

Theology Simply Explained — WSC71 “Regulating and Renovating Pleasure by Pleasure in God”

Pastor walks his children through Westminster Shorter Catechism question 71—especially explaining and applying how finding our ultimate pleasure in God must limit, shape, and drive all of our other pleasures, especially our pleasure in the person of our spouse.

WSC71: Which is the seventh commandment? *The seventh commandment is, Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

The. Catechism question this week. What is required in seventh? Commandment in? The answer is the seventh commandment required. The preservation of our own and our neighbors chastity. In heart speech. And behavior. And so, Our desires. Uh, must be chased that is.

They must be instructed corrected disciplined. To be according to god's design for them. Not just within the boundaries that god has set for them. But trained. To be in the direction and in the proportion and the place in the measure. Um, That God has given. It's giving us many good appetites, the greatest of which is the appetite of our soul for him.

And all of our other appetites must then be To enjoy the good things that he has designed. Because we want to enjoy him and his goodness. In each of those good things. And so he's designed food. And he is designed many different kinds of food and given us different kinds of taste buds.

Or taste buds that can do different kinds of things. Or we'll just say, many different capacities for enjoying each of the different kinds of food. And so there's a right and good way to enjoy good food. Because we are enjoying the goodness of him, who both created it and Created us for the enjoyment of it.

That even in the enjoyment of the material thing called food, We are knowing the generosity of our god. And his love for us. And his making us to be not like beasts. Who can know that food is tasty and belly. Full feel good. But who know him, who has created us.

And that knowledge and fellowship that we may have with him. And so, we want to have Chastity. We want to have. Pleasures that are controlled. With not just within the limits but trained up. To enjoy. Um, The right way, the right things. Onto the our enjoyment of god. And the place that this comes to a head is in marriage.

The enjoyment of. Uh, one's wife. With whom, Uh, god has created us to have fellowship. That great not goodness. When all other pleasures had been created, it was still not good for the man. To be alone. And there is in marriage. Um, not just the romance and the affection, which itself is something that needs to be enjoyed in a chaste way.

That this is, if A man, this is the wife that god has selected for me. And she is the best wife in the world for me. Uh, not that she is necessarily enough herself, the best wife in the world. Or even a good one. Hope she's a good one, if you've been wise and God has helped you.

It's very high. Um, Rate at which they would be good ones. But yes, she has been given to you by god. Which is the wife of your youth. She's your wife and nobody else's. And this comes in the sovereign providence, by the degree of the one who has Uh, to create all things is working, all things according to the council of his will.

For the purpose of giving you to inherit him. And so she is the best wife in the world, not just now, but from all time for you. And, Flavor, the nature, the character. Of the romantic affection as you consider her. In, in that light. Is far better than if you just become infatuated with how romance feels.

And become an emotionally controlled idiot. Because you're going to fall out of those emotions one day, And then your idiocy will have ruined. Your life, her life and your marriage. But there's also the physical component of marriage. And with the wife and the husband enjoy one another. And that too is to be enjoyed as a specific gift.

From god for you. And because of the intensity, Of how god has designed it to be enjoyable for us. There's a great temptation. To enjoy the idea of another woman. Or the image. Of another woman or if A girl or another of another man or to try to enjoy the physical pleasure.

Or give into enjoying the physical pleasure even just all by yourself. All of which are great, perversions great twistings. Of the enjoyment of god in enjoying your wife, even physically or enjoying your husband, even physically. And so chastity is important. That we might not have our pleasure in pleasure.

But that we might have our pleasure in god. That we might not have our pleasure in self. But that we might have our pleasure in god. That we might not have our pleasure in the object of the pleasure. That we might have. Our pleasure. In god. And especially in marriage.

Where there is? An imaging of the way that when you enjoy, god, you're enjoying a person. And, Being chased in all of our desires and in the enjoyment and fulfillment of the desires is all about properly enjoying the person. Well, the enjoyment of the marriage bond, whether you're talking about the romantic affections, or even the physical enjoyment at a husband and wife have of one another, is to be the enjoyment of a person.

And so, just as Any untraced desire or unchasted fulfillment of desire? Um, in any area is a failure to enjoy god and a great sin, then against him. In the particular. Uh area. Of the enjoyment of the things that are for marriage. If you are enjoying those things apart, from enjoying your spouse, Apart from enjoying your wife, apart from enjoying, your husband, Then, it's not only a sin against god for an in the area of a general unchasted pleasure.

It's also a sin against your spouse. Because that was given to you to enjoy that person. Not just experiences you have with that person. And so, The seven commandment requires us to preserve that. To to guard and preserve chastity. The the rightly bounded and trained and focused. And right character of enjoyment.

In right desires, fulfilled the right way. Now, that's something that applies a force to behavior. But all of it starts in the heart, it's out of the heart. That sins come, that's out of the heart that the mouth speaks. And, With chastity having so much to do with the heart.

That's the first place. Now, there's Um, The one whose heart you have the most access to, is you And god has given us the right ways of training and directing

our hearts. One of the most important ways of keeping the seventh amendment is to keep the second and fourth commandments.

Which perhaps in such an adulterous age. Is related to the fact that these are the commandments that even in the churches? There is the most resistance to But the second and fourth commandments are about pleasure in god, the way that god has given us to have pleasure in him.

It is the training of the heart. In the right way. Of enjoying the right objects. Uh, object at the right time. And so, the first thing we, we want to do is to preserve the chastity of our heart. Now, one of the ways that we help our neighbor most with his heart is by preserving chastity in our speech.

You know, it breaks the seventh commandment. For us to constantly tell children. From. Before they can speak. Up until they are. Well, i guess we never stop in our culture. God help us. That's fun. Wouldn't this be fun? That would be fun. Ooh that sounds like it was fun.

What are we saying? Go over and over again. That the indulgence of our pleasures is the primary thing. That's not preserving our neighbor's chastity by speech. Rather let us learn to be more specific to spend the effort to think about the good that god does us. And to name the good.

In the context of the god, who does the good? Wonderful that the lord gave you. To have that camaraderie together. Wonderful that the lord gave you that opportunity to work hard and be fruitful in that area. Wonderful that the lord gave you. That opportunity to refresh your body and mind and soul at the same time.

And so we're training the way we think about good things. To find the pleasure of them, not just in the goodness of the thing. We're not denying the goodness of the thing. But in god and his goodness to us in the thing, that's preserving our neighbors chastity by speech.

So that as i am working on my heart and trying to enjoy god and his goodness on the right way, in all things, i'm also wanting to train my lips. Because if i'm going to train my lips that that way that it's got to start from my heart. But as i use my lips in the right way, then, my neighbor is helped.

Because we have a great effect on one in one another, by the way that we speak. And what if my neighbor? Is working on his heart and her heart. And learning to speak that way. Then here i am. Who i'm trying to keep the seventh commandment grateful that jesus has kept it in my place.

Perfectly already grateful that the spirit is using. All of his means, by his almighty, power to conform me to jesus, but still Continuously, stumbling and falling short. But now i have a brother who every time he talks to me, He is speaking in such a way that focuses on.

The goodness of god, and the way he is designed things to be used appropriately. And so there's that chastity of speech and wouldn't it be self-mocking? If we spoke to one another that way, And then, Um, Went and you know, taken all you can eat buffet literally. And ate until we couldn't.

And just, you know, You know, nuked our taste buds and nuked the the happy. Uh, hormones that you get from feeling full and nooked, all of those things. Or apply that to any other pleasure. And we're unchaced in our behavior. Of course, we want to be chased in our behavior.

It makes display of who God is it. Actually it is the actual interaction with him. But it really starts in the heart. Uh, we are helped when we are traced in our speech and we're helping our brother. When we are chasing our speech. So that's what the seventh commandment requires.

The preservation of our own. And our neighbors chastity. In heart. Speech, and behavior.