

I. Introduction and review.

II. Hold marriage in high honor. v. 4a

- A. The theology of sex: Sexual purity is a matter of covenant.**
- 1. God deals with us through covenant. 8:7ff**
 - 2. Marriage is a lifelong covenant of companionship between one man and one woman. Gen. 2:18-25**
 - 3. Sexual expression is to take place exclusively within the covenant of marriage.**
 - 4. Marriage is designed by God as a picture of His relationship to us. Eph. 5:22ff**
 - 5. Sexual union in marriage is a symbol of the intimate spiritual relationship between Christ and the church.**
 - 6. To be unfaithful to your marriage is to imply that Jesus would be unfaithful to His covenant bride.**
 - 7. Sexual sin is sin against God. Gen. 39:9 Ps. 51:4**
- B. Marriage, therefore, is honorable (precious and valuable). I Pe. 1:19 I Co. 3:12**
- 1. God honors marriage. Gen. 2:18ff John 2**
 - 2. The marriage bed is honorable and is to be kept pure. Gen. 2:24 1:28 Pr. 5:15ff**
 - 3. Virtually every culture acknowledges the value of marriage.**
- C. In what ways can we positively show that we value marriage? Eph. 5:22ff**
- 1. Invest in your own marriage so that it will display God's ideals. Phil. 2:3f**
 - 2. Respect the marriages of others.**
 - 3. Be pure before you are married and don't even consider marrying someone who doesn't share your faith and your ideals about marriage. I Cor. 7:39 II Co. 6:14ff**

III. How do some dishonor and defile marriage?

- A. Some dishonor marriage by implying that celibacy is a more holy state. I Tim. 4:3-5 Mark 1:30 Mt. 1:24 I Co. 9:5 7:3-5 I Ti. 3:2ff Jo. 7:3 Pr. 5:18-19 Song of Solomon**
- B. Some dishonor marriage by breaking their marriage covenant (divorce). Mt. 5:32 19:9 Mal. 2:16**
- C. Some dishonor marriage by not investing the time, love, and effort required into their own marriage. Eph. 5:22ff**
- D. Some dishonor marriage by denying the distinctiveness of how God has made us as male and female. Gen. 1:27**
- E. Some dishonor marriage by redefining marriage to include the union of two men or two women. Lev. 18:22 20:13 Rom. 1:26-27**
- F. Some dishonor marriage through marital unfaithfulness (adultery). Ex. 20:14**
- 1. Adultery breaks the marriage covenant and is grounds for divorce. Mt. 5:32 19:9**
 - 2. Jesus taught that lust is adulterous. Mt. 5:28**
- G. Some dishonor marriage through partaking of its privileges (sexual union) before the marriage covenant has been made (fornication). 12:16 I Co. 5:9-11 6:9 Eph. 5:3,5 I Th. 4:3-7 Rev. 21:8 22:15**

IV. God will judge fornicators and adulterers.

A. Sexual sin is deceitful. 3:13 Prov. 7:15ff I Co. 6:16,18-20 Num. 32:23 I Th. 4:6 Js. 1:14ff Pr. 30:20

B. Sexual immorality has immediate consequences.

- 1. You will harm your relationship with God. Ps. 32:2-4**
- 2. You will harm yourself personally. Ro. 1:27 Prov. 6:26ff 7:22ff**
- 3. You will harm the other people involved. I Co. 13:5-6**
- 4. You will harm your relationship with your spouse (or your future spouse).**
- 5. You may harm your children. II Sam. 13 16:20-21**
- 6. You will harm the church body. I Co. 5:6**
- 7. You will harm your testimony to the lost.**

C. The ultimate consequence is everlasting judgment. 9:27 10:30 12:29 Eph. 5:5-6

Col. 3:5 I Cor. 6:9-10 Rev. 21:8 22:15 Dt. 22:20-22 Pr. 5:20-23 6:24-35 7:22-27 2:19

D. Resist sexual temptation. II Tim. 2:22 Gen. 39:12

- 1. Don't be like Esau who chose this present world and rejected God. 12:16f**
- 2. Don't play with sexual temptation. Prov. 5:8**
- 3. See sexual immorality the way God sees it. Pr. 2:16-19**

V. Concluding applications: Sexual purity is a matter of faith.

A. Faith frees you from the guilt of past sinful failures. 11:31 10:10,14,18 I Co. 6:9-11 John 8:1-11 Ps. 32:1ff,51

B. By faith you are transformed into a new person. I Co. 6:9-11 II Co. 5:17 Rom. 6:1ff

C. Ongoing sexual purity is a battle for faith. 11:1-2,6 I Th. 4:3-8 Ro. 14:23

- 1. The world and the flesh tell you to follow your feelings and pursue pleasure**
- 2. By faith we know that God's good gift of sex is exclusively for marriage.**
- 3. By faith we trust God to meet our needs in His way and time. v. 5b-6 Phil. 4:11ff**

VI. Recommended Resources

A. The Complete Husband, by Lou Priolo

B. The Excellent Wife, by Martha Peace

C. Helper by Design, by Elyse Fitzpatrick

D. Sex is not the Problem (Lust is), by Josh Harris

E. Pure Freedom, by Mike Cleveland

F. "The Pain of Porn", "How to Change Your Husband", and "How to Change Your Wife"; by Jim Newheiser. Audios and outlines on www.biblicalcounselingonline.org

Discussion questions

- 1. What is the theological foundation for sexual morality?**
- 2. Why should marriage be regarded as honorable and precious?**
- 3. In what ways can we show that we value marriage?**
- 4. What is celibacy and how do those who promote celibacy dishonor marriage?**
- 5. In what other ways do people dishonor marriage?**
- 6. Why is sex before marriage (fornication) wrong?**
- 7. How does homosexual marriage dishonor God?**
- 8. What are some of the consequences of sexual sin?**
- 9. What hope do we offer to those who have been immoral?**
- 10. In what sense is the battle for sexual purity a battle for faith?**