

Reconstruction: Good Sex
Genesis 2:18-25
Growth Group Discussion Guide

Begin with prayer. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you all through God's word, and to lead your discussion.

Opening Questions (try to get everyone involved in discussion):

- On a scale from 1 to 10, how comfortable are you talking about things dealing with sex? “10” means you are completely comfortable, just as if you were discussing a restaurant, and “1” means it makes you sick at your stomach to think that you might have to discuss this topic in public.
- In the environment where you grew up, was sexuality viewed as something dirty and taboo, or was it celebrated as something good? Or did you have a different experience altogether?
- We’re thinking about the concept of deconstruction during our current sermon series—that some people dismantle and even desert their Christian faith, for a number of reasons. Some people cite issues of sexuality as the catalyst for their deconstruction.
 - How would you say that Christians have historically been part of the problem in this area, rather than the solution?
 - In your own experience, has this issue posed any problems for your own faith? Why or why not?

Read Genesis 2:18-25, then discuss the questions below.

- Based on Gen. 2:24-25, Pastor Josh argued that sex is intricately connected to God’s creation of marriage, as it is the “covenant oath sign” for the covenant of marriage. Read the following sermon excerpt, as a review:
 - “A covenant is a relationship that you swear to stay in for life, for which God will hold you accountable. For you to get this, you need to understand something about covenants in the Bible. Whenever God made covenants with people, he gave them a covenant ‘sign’ as a way of sealing the covenant and symbolizing the nature of the agreement. This was common practice in the ancient world—covenants culminated in an ‘oath sign.’ And often, the covenant involved some kind of covenant renewal ceremony, which was to be practiced periodically as a reminder of the covenant.”
- Read the following excerpts from Scripture, and discuss the “covenant oath signs” that you see here. What is the sign? What is the covenant? What do they show us about the covenant being discussed in each passage? How do they enact the covenant? What do they show us about covenant oath signs in general? (Leaders, for the sake of time, you may want to break up into smaller groups, and have each group or individual report on one of these).
 - Genesis 9:11-17
 - Genesis 15:1-20
 - Genesis 17:1-14
 - Genesis 31:36-55
 - Exodus 24:1-8
 - Luke 22:7-23

- Because sex is the covenant oath sign in marriage, it is intended to be used exclusively in marriage, and it plays a crucial role in marriage relationships. Pastor Josh's main point was, **"God created the powerful gift of sex to symbolize and to seal our oneness in marriage, and show us a picture of his love."**
 - How does sex both symbolize God's intent for all of marriage, and seal the marriage between a man and a woman?
 - Which of these ideas struck you as fresh or especially relevant?
 - Did you feel resistance to any of these ideas? Why?
- Pastor Josh claimed that because sex is so powerful for good, it is also powerful for destruction when used in the wrong context. How did this section of the sermon strike you?
- Discuss this quote from Tim Keller's book, *The Meaning of Marriage*:
 - "One reason we can burn with seemingly uncontrollable sexual passion is because, at the moment, our hearts believe the lie that if we have a great, romantic, sexual experience, we will finally feel deeply fulfilled. To resist temptation, we have to speak the truth to our hearts. We must remind them that sex simply cannot fill the cosmic need for closure that our souls seek in romance" (227).
 - Do you agree that every sexual temptation is a form of this lie?
- Read Ephesians 5:31-33. If Paul's statement is true, that human marriage is a picture of the relationship between Christ and his bride, the church, then what does sex say about Jesus' relationship with us?
- The Bible often uses the metaphor of marriage to describe our relationship with Jesus. We are his bride, and our eternal future is depicted as a wedding feast. See Revelation 19:6-9 and 21:1-4. With that in mind, how do you feel about Keller's statement, when he says, "Sex is the most ecstatic, breathtaking, daring, scarcely-to-be-imagined look at the glory that is our future" (236)?

Share and Pray

- Spend some time sharing with one another about needs that you have. If you are comfortable sharing about where you need prayer related to today's topic, do so.
- Pray for one another and for our church, that we will live out a picture of Jesus' love for his people.