

“Good Sex?” - Men and Sex – by Tim Chester

- Sex is a wonderful and powerful act that binds couples together. But outside the covenant commitments of marriage, its power becomes the power to harm.
- The Bible portrays sex as a great gift from God.
- Its prohibition on sex outside of marriage is not to protect us from sex, but to protect sex from us.

Sex and self-giving

- Piper: “Sexuality is designed by God as a way to know God in Christ more fully” and “knowing God in Christ more fully is designed as a way of guarding and guiding our sexuality.”
- So good sex is sex within marriage that enables us to know God in Christ more fully, or sex within marriage that reflects the relationship of God in Christ to his people.
- Good sex is intimate, affectionate, gentle, sacrificial, personal and pleasurable.
- Sex teaches us the pleasure of self-giving: the pleasure of giving pleasure, the love of loving, the honor of honoring, the blessing of being a blessing.
- Sex is an act of union. It is becoming one flesh.

Sex and Idolatry: Consider how idolatrous desires can corrupt sex within marriage

When you don't get enough sex

- More often than not the real problem is that sex has become an idol.
- Our allegiance to sex is greater than our allegiance to God. We love sex more than we love our wives.
- Men typically see intimacy in physical terms, but often what matters more to wives is verbal communication.
- For men, this means that marriage calls us out of our self-focused concern for pleasure and towards the totality of the sex act within the marriage relationship.

Making love without making love

- Any sex in which we objectify our wife is bad sex.
- We objectify our partner when we consider them a means by which we can gain sexual pleasure rather than a person with whom we have a relationship.
- This can occur if we put our pleasure above theirs.
- It can occur if, through fantasy, we transpose ourselves into another situation or imagine having sex with another partner.

When they don't seem up for it

- Serving your partner may involve allowing them the pleasure of serving you even when they don't feel up for sex.
- But when this is not enough for you, you may have an obsession with “serving” or “pleasuring” your wife that is self-serving. You may want to be worshipped and if so, that is idolatry.
- One of the joys of a godly marriage is that we find pleasure in giving pleasure.
- This reciprocal giving of pleasure and accepting pleasure—of finding pleasure through accepting pleasure—reflects our relationship with God.
 - o In love the pleasure of God and our pleasure cohere.
 - o God delights in our delight in him.
 - o We delight in God's delight of us.

Good sex is good sex

- Good sex (God-honoring sex) should lead to good sex (pleasurable sex).
- Sex will always be best when both partners are self-giving, pursuing the pleasure of their partner above their own pleasure.
- The aim of good sex is that God is honored.

- There are two basic problems in every marriage: one is the husband and the other is the wife.
- We are all selfish, sinful human beings who want the world to revolve around us – and marriage throws us together in close proximity.
- Our idolatrous desires both clash and reinforce one another.
- Because sex-problems arise from the idolatrous desires of our hearts, their solution is faith and repentance.

Three areas/aspects of sex that are not God-honoring:

1. Masturbation

- a. First, it's a sin to have sex with someone other than your spouse, even if that sex takes place only in your mind.
- b. Second, masturbation is often justified as something that gives a physical "release" to men who are frustrated through lack of sex, and that it is harmless and "healthy."
 - i. Masturbation doesn't relieve sexual tension, except on the most short-term basis. Instead, it fuels it.
 - ii. Masturbation increases the hold of lust over your life.
- c. Thirdly, masturbation doesn't involve the self-giving, that is integral to sexual intercourse.
- d. Questions to consider:
 - i. Does my masturbation involve inappropriate sexual fantasies?
 - ii. Am I in control of my masturbation or am I being mastered by it?
 - iii. Is my masturbation beneficial? Does it strengthen my marriage? Does it enhance my relationship with God?
- e. Every act of resistance strengthens their resolve for next time. Holiness becomes reinforcing.

2. Pornography

- a. There are a number of things we can do to avoid temptation—like putting accountability software on our computers or not watching late-night television alone.
- b. There are four promises porn makes and fails to deliver:
 - i. Porn promises refuge.
 1. For many people porn is refuge when we feel overwhelmed or defeated.
 2. We counter this with faith in God's greatness.
 - ii. Porn promises respect.
 1. We counter this with faith in God's glory.
 - iii. Porn promises reward.
 1. Some people turn to porn simply because it's pleasurable.
 2. That's why porn is addictive: it leaves you wanting more. More Porn. More extremes.
 3. We counter this with faith in God's goodness.
 - iv. Porn promises revenge.
 1. Porn can be an expression of anger, resentment, ingratitude.
 2. We counter this with faith in God's grace.
- c. At the heart of porn is self-worship.
- d. Tell someone about your struggle. Find someone who will hold you accountable and speak the truth of the gospel to your heart.

3. Homosexuality

- a. We need to commit ourselves to recognizing sin as sin and turning from it with the help of God and each other.
- b. Honest, gracious, supportive friendship with a Christian brother can be an enormous help.