declares.

So the end of the story is that God, after giving up His faithless wife into the hands of her brutal lovers, will not only take her back, and not only make with her a New and Everlasting Covenant- but He will also pay for all her sins- *Himself*! Are there debts that this "harlot" owes? If so- her Husband will pay them. The last part of verse 63 says:

**... when I have forgiven you for all that you have done," the Lord God declares.**

... and so God will forgive unfaithful people at great cost to Himself- the death of His Own Son.

And so in the New Testament, after Jesus Christ has died and risen and is gathering a people for Himself and His heavenly Father- the Apostle Paul calls *all* husbands to live with their wives like he writes in **Ephesians 5:25**:

**25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,**

**26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,**

**27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.**

**28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;**

**29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church,**

**30 because we are members of His body.**

**31 *FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.***

And just in case- anyone would get the idea from this that Paul was speaking only about an earthly Marriage and the human intimacy in Marriage- he wrote this in verse 32:

**This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.**

So this is the fulfillment of Ezekiel's Prophecy:

**“ ... I will remember My covenant with you... and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you... and you shall know that I am the Lord... when I have forgiven you for all that you have done,” the Lord God declares**

So Jesus Christ creates and confirms and purchases with His Own Blood- the New Covenant and the everlasting Joy of our relationship with God. And God *could* have called that special eternal Relationship *anything* He wanted to. But what He *did* call it was “A Marriage”. And God pictures the great day of our final union as:

**The Revelation 19:9b  
... the marriage supper of the Lamb.**

Therefore, I conclude that God *could* have established His Divine Relationship with His people anyway He wanted to. Yet we see that He only set it up in *one* way. And the one way that God *did* explain the Relationship with His people in Scripture was by creating us in His Image- uniquely Male and Female on *purpose*- with both Personhood and Sexual Passions- so that when He comes to us in this world- there would be these powerful words and images to describe the Promises and the Pleasures of our Covenant Relationship with Him through Christ.

God made us powerfully *sexual*- *not as an end to itself*- but so that by doing it that way- He would be more deeply *knowable*. In other words- we were given the power to know each other *sexually*- so that we might have some hint of what it will be like to know Christ *supremely*. And I said all of that to say this- because that is true- *therefore*- all *misuses* of our sexuality- all manifestations of human sexuality that divert *away from* the one single Divine Standard of one naturally born man united with one naturally born female inside the Covenant of Marriage (such as adultery, fornication, illicit fantasies, masturbation, pornography, homosexual behavior, rape, sexual child abuse, bestiality, exhibitionism, incest, and so on) *distorts* the true Knowledge of God, and thus robs God of the Glory that He is entitled to, and, also, robs us of any true and lasting hint as to the true Knowledge of God- which is *why* God says so much in His Word about how evil sexual sins are and *why* Jesus said that it would be “better” to lose an eye or a hand than

to commit sexual sins. For example- listen to what the Apostle Paul says in **1 Corinthians 6:18**:

**Flee immorality. Every *other* sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.**

Paul taught that sexual immorality is *different* from every other kind of sin. And so I will tell you that there is a huge connection between *why* the true Knowledge of God is so hidden and obscure to the people of the modern Church and the literal explosion of sexual sins being rampant among God's people. The two things are connected. Because God means for human sexuality to be a natural example of a spiritual Truth concerning our eternal Relationship with Him, and that is the only reason why God created human sexuality in the first place.

## **2. Knowing God Is Designed by God as a Way of Guarding and Guiding Our Sexuality**

Now that's the first of my two points. And the second is this: Not only do all the *misuses* of our sexuality serve to *dishonor* God and thus conceal or distort the true Knowledge of God in Christ, but it also works powerfully the other way around: the true Knowledge of God in Christ- found only in sacred Scripture- serves to actually *prevent* the *misuses* of our sexuality.

So, on the one hand, sexuality is designed by God as a way to know Christ more fully. And, on the other hand, knowing Christ more fully is designed as a way of *guarding* and *guiding* our sexuality.

Now on the surface- this may seem to some as patently false- that knowing Christ rightly will *guard* and *guide* our sexuality. Because many will begin to list off all the Pastors and Elders and Theologians who have committed adultery or who have been found addicted to pornography or who have sexually used little boys or girls and had to resign in shame. It is breathtaking to see how many men in Ministry have had to resign in just this past year due to sexual sins. I have read where up to 60% of all men in the modern Church view pornography on a regular basis.

The truth is that the modern Church is doing a lousy job today of preparing boys to be fathers and husbands, and preparing girls to be

mothers and wives. And the result is that Marriage is under assault. There are far too many divorces today among people where both lay claim to being saved. How could that be? We can forgive our enemies but we can't forgive our spouses? So we can rightly call sexual sins an epidemic. And so the latest manifestation of sexual perversion being normalized is merely an extension of a century and a half of bad and wrong teaching concerning knowing God and sexual purity.

And we need to ask why this is. Why is it that sexual immorality is rampant in our day? Sexual temptation has been around since the very beginning and yet the overwhelming majority of both believers on the pew and Ministers in the pulpit- up until recently- did *not* succumb to sexual sins. Why is that? I will say again. There is a *connection* between people *not* beholding the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ and sexual sins. One gives way to the other. And that is because they are connected. And the modern Church is doing an even more lousy job of revealing God in His Glory through Scripture.

The glorious new birth whereby God sovereignly re-creates us with a new divine nature has been devalued by the modern Church into being nothing more than raising your hand or walking an aisle or praying prayer or making a decision. The mindless, shallow songs with endless repetition, and the silly, shallow sermons simply do not have the ability to produce any sin hating conviction, and they do not have the ability to magnify the brilliant Majesty of God, and so far too many in the modern Church do not see and they do not know and they have never had an powerful, life changing intimate contact with the indescribable Glory of the Almighty that forced Isaiah to cry out,

### **Isaiah 6:5**

**"Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."**

But I think this issue should be answered from Scripture and *not* from personal experience- because if the Scripture teaches that truly knowing God guards and guides and governs our sexuality in purity and love- then we may be sure that a Pastor, Elder or Deacon or Theologian, or anyone else, whose sexuality is *not* governed and guarded and guided

in Christ-exalting purity and love- does *not* know God- at least *not* as he ought.

So what does the Bible teach concerning the connection between the Knowledge of God and the guarding of our sexuality? And in answering this question let's remember that "knowing" someone in the fullest Biblical sense is defined by sexual imagery. **Genesis 4:1,**

**Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain...**

Now both the King James Version and the English Standard Version say:

**And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain...**

So "knowing" here refers to sexual intimacy- which is described as a "relationship". Or again in **Matthew 1:24&25** we read,

**24 And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took *Mary* as his wife,  
25 but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.**

... again the KJV and the ESV say that Joseph,

**... knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son:**

... and the phrase, "**knew her not**" means: he did not have sexual relations with her.

Now it isn't true that every time the word "know" is used in the Bible that there are sexual connotations. That's just not true. But what *is* true is that sexual language in the Bible for our Covenant Relationship to God *does* lead us to think of "knowing" God on the analogy of sexual intimacy and ecstasy. Now, of course, that doesn't mean that we somehow have sexual relations with God or He with us. That is a *pagan* concept- not a Christian or Biblical concept. But I do mean that the *intimacy* and *ecstasy* of sexual relations points to what "knowing" God is meant to be.

And one of the Books of the Bible that makes this clear is the Book of **Hosea**. Turn there with me and read the way God speaks through Hosea to describe the restoration of his marriage with faithless Israel in **Hosea 2:14-20**:

**14 "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, Bring her into the wilderness And speak kindly to her.**

**15 "Then I will give her her vineyards from there, And the valley of Achor as a door of hope. And she will sing there as in the days of her youth, As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.**

**16 "It will come about in that day," declares the Lord, "That you will call Me Ishi And will no longer call Me Baali.**

**17 "For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, So that they will be mentioned by their names no more.**

**18 "In that day I will also make a covenant for them With the beasts of the field, The birds of the sky And the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword and war from the land, And will make them lie down in safety.**

**19 "I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice, In lovingkindness and in compassion,**

**20 And I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness. Then you will know the Lord.**

Listen to that last line again that illustrates faithfulness to knowing God:

**... I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness. Then you will know the Lord**

So, faithfulness in Marriage is connected to knowing the Lord. And so I think it is *impossible* to read this and then honestly say that *knowing God*, as God intends to be known by His people in the New Covenant, simply means a "mental awareness" or a casual, distant "acquaintance" with God. Not in a million years is that what "knowing God" means here. This is the "knowing" of a lover- not merely a scholar. Now a scholar *can* be a lover- but a scholar—or a Pastor—doesn't really know God until He is a lover. You can know *about* God by research, but until the researcher is ravished by what he sees- until his heart is smitten with intimate and lasting and faithful love for God- he doesn't know God for Who God really is. And his life will reflect that. And that

is one great reason why so many Church Leaders can become so immoral so fast. They simply do not know God- the true, massive, glorious, gracious, biblical God. The humble intimacy and brokenhearted ecstasy- which gives fire and passion to all the facts he has discovered- is simply not there.

So does the Bible teach this: that knowing God- knowing Christ- is the path to Purity? Is it true that the real, intimate, and lasting Knowledge of God promised in Hosea (and **Jeremiah 31:34**) brings the powerful passions of the body under the sway of Divine Truth and Divine Purity and Divine Love?

I think this entire sermon series will be an answer to that question. But let me end today by pointing you to some of the verses that provide the answer and that prove my point.<sup>3</sup> Every single one of these verses teach that "knowing" God- as He is most fully revealed in Jesus Christ- guards our sexuality from misuse, and each of these verses also proves that *not* "knowing" God fully- makes us a prey to our passions.

#### **Romans 1:24&25**

**24** Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.

**25** For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

So the Bible teaches that purposefully *suppressing* the Knowledge of God- the Truth of God- will make you a casualty to sexual corruption. And that is true because knowing God rightly and the ordering of our own sexuality are connected. It is a part of God's Judgment. If you willingly and continually trade the Treasure of God's Glory for anything else- you will pay the price for that idolatry in the disordering of your own sexual life. That is *exactly* what **Romans 1:23&24** teaches:

**23** and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

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<sup>3</sup> See also: 2Timothy 2:24-26; Romans 12:2; Philippians 1:9; Romans 10:3; Hosea 4:1, 6; 5:4; & 6:3.

**24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.**

But this is *supposed* to be describing the old, unsaved man. And so when we come to Christ in broken repentance- that old man dies and we treasure Jesus Christ and so we no longer make that sinful exchange! Being saved means by definition that God has sovereignly *removed* the barrier that made us not love and enjoy God and His Truth. Therefore- ignorance of either God's Wrath or His Glory does not fit in with truly born again people. The *new man* is created in Righteousness and true Holiness- which is *always* manifested in sexual purity. And so where there is no sexual purity- the Apostle Paul contrasts that with not knowing God. Look at **1Thessalonians 4:3-5**:

**3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; *that is*, that you abstain from sexual immorality;**

**4 that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,**

**5 not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God;**

This Passage says that the Will of God in our Sanctification is that we *abstain* from sexual immorality. And that every single person who is saved and is being sanctified will know *how* to possess his own fleshly body in sexual purity and *not* in passions brought about through carnal lusts- which manifests that he doesn't know God any more than a Gentile. So *not* knowing God puts you at the mercy of your carnal, sinful passions. Here's the way that the Apostle Peter says it in **1Peter 1:14&15**:

**14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance,**

**15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior;**

Peter says here that the desires that governed you in those days got their power from your *ignorance* about God- *not* your knowledge. Now look at **Ephesians 4:22**:

**that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,**

So the desires of the body lie to us. They make *deceitful* promises- promises which are only half-true at best- as in the Garden of Eden. And we are powerless to expose and overcome those deceitful promises unless we know God- *really* know God, and unless we embrace His Ways and Works with growing intimacy and joy.

When Paul describes the new person in Christ, who is putting off the old practices and the old slaveries, he says in **Colossians 3:10** that "the new self . . . is being *renewed in knowledge* after the image of its creator." Or in the words of Ezekiel, "**I will betroth you to me forever, and you will know me.**" And in that knowledge- you will be renewed— *including* your sexuality.

Peter's second letter has one of the clearest passages in the Bible on the relationship between knowing God and being liberated from sexual corruption. In **2 Peter 1:3&4** he says:

**3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.**

**4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.**

Notice that Peter says that the Divine Power that leads to godliness comes to us "**through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence.**" And we become partakers of His Divine Nature- which means that we share in God's Righteous Character- how? By or through His precious and magnificent Promises. In other words, knowing the glorious Treasure that God promises to be for us in Jesus Christ- *frees us* from the corruption of lust and shapes us after the Image of God. Or as Jesus said, most simply in **John 8:31&32:**

**31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine;**

**32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."**

Not *any* truth- but the Divine Truth that you find in God's Word. The Truth that you find in intimate relationship to Jesus as His disciple. And what is that Truth?

**John 14:6**

**“I am the way, and *the truth*, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”**

The Son knows the Father with *infinite* Truth and Intimacy and Ecstasy. And the eternal Joy that the Son has in the Father is unparalleled. His Gladness in God the Father exceeds all gladness (**Hebrews 1:9**). And God shares this Joy and Intimacy with every single soul who trusts Him as Savior and Lord and the Treasure of their lives.

Therefore, I repeat the two points that fly as a double banner over this sermon series:

1. Human Sexuality is designed by Christ as a way to know God more fully.
2. Knowing Christ more fully in all His infinite Supremacy is designed as a way of guarding and guiding our sexuality

Therefore- *all* sexual corruption dishonors God and is sin because it serves to conceal the true Knowledge of Jesus Christ, while the true Knowledge of God in Christ serves to *prevent* our sexual corruption.

Amen. Let's pray

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.