***The Bible Doctrine of Sex

M-1B***

Our subject for this session is the Bible doctrine of sex. The society in which we live, the ways of a society with which we are surrounded, are the products of Satan's leadership as the god of this age. So, society has a twofold standard toward the matter of sex. It has, on the one hand, a moral front that it subscribes to, but it has a second front on which it condones the immoral practices. Efforts have been made to liberate society from this deceit of condoning what is wrong, on the one hand, while purporting to stand for what is right on the other hand. These efforts to liberate society from this deceit have spawned the philosophy such as is represented by Playboy magazine, the Hugh Hefner empire, and the Joseph Fletcher (the seminary professor's) new morality philosophy. So, today it's considered sophisticated and advanced to condone violations of the Word of God and of biblical sexual standards. Instead, it's considered that only certain personal codes are binding upon us, and only those are relevant to our consideration.

The biblical view of sex is usually grossly distorted. The public mind has a weird caricature of what the Bible has to say on this subject. One of the weirdest ideas is that the Bible equates sex with sin. Nothing could be farther from the truth. A lot of the arguments and the attacks upon Christianity are based upon this false premise. So, the arguments aren't meaningful at all, because our answer is that we don't stand for those things. We don't view those things and hold them to be the biblical view of these matters. Christian leaders themselves, of course, are to blame for this condition. There is a lot of misconception among Christians because preachers don't like to talk about this subject. They don't like to lay it out on the line even though the bible deals with this as a pertinent issue. Instead, people run around trying to be sure that their kids are going to be morally straight, so they give him a lot of advice and they give them a lot of recommendations and a lot of pep talks, all of which bears little fruit. If you want your kids to be morally straight, it requires right information. The rightest information on this subject comes directly from the Bible itself.

So, as a result of our churches' lack of teaching and of the religious leadership of our society, we have the impression given that sex is a regrettable necessity and that it's the worst of all sins. So let's take a look at the Christian view of sex.

**What is the Purpose of Sex?**

First of all, what's the purpose of sex? The purpose of sex is threefold:

**Recreation**

Number one: the basic Biblical reason for sex is companionship or recreation. Eve was formed, the Bible tells us, because it was not good for man to be alone. It was a lonely life and it was an unfulfilled life. Eve's first role was to be a help to her husband. That included his physical well-being and happiness. The one flesh concept of which the Bible speaks is in contrast to dependence upon parents. So, it includes the total dependence upon each other which is supremely expressed in sex. Sex makes possible the greatest of all kinds of human companionship and interdependence. It is this quality of human sexuality that makes possible a variety of relationships short of marriage. It doesn't only apply in marriage. When we say that its basic relationship is companionship, this is not only true of marriage. This is the relationship that makes life a variety and a colorful experience between people who are not married. It enriches our lives.

**Procreation**

The second biblical reason for sex is the bearing of children. This came number two in the biblical order. It's a divine drive which God places within human beings to create family life. This is what cements a man and woman together. This desire for children is deeply ingrained in the psychology of both men and women. When children are born, Psalm 127:3 tells us, they are a heritage of the Lord. It is the quality of sex binding the parents together to provide a stable home for the children.

Now these two basic purposes can only be realized within marriage. The full companionship and the providing and rearing of children can only be realized within marriage. This demands, therefore, the total commitment of life in love to care for one another. Situation ethics destroys all of this. The Playboy philosophy says that the only purpose of sex is number one, and therefore there are no basic deep ties between one person and another.

**Control**

Since the fall in Eden, a third quality was necessary. This third quality that came into being was because sin had entered the realm of human experience. So, in order to control this force in a sinful world, marriage was provided. The purpose of sex in marriage is for its control. The Bible views sex as a good thing. It's part of God's creation which he declared to be very good. It's not sinful in itself. In fact it fits what 1 Timothy 4:4 says that we are to view everything that God provides as being good and desirable and received with thanksgiving as a wondrous gift from His hand. It's not unspiritual to find someone of the opposite sex attractive. This has bothered Christians because they find men and women attractive. This is not unspiritual. As a matter of fact, you can see it's essential to marriage. However, the problem is that this gift has been spoiled by the old sin nature. This is what makes sex an instrument of selfishness and depravity--not the thing in itself.

One mistake that is represented in the Playboy philosophy is that sex and love are equated. This is not true because sex without love is sensuality--it's a goal to itself. As a matter of fact, because sex can hurt the genuine love between a right man and the right woman, God has seen to it that he protects it by requiring that it be practiced only within marriage.

The popular ideas about this subject are disoriented human viewpoint. The Christian holds a very high view of sex. So, we don't accept the world's point of view, that it's a mere physiological or psychological drive for pleasure. The world says, "We have to be more natural about this. We want to remove all of the distortions and all of the hypocrisy. When they say they want to be natural, what it is converted into are the worst kind of depravities. The new morality is a justification for those depravities. If you'll read some of the current writers on this subject of human sexuality, you will notice that they don't like to use the word "depravity." They substitute the word "deviations," so all of the things that the Bible condemns on this subject are simply presented as different ways of doing the same thing. You do not demonstrate your manhood, you do not demonstrate your womanhood by illicit unbiblical use of sex. You demonstrate it rather by control.

So, in marriage this becomes just one small feature. As my pastor used to tell me when I was a teenager, one of the things you have to learn about marriage is that most of it has to be spent at arm's length. A lot of people enter marriage without realizing that that's how it is. Most of it is spent at arm's length. A Christian who is chaste in thoughts and in his deeds is not the person to be pitied. This is the one with latent physical powers unspoiled. When you talk about being natural, in this realm of sex, it is the Christian who is the one that is natural.

There is a word that the world likes to throw at us and that's the word "repression." They say, "We want to be natural about sex in order that we shall not have any repressions." Well, repression is a word that connotes something that a person does of which he is guilty, or it's a reality that he can't cope with. So, he drives it down to his subconscious in order to forget it. This is very bad. A lot of problems that people have on the surface are the results of things that they have repressed that they are not even aware of. It's down inside the subconscious, and it's eating away at them. What the Bible speaks of is not repression, relevant to sex, but it speaks of suppression. There is absolutely no bad psychological effect from suppression. This is a conscious discipline of a force that is being directed under your conscious control. It is not something you're trying to escape from. It is the recognition that you have an old sin nature and that it distorts your soul. So, you have to place upon this quality a form of discipline through which the soul is then wisely controlled.

If you're a young person who is single, you see therefore that there is a ground of good relationships with the opposite sex. These are things that you need to think a little about and get over some of the hangups that you have that will in time cause you to either violate or fall short of this gift that God has placed in you. For example, you ought to welcome opportunities of working together with the opposite sex, and learn to appreciate the good qualities in them. Some young people think they have to avoid the opposite sex in order to act in the right way. But what you need to do is to keep the value of physical attraction in its perspective and realize that there is something more than just a good looking gal that is the epitome of what you're looking for. Proverbs 31:30 says, "Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.

If you are a young person, one of the things that you ought to be aware of in dealing with the opposite sex is that you should avoid flirtations--flirtatious friendships. There is a teenage mentality that feels it must be constantly paired off with someone. You don't have to look at high school kids very far before you see this teenage mentality. They just feel terrible if they're not paired off with somebody, and they're not going steady. Sometimes this is carried on into the maturity of college where you ought to get over that kind of a teenage mentality. There you're on a scene where everybody's running around with a certain somebody, and you feel, so that you're not out of the swing of things, that you may have to pursue and be associated with a certain somebody. You never find yourself going wrong just because you don't constantly find yourself paired off with somebody of the opposite sex. Instead, you ought to be able to build some real friendships apart from superficial excitements, and certainly you should never deliberately arouse sexual feelings outside of marriage.

In dealing with the opposite sex as an unmarried person, you should seek the will of God in your marriage, quite obviously. His decisions are based on the future of your whole life. Very often college students have to postpone marriage for a few years. While you postpone it, you act in faith rest as you contact people of the opposite sex. You're not forever running around exploring to see if you found the person. It is very unwise to get married before your basic education is completed. If you're going to college, I doubt seriously that it is very often that you should be married while going to college. You've almost inevitably stepped out of the will of God, and this of course will be reflected in your spiritual life in any number of ways. It isn't too hard to look around and find people who are married and who are going to college, and you can just find all kinds of things in their lives that are spiritual defects and they're reflecting it. It hurts you to get married before that basic education is completed.

You should always treat sex with respect and with dignity. Jokes about this are out of line. They're not only in poor taste, but they're downright crude. Flippancy and foolishness about sex is even more dangerous when you're in mixed company. You may say, "Well I move with Christians, so I won't have any trouble with this." Don't kid yourself. I've had church members tell me stories that caused me to blush. And that's pretty hard to do at best. But I have. Furthermore, I've had them do it right in a group with other church members. I think, "You must be kidding. I can't be hearing this right." I've had men on the staff here who say that we'd like to have so-and-so to do something in a public group. And I've had them say to me, "And I'll ask him to tell me all of his jokes ahead of time," because sometimes we have people we really can't trust on what they may be flippant about relevant to this matter. You should treat sex and the opposite sex with honor, with respect, and with restraint for the happiest experience in marriage. Never be ashamed of it. Just use it in a godly way and appreciate it as a great gift of God. That's all.

OK, so you violate it. Do you abandon your Christian walk? Do you give it all up? No, you recover by confession to God who forgives and forgets and who expects you to do the same. But when it is violated, you press right on because you have to remember that when it comes to violations of sex in acts and in thoughts and in deeds, there is nobody who is blameless. So, you pick up by the confession that is necessary. Someplace along the line, everybody has been guilty, and you go on. The failures will humble us, but they should never be permitted to crush us. For this reason, it's necessary to control your thoughts. This is where the problems begin. James 1 tells us that sin all begins in a matter of our thinking. "But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death." So your thinking is going to affect your attitude in these matters. The mind should be directed by positive volition toward the Word of God and toward the right use of this quality. Marriage is an honorable relationship between Christian partners, so approach it as such.

**Maintaining Chastity**

This does raise the question of how do I maintain chastity. Chastity means freedom from unlawful sexual relations.

**Genesis 39:6-23**

One of the splendid examples that we have that gives us a lot of lessons is this fellow named Joseph in Genesis 39. You remember the story of Joseph who, having been sold into slavery by his brothers, found himself placed in the position of a captain of the Pharaoh's guard, a man named Potiphar. Joseph was about 17 years of age when he was sold into slavery. This incident in Potiphar's home took place about 10 years later. By now, the Scriptures tell us, that Joseph had grown up to be quite a handsome young man. Genesis 39:6: "And he left all that he had (that is Potiphar) in Joseph's hands, and he knew not anything he had, save the food which he did eat, and Joseph was a handsome person and well-favored." Potiphar completely trusted Joseph, and into the hands of this young bachelor, he entrusted his total material possessions. Potiphar couldn't even know what he owned and what he didn't own; what he had and what he didn't have; or, what his bank account was unless he went to Joseph and said, "What's our balance?" He made no checks on what Joseph did.

Suddenly temptation hits this 27-year-old young man. Verse 7: "And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph and she said, 'Lie with me.'" If it had been the habit of impure daydreaming on Joseph's part, if this had been his practice, he would have easily been susceptible to this opportunity. He would have subconsciously programmed himself. This is what James means when it tells us to be very careful about our patterns of thinking. Your subconscious is programmed to thinking. However, your subconscious doesn't know whether you are actually doing this thing or whether you are just thinking through. In either case, you are programmed. So, when you find yourself in a situation and in an opportunity to perform a certain sin, your subconscious rises up and, unless the Spirit of God has control of your life, and unless you're so oriented and responding to the Word of God, you just automatically move in the way that you have programmed yourself.

A baby grows up in this way. A baby can't take his fingers in his hands and grasp, or can't reach out and hit a thing that he wants to point to. He has to develop a certain programming of his whole muscular system, and this is exactly what he goes through. Gradually he can reach out and he can reach the things that he aims at. The same thing happens to us internally. What you think will set you up for your actions. So, the Word of God says, "As a man thinks, so is he." And this is very important. So if you fly around and daydream yourself into all kinds of exotic situations, you may feel that you're a very strong Christian who can defend yourself and who has a very moral quality. But, the test of the pudding is when you have an opportunity to do what is wrong. Anybody can be nice and moral and good when they don't have an opportunity to do anything else. But when an opportunity presents itself to respond with sin, that's when your programming begins to take its effect.

Now Joseph had a subtle temptation here to please the boss's wife as an expedient to protect himself in his influential position. This temptation did not cease. It not only came upon him suddenly, but it persisted day after day after day. There are some Christians who, while they have that initial resistance, persistently expose themselves to a sin that begins to erode their resistance until they have placed themselves where they can no longer say no. In a moment the last wall of resistance is gone. So this is the approach that Potter's wife used against Joseph.

Verse 10 tells how this continued, "And he hearkened not to her." Now the opportunity presented itself suddenly one particular day all alone in the house with nobody else around. There was the climactic test of what Joseph had really prepared himself internally and spiritually to meet. The result of the temptation was that Joseph did not say well it would be unhealthy for me to repress this (the theory of the old sin nature). He knew that his resistance was merely a suppression. He knew that people have to knowingly yield to sin, and if they do, they have to resort to repressing their guilt. They have to repress the presence of God. Joseph knew that if he said yes, he had to do two things: he had to repress his sense of guilt; and, he had to repress his sense of the presence of God. Both of these factors, unless dealt with through confession, or removed, would create a permanent debilitating effect upon his spiritual life.

So, the will can only be strengthened by a right attitude ahead of time. Notice what Joseph called this. When Joseph was confronted with this illicit sex, he called it "this great sin against God." Verse 9 says, "There is none greater in this house than I, neither has he kept back anything from me, but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? Joseph didn't call this playing a little fast. He didn't call it having a good time. He didn't call it sowing a little wild oats. He called it "this wickedness." He called this "the sin against God" because that's who sin is always against. It's against God. It is not a lesser sin just because it is so common among people. A lot of the defense of the philosophies of our day is because it is so common among people, it's justified. Instead, Joseph judged the invitation in the light of God's presence, and the issue was not the absence of Potiphar. The issue was the presence of God. So, the place to win this battle for chastity is in the earliest stages. Joseph avoided listening to this woman. He avoided being with her.

This is what 2 Timothy 2:22 says, "Flee youthful lusts." Practice that which we must practice, and that is to avoid the things, the places, the people, and the activities that are going to excite impure thoughts. One of the best ways to excite impure thoughts, if you want to get yourself programmed for some real trouble, then start attending the movies regularly. You don't have to attend them to find out. All you've got to do is look at the movie pages. You'll see how little there is that could possibly be of value for you to attend. You can't even say, "I can go to a G-rated movie and it won't be too bad." Here's one of the greatest opportunities to program yourself for evil. Our books, our movies, the way people dress, magazines, ads, and entertainments, all of these add to impure thoughts. This mind that you have is your outer ring of defense. Once the mind is invaded, you're well on your way to going down. I would suggest that you evaluate your impure thoughts and you dismiss them in favor of wholesome ones.

Joseph was so spiritually disciplined in his life that it enabled him to flee this scene of great opportunity without a moment's hesitation. In fact, we know that he left so fast, verse 12 tells us, that he didn't even bother waiting to take his outer garment. He just left it as it was snatched off his shoulders as he went by. The result was that Joseph had to suffer for this act of righteousness, but eventually God brought it to his greater good. You will have to suffer for being what would be considered a square in the matter of sexuality. But God made Joseph number two in command of all of Egypt. Potiphar's house was no loss to Joseph, so an opportunity of impurity is no loss to you.

**The Doctrine of Sexual Morality**

The Bible has a doctrine concerning sexual morality. Let's summarize it very briefly:

1. **Adultery and Fornication**

Adultery and fornication are prohibited by the Word of God. Adultery is illicit sex usually between people who are not married to one another. Fornication is between people who are not married, although the word fornication sometimes is used in the sense of adultery. This is not always carried out exactly but it is prohibited by the Word of God (Exodus 20:14 and 1 Thessalonians 4:3).

1. **Mental Adultery**

Mental adultery is equally condemned by the Word of God (Matthew 5:27-28).

1. **Calluses on the Soul**

Adultery builds calluses on the soul to destroy its sensitivity to the will of God (Proverbs 6:32, Ephesians 4:19). When callouses are built upon the soul it hinders your recognition of your particular man or your particular woman.

1. **Frustration and Punishment**

Frustration and punishment follow sexual immorality. Ephesians 4:19 speaks about greediness, and Ephesians 5:3 speaks about covetousness. The Greek word used here connotes a frantic search for happiness in the details and in the things of life. 1 Corinthians 6:13-18 declare that illicit sex has a destructive effect upon the body of both men and women. Frustration and punishment follow sexual immorality. It affects you physically. There will be little signs, little indications, that will be noticed that the immorality is taking its effect. It will be a frantic search for a happiness that is never fulfilled. Persistent adultery is declared to be legitimate grounds for divorce (Matthew 5:32). The building up of the calluses destroys the compatibility of the souls and bodies of the married couple.

1. **Sexual Immorality**

Sexual immorality is used in the Bible to picture apostasy or the rejection of doctrine (Jeremiahs 3:8-10, Ezekiel 16:32-43, Ezekiel 23:24-28, Revelation 17:1-5).

1. **Illicit Sex**

Illicit sex is a substitution for the partner that God has in store for you. It's a substitution to gratify biological and emotional urges, so it rejects the faith rest technique.

1. **Marriage**

And number eight the framework for the expression of sexual love is marriage to the one that God has designed for you (Proverbs 5:18-19).

So, what we are saying is that in the Bible view of sex, sex without love is basically a distortion. Yet our society equates the two. Sex is but a small expression of this quality of mental attitude love which is the thing that binds a marriage together. Unless a woman can respond to a man in the broader aspects of this mental attitude love in her soul, she can't respond physically. When the wife can also respond to her husband's spirit, then the physical takes on a wider and deeper meaning. Sex Love can be a very ennobling experience, but it cannot be this unless it's submersed first in soul love. So, it's foolhardy to marry when you are on a wave of libido and you think that it's love. There are a lot of people that think they have fallen in love, and they have an emotional attachment at the moment, and they think that this is the thing to guide them. A wife's love comes from her mind as her will is stimulated by her husband's mental love. If a wife's mental attitude is bitter, she's antagonistic, competitive, apathetic, and resentful, and she can't respond in love. Most of marriage is what the partners are thinking. So, God's way is to marry for this mental attitude love and then the physical follows it. Don't marry so that you can get physical, but marry because you really like the person that you're with in respect to that person's soul. Then the rest follows in order.

**Song of Solomon 8:6-7**

The book of the Song of Solomon has a very beautiful illustration of the nature of genuine love between a man and woman. This thing that the Bible views as genuine true physical relations. Song of Solomon 8:6-7: "Set me as a seal upon your heart." Here is the relationship of a particular man with his right particular woman. The man is an aggressor toward the woman's soul. She, as a responder, is asked to respond with her positive volition. The words "seal" refers to ring, a signet ring, which was carried on a string around a chain or on a leather band around the woman's neck. This ring signified a particular man in her heart or in the conscience side of her mind. This is the part of the soul that responds to your right person, that conscience part of your thinking. So he asks her to set his ring upon her heart, or upon her soul. This man is to be in her soul before she surrenders her body. Once the right particular man is in the right particular woman's soul, I remind you again that she can never forget him. No matter how far astray she may go from him, she will never again forget him.

"Set me a seal upon your heart and a seal upon your arm." The arm connotes her strength and the physical claims of two right people upon one another. Her physical capacities and all of her capacities are developed with the right physical relationships. Then it goes on to say, "For love is strong as death." When it's between two right people, love has the overwhelming power that death has in our experience--strong here, in the sense of a fortification. "And jealousy is cruel as Sheol (the grave)." This mental attitude of jealousy is so cruel that it destroys good marital love. It makes people hard, and it makes people mean.

I don't know how many times I've had the suspicion that people who were complaining to me about their marriages had a good thing going and didn't realize it. They were dissatisfied with their situation but they simply did not realize that they had a good thing that didn't please them in certain aspects, so they were willing to pick it to pieces and kick it to death. And they succeeded in doing it. You can destroy marital love. One of the ways is with jealousy.

"Its coals are as the coals of fire." The intensity of fire. True marital love is like a burning intense desire. 1 Corinthians 7:9 speaks about if there is that burning, then you should marry. This is the burning of a desire for one particular person exclusively, not just the general desire of the waves of libido. It then says of this flame of consuming unique love, "Which has the most vehement flame." Then he goes on to say, "Many waters cannot quench such a love." This kind of a deep moving passionate experience. Water can put out fire, but nothing can extinguish the marital love of the right man and the right woman. These waters are like floods to drown it. They are the waters of pressure, of misunderstanding, of conflicts, of lies, of mental attitudes sins, of troubles, and of unfaithfulness. There is a permanency in your love with the right person. There are people today who are divorced who look back with regret upon the ones that they left behind, because they discover that the person they divorced was really God's right one for them. That is a really miserable condition. A lot of young people make this mistake. A lot of older people do too. They don't realize that once the impression of the right person is received, you simply cannot eradicate it. That's what he's saying here. It's a flame of such intensity that even water cannot quench it. So, you better learn the permanency of true love before you get hurt.

Jeremiah 2:25 speaks about how unfaithful Judah has been to God her husband. Yet, through it all, God remains faithful to her. The passage indicates how Judah would like to forget Him, but she still can't forget Him. There's no way to put out the flame. So, the last part of Song of Solomon 8:7 says, "If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, he would utterly be rejected." How can you get this kind of love? Well, you can bribe a woman. There are some young men that think they have to go around proving to girls how much superior they are to the competition. This is a disastrous notion. That's what he's talking about here. Here is this fella who doesn't have a wife, so he wants to buy one. He doesn't realize that he cannot buy what God intends to give you in grace. Remember we already learned that the right woman is given to you and the right man is given to you as an act of the grace of God, and you can't get it in any other way. So, if you think that you can go around and do a selling job on yourself, you are disoriented to grace. The Bible says that he would be utterly rejected.

If you do find the kind of a woman that you can sell yourself to; you can sell yourself to her because of your position, because of your money, or, because of what you offer her, then she's using you. Remember that a woman who can use a man will never love that man. A woman who cannot look at a man and say, "You're my lord," because she has calluses upon her soul, is a woman who will never respond in any way, deeply in love to that man. She will use him, but she will never love him.

So the Bible view of sex is not this distorted notion that we hear all around us today. There is nothing wrong. There is nothing illicit. There is nothing to be ashamed of. There is nothing to hold in contempt. But there is something to hold in a deep respect and a deep awe as a great gift of God. If you abuse it, it will hurt you. But if you will use it in the context of its biblical guidelines and restrictions that God places upon it, it will ennoble your life. If you follow the Playboy philosophy, it will cheapen your life. If you follow the ideals of the new morality, it will destroy your life. But if you follow the biblical principles, it will ennoble; it will develop; it will broaden; it will deepen; it will enrich; and, it will strengthen your being in every way. God's purposes are the purposes of reality.

So learn the realities of this subject, and reject the misguided notions of all the kids and of all the young people and of all the influential leaders of our society. God knows how He made us, and when we work his way, that works right.

We thank our Father for the guidance of His Word. We pray that that will help us to again think through how these factors fit into our experience. We pray that God will help us to respect the experience of Joseph, and that we should learn from the procedures that proved to be such a protection in his life. We pray that God will even now, for these who have not made this choice of a person in marriage, that they would be careful to pray for that person, realizing that someplace in the world right now that person exists and that God's hand is upon that one, guiding the destinies of both until God's good time when they are brought together in that climactic meeting, and each recognizes the other. When we realize that unless our young people are informed ahead of time by views in these matters, unless they are cautioned of the hazards that they run in a wrong mental outlook and mental practices, wrong ways of thinking, that they put themselves in a hazardous position once opportunity opens itself to them. So we pray that in every respect, this may be a part of their lives that they will always look back upon without any regret, and with the delight that they were informed enough ahead of time to know what was the right course to follow. We pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1970

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