

I. Our State of Being

A. Introduction

1. Our culture is sexuality and sensuality saturated
2. Sexuality is a part of our lives but not the core of who we are.
3. God created us in His image as male and female
4. God's intent for our sexuality does not conform to our current societal norms.

B. Walking in Holiness

1. "You shall be holy to me; for I the Lord am holy, and I have separated you from the other peoples to be mine." Leviticus 20:26
2. Hebrew and Greek words for holy or holiness in the scriptures
3. 1 Peter 14-15, "Like obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires that you formerly had in ignorance. Instead, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct."
4. Holiness is more than living a sacred life, being worthy, honorable, pure, or free from defilement
5. Important questions
6. The Law proved our utter need of dependency upon God and the futility of our striving
7. Adam and Eve knew holiness because they knew no shame in their bodies
8. To embrace holiness, we must embrace the fullness of God

C. Purity of Heart

1. In the Garden, Adam and Eve experienced an original innocence
2. The definition of purity is freedom from immorality, especially of a sexual nature
3. Purity is not living with the absence of something but with the presence of Someone (REPEAT)
 - a. purity is not living with the absence of something but the presence of Someone
4. Purity is not exclusively exterior in nature
 - a. "Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." (2 Timothy 2:22)
5. "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." Psalm 51:10
6. Purity of heart impacts our thinking, relationships, attractions, desire, and behavioral choices

D. The State of Chastity & Celibacy

1. Chastity is an antiquated term in our culture and Church at large

2. Definition of chastity is: the quality or state of being chaste: abstention sexual intercourse
3. Chastity addresses a much larger concept
4. The state of celibacy is rarely understood in the Church, especially Protestant churches
5. Celibacy is the state whereby one dedicates their life to the Lord, choosing to never marry.
6. To live a holy, pure, and chaste life is not only through a set of rules and regulations

II. The Reality of the Flesh

A. Drawing a line in the sand

1. "May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23
2. The fall brought disorder and chaos to our divinely inspired sexuality and relationships
3. "But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people." Ephesians 5:3 (NIV); "let it not be named once among you" (KJV); "must not even be mentioned among you" (NRSV)
4. The word porneia in Ephesians 5:3 is the Greek word from which we get the word pornography
5. Any form of sexual behavior outside of heterosexual marriage is considered fornication and unacceptable in God's eyes
6. Our culture makes the experience of sexual intimacy into an idol and a necessity
7. The lies the world promotes about sex
 - a. sex is necessary in order to be happy or content
 - b. you have to be sexually active (animalistic drive is normal)
 - c. something is wrong if you are chaste or celibate
 - d. masturbation is a physical "need" which must met
 - e. all men think about is sex

B. Lust

1. After the Fall, agape and eros became split and lust was birthed.
2. World accepts lust as part human relationships.
 - a. "If God's love constitutes man's origin, vocation, and destiny, then lust constitutes the antithesis of man's very existence." (Christopher West, *Theology of the Body Explained*, p. 228)
3. Lust robs our relationships of authentic communion with one another
 - a. hinders our capacity to see each other as marvelous image bearers
 - b. whole becomes objectified pieces
 - c. brings moral disorder and the loss of human dignity
 - d. ultimate devaluing of the life
 - e. ushers in a spirit of death

C. Physical and emotional consequences of sex

1. "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body." 1 Cor 6:18
2. Repetitive behaviors create neural pathways in the brain
3. Sex lends itself to attachment to false intimacy found in the immediate
 - a. "The monstrosity of sexual intercourse outside of marriage is that those who indulge in it are trying to isolate one kind of union (the sexual) from all other kinds of union which were intended to go along with and make up the total union." C.S. Lewis
4. Our culture often substitutes the physical act of sex as being the totality of true intimacy without regard for the deeper aspects of knowing the other person

D. Spiritual consequences to sex and birth control

1. The only sexual union God can bless is that between a husband and wife
2. There are specific prayers for the breaking of one-flesh unions

E. Birth control

1. The advent of birth control ushered in much sexual brokenness
2. Why was birth control sought by humankind?
3. Birth control also diminished the value of marriage
4. World sees sex as a biological, almost animalistic drive diluted down to physical dimensions
5. When sex is only casual or recreational, it is like a cheap cubic zirconium

F. Sloppy Agape message about sex in the Church

1. Believing one can only be content or happy by experiencing sexual intimacy, shifts the focus from sex and marriage being a sacred gift, to being an absolute necessity
2. Marriage can become leveled with being equivalent with holiness itself
3. The most whole and complete person to walk this planet was Jesus, who was a virgin and single
 - a. Jesus found His intimacy needs met in the Father and in whole, healthy relationships
 - b. sexual intimacy is not the sole source for our deepest desire for true intimacy
 - c. God instructs us how to have our intimacy needs met without turning to false intimacy
 - d. through suffering Jesus learned to be obedient: we too learn a holy obedience
 - e. learn to trust God to meet our deepest needs for true intimacy.

G. The Greater Gift

1. Bill Watterson's Calvin and Hobbes
2. When sex is taken out of the setting for which it was intended, it loses something.
3. Premarital sex is routinely used as a measure of "compatibility" prior to marriage

4. Understanding of the sacredness of sex provides strength when sexual temptation arises
5. When we remove God's presence, sex loses its Divine connection and purpose
6. Scripture esteems the beauty of God-honoring sex
 - a. Song of Songs 6:3 says, "I am my lover's and my lover is mine"
 - b. 7:10 rejoices that "I belong to my lover and his desire is for me."
7. Jesus refers to the church as His bride many times in the New Testament
8. In Revelation chapter 21, the Church is defined as "the bride, the wife of the Lamb."
9. For those of us who walk in the state of singleness or the gift of a celibate life, our longing for intimacy can be met in God
10. Jesus, through His life, death, and resurrection, restores unto us the original purity of heart as was known in the Garden.