

ULC Sermon Study Resource

What's up with Christians and sex?

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Prayer: Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:1-16 (ESV)

Outline:

- I. Sex is not God (1 Cor 6:13).
 - a. Our culture and impulses don't determine how we use our body; rather, we use our body to honor God because it is bound to him.
 - b. There is something bigger to live for than sex, romance and even marriage: the Kingdom of God (Mat 19:10-12).
- II. Sex is not gross (v1-4).
 - a. Our culture views sex as an act of self expression and gratification, which creates consumer relationships that ask "What have you done for me lately?"
 - b. God invites us to experience and enjoy sex as an act of radical self-donation within the covenant of marriage which asks "What did I promise you previously?"
- III. Sex is a gift.
 - a. Jesus is our Ultimate Lover; scripture again and again describes his relationship with us using imagery of him as a husband and us as his bride.
 - b. Every one of us has tarnished God's gift of sexuality. But Christ loves each of us so dearly that he went to the cross and died to reconcile us (Eph 5:25-27).

Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) Have you seen sex and romance treated as gods in our culture? In your life? Where?
- 2) Author Ernest Becker says that when we treat sex and romance as ultimate, it is because we are looking for redemption, validation and transcendence. What are some practices in your life that could remind you to look to Jesus for these things?
- 3) What does it look like to "pursue the Kingdom of God" in the context of your life now, be it while having sex in marriage or without sex?
- 4) Do you find yourself with a mindset of self-gratification in your relationships (romantic or not) rather than self-donation? How might you cultivate a mindset of self-donation?
- 5) What feelings arise when you hear about the passionate, intimate, insurmountable love Jesus has for you? How do you take hold of that and allow it to shape you?

Suggestions for further reading:

- Isaiah 54:4-8
- Hosea 2:16-20
- Ephesians 5:22-33
- Revelation 21:1-8