

Sexuality

From the Christian worldview

Where does identity, value, and purpose come from?

- We (humanity) are made in the image of God. That is firstly where our identity and value come from. Genesis 1:26-27, 9:6
 - We are purchased at the cross of Christ. Because something tends to be worth what someone else will pay for it, this affirms our value. 1 Peter 1:18-19
- We were made by God and for God. Colossians 1:16 That is your purpose.

Your value, identity, and purpose have nothing to do with your desires or behaviors. God determines them all. Praise God, for we are too weak to hold such a weight. The Gospel is

The Fallen State of Humanity and the Gospel

- Sinful nature as a premise to all of Christianity
 - We are all sinners ... by nature... we're born that way Romans 1-3, Psalm 51:5
 - This is a result of the fall and not a faulty design by God. Romans 5:12-14
 - We don't all have the same broken desires, but we all are broken.
 - Just because the desire is intrinsic, does not mean it should be satiated. 1 Corinthians 6:12-13
 - Paul encourages us to think of ourselves as the chief of sinners. So we ought not to think of others' sin as worse than ours. 1 Timothy 1:15-17
- Jesus took our sins (past, present, and future) and credits us with His righteousness. This reconciles us to God the Father. Hebrew 10:12-14
 - This gift of grace is received through faith (putting the full weight of our soul in Christ) Romans 3:21-26, Galatians 2:16, Ephesians 2:8-9

Cost of Discipleship

- When we give the weight of our souls to Christ, we give all of ourselves to Him. We are not our own! 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
 - The cost of discipleship is everything. Our whole lives. God wants every bit of us. Luke 14:25-35, Romans 12:1-2, Deuteronomy 6:5, Matthew 22:34-38
 - This includes how we think, what we believe, our money, politics, families, sexuality, everything.
 - Although the cost of discipleship is the same for everyone and it is difficult for everyone, it is not difficult in the same way for everyone.
 - Saying "yes" to virtually anything is to say "no" to something else. The bigger the "yes" the bigger the "no". When we say "yes" to Jesus at the Gospel, we simultaneously say "no" to ourselves. Matthew 6:24, Luke 16:13
 - Obedience to Christ, although difficult, always leads to more life and joy in the long run. John 15:9-11, 16:16-24

The value of singleness and marriage

- The Bible does not teach that marriage is for everyone. You don't necessarily have a soul mate (other than Jesus). Matthew 19:10-12, 1 Corinthians 7:25-28, 32-35
 - Marriage is not the pinnacle of human experience. It is a gift.
 - Singleness (celibacy) is not the pinnacle of human experience. It is a gift. 1 Corinthians 7:6-7
 - Sex is not the pinnacle of human experience or necessary for fulfillment.

Talking about sin

- Sin is defined by God. It is falling short of God's glorious standard. Romans 3:23
- Biblical judging
 - We are not to judge (hold accountable) those outside the Church. 1 Corinthians 5
 - If we do end up talking to someone outside the Church about their sin, we should intentionally get to the cross. We are stewards of the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:16-21), therefore condemnation without grace is an evil-mishandling of our duty.
 - We bring our own sinful desires to the Lord. We judge ourselves first and strictly. Matthew 5:27-30, 7:1-5
 - We are to engage sin inside the Church. This should be done with great consideration and intentionality out of love for both the person and for God. Matthew 18:15-29, Galatians 6:1-3, 2 Timothy 2:24-26 & 3:16, Titus 3:10-11
 - Repentant sinners don't need to be confronted, they need to be shown grace, compassion, and help when needed.

Epistemology matters

1. God - His authoritative Word
2. The Church - Both past and present
3. Reason
4. Experience.

We do not determine reality. We don't get our own reality.

This idea, which is very common in our culture, comes from the premise that truth is subjective, which is a claim of postmodernism.

- Postmodernism states that there is not absolute truth or reality and that nobody therefore has the right to lay claim to a worldview that hoists itself up over all other worldviews.
 - If that sounds good; understand that postmodernism does not abide by its own premise. Postmodernism IS a worldview that hoists itself up over other worldviews.

This is actually really good news. Could you imagine if every genuine thought people had about themselves was true? How many people feel like they are worthless? How many people think

they would be better off dead? How many people feel like they are innocent of crimes they actually committed, whether big or small?

The need for civility in discourse

- Civilized society, as opposed to a totalitarian society, mandates the capacity for passionate disagreement with compassionate dispositions.
 - Two kinds of tolerance
 - Truly different people who are willing to peaceably live together. *Good*
 - Affirming someone's every desire, behavior, and belief. *Not good*
 - Christians should not expect our culture to lead with wisdom and clarity here. We must lead.
 - We must be able to disagree with people, while still genuinely wanting what is in their best interest.
 - Disagreeing and/or disapproving does not equal hatred (being a bigot) or fear (a phobia). Otherwise the cross would be a display of God's hatred or fear of us, in light of our sin. Romans 5:8.
- As Christians, we have a duty before God to love everyone, this does not mean that we have to agree with everyone.
 - Love does not equal affirmation. Hebrews 12:3-11

This is not about politics

We should not have to say this.

Love is not

- Affirmation. You can love someone and not affirm their behaviors.
- Agreement. You can love someone and not agree with them.
- Sex. Not having sexual relations with someone does not mean that you don't love them.

What does the Bible say about sex?

Marriage and sex

Our model of marriage comes from creation. Genesis 2:15-25 This is also the first time we see sex. Genesis 2:24 We know that this is the appropriate model for marriage, because it is the model Jesus gives us in Matthew 19:1-6. This means that the Biblical model of marriage is one man and one woman in a lifelong commitment to one another in which the two become one flesh (this is Biblical language for sex).

Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-6, 36-39. Notice how Paul interchanges sex and marriage. He is speaking about sexual desire and saying, if you are struggling to not have sex, get married. Also read one chapter back, 1 Corinthians 6:12-20, and notice how he speaks about sex outside of

marriage (to a prostitute) as still being the exact same thing as the very act that makes or consummates a marriage. In fact, it is the verse that Jesus quotes in the aforementioned text from Matthew about marriage. The conclusion is that sex and marriage, in scripture, are intricately connected.

There is a stated expectation of virginity on the wedding day of your first marriage.

Deuteronomy 22:13-21 The implication in the text is that any sex prior to or outside of marriage is sexual misconduct or sexual immorality. Matthew 1:18-19

Marriage is a picture of Christ and the Church. Ephesians 5:22-33, Matthew 9:15, Mark 2:19, Luke 5:34-35, John 3:25-29. There are roles associated with genders in marriage, as established by God in the first marriage. As such, we need to be careful not to change gender mix or roles and thereby change the implication in our relationship with Christ as His bride. Another way of saying this is, what is clearly true about the relationship of Church and Christ is therefore also true of the institution that it is analogously like; marriage.

The conclusion is that sex is a gift from God that is meant to accompany marriage. Marriage is the lifelong commitment between one man and one woman. Within the marriage relationship, in as much as you are able, you should have sex regularly. 1 Corinthians 7:5. Outside of marriage, sex is neither permitted nor moral.

Texts on sexual misconduct:

Exodus 20:14 → Matthew 5:27-30

*Leviticus 18:6-23 (more on periods Leviticus 15:24, Exodus 20:18)

Acts 15:19-20

*Romans 1:24-27, 13:11-14

*1 Corinthians 5:1-2, 9-12, 6:9-20

Galatians 5:16-21

Colossians 3:5-9

Ephesians 5:1-5

1 Thessalonians 4:1-5

*1 Timothy 1:8-11

Hebrews 13:1-5

1 Peter 2:11-12, 4:1-5

*Jude 1:3-7 (Genesis 19:5)

Revelation 2:13-14, 18-20, 21:3-8

As disciples of Christ, purchased at the cross, we are not our own. Therefore, we seek to live in full submission to God in every area of our lives. This includes our sexuality, if we choose to marry, and whom we may choose to marry. We are also convinced of the goodness of God and trust that His commands will ultimately lead to a full and fulfilling life of joy.