**Sex, Sin and the Savior**

**Reading of the Word**

John 8:3-8:11

The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst 4 they said to him, “Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. 5 Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?” 6 This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. 7 And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.” 8 And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. 9 But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. 10 Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” 11 She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”]]

**Prayer:**

Heavenly Father, May our hearts be renewed and washed by your Word today. May we put on the new self- as Scripture describes being renewed in the knowledge of you our creator. Bring light into out darkened understanding and allow our meditation and worship of our heart increase our love for you Jesus. Use me in my great weakness in Jesus name Amen

**Warm up**

You may be seated. My Name is Eric Mattie, I serve as one of the elders here at LEFC. Pastor Dan has asked that I fill in today about a month ago as he and the other pastors and elders went to a pastor’s conference for half the week being refreshed and challenged in their faith. My prayer is that they’ve come back on fire and focused and rejoicing.

INTRODUCTION

The title of my message this morning is Sex, sin and the Savior.

The issue of sex in the Church can be like Pandora’s box full of evils and confusion and can muddy the issue of sex. But the truth is, sex was created by a good God. He gave us these pleasures to enjoy and in turn to exalt Him for them. So I realized whether it was addressing the sins of homosexuality, transgender orientation, pornography addiction, adultery and affairs of the heart or sexual abuse, sexless marriages, masturbation or simple lust of the eyes…. I had to lay the proper foundation on which we can begin to talk about the issues openly, honestly and redeemingly.

Here in John 8:3-8:11 we have the scribes and the Pharisees looking to trap Jesus. They bring a women who was caught in adultery. They ask a tricky question. Christ once again confronts their hypocrisy-causing them to back down. And then shows compassion and forgiveness to this adulterous woman by saying go and sin no more.

Now the question I want to address today from this account is: What truths should shape our beliefs so that we respond in a more Christ centered way toward a sexual sinner? Jesus handled this so well. We will never know his full world view since he is full God and man. But what do we keep in mind when we are dealing with sexual sinners that will help us to be more Christlike and gospel driven in this situation?

I wish to address two Biblical worldviews that will help shape how we apply the gospel in the way Christ did here.

1. The delight and goodness of sex.
2. The damaging effects of sin—on sexuality

**1. The Delight and Goodness of sex**

The greatest things about the Bible and sex is that it looks favorable on it. It favors it so much that God's guidelines are made to protect and provide for its special place in the human experience. Unfortunately we can look at it pessimistically instead of optimistically.

Four things the Bible says about sex
***1. Sex is from God... He invented it. (Gen 2:21-25)***“So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones

 and flesh of my flesh;

she shall be called Woman,

 because she was taken out of Man.”

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”

* So here at the very start of all creation, God set up the way things were to be. We have general understanding of sexuality set within the broader context of God’s grand purposes and design at creation.
* God’s intent for human sexuality is imbedded in the fact that he created gendered beings who have the ability and desire to become “One Flesh”. It is beautiful complimentary relationship.

***2. Sex is a gift... to be enjoyed (Prov. 5:18,19)***"Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, a lovely deer, a graceful doe.Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always in her love."

* The verse in Proverbs is advice from Solomon to his son on how to handle his sex drive and how not to allow it to tempt him to use it in a sinful way He encourages him to have enjoyment in his wife and to allow himself and his wife to be satisfied in their lovemaking.

***3. Sex is good and great... in the context of marriage. (Prov 5:20, Lev 20:10 )***

"Why should you be intoxicated, my son, with a forbidden woman and embrace the bosom of an adulteress?"
"If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death."
While lovemaking is a mutual and intimate part of marriage that is to grow and be explored together, it is to be an act that grows in pleasure and enjoyment.

Let me camp here a little bit longer than the rest

***What is the biblical sex ethic***: Only Sex inside a marriage covenant.

That is to say the bible says no sex outside of marriage. So some say covenant is kind of an archaic word- Could you give me a more up to date word- a more modern concept. I’d say no. Here’s why.

Covenant is more than just a word it is a category of thought. And it is the best word that conveys this category of thought. That category is this: A covenant creates a relationship far more loving and intimate than a maritally legal relationship. But its also far more binding and enduring than a martially emotional relationship. A covenant creates a personal relationship which is more intimately and loving because its legal. Hows that?

Let me explain

A Consumer relationship- you relate to a vendor and you have a relationship with they vendor as long as they provide a product at a good price. But you are always looking for an upgrade. So you say to the vendor “We have a relationship but you better keep adjusting to me. Because if you don’t meet my needs, I’m outta here- because me needs are more important than the relationship. We have a relationship but if I can get my needs from somewhere else, that’s where I’ll go.”

A Covenant Relationship- is exactly the opposite… Consumer “you adjust to me or I’m outta here”. Covenant relationship say “I’ll adjust to you, because I made a promise and the relationship is more important than my needs.” My needs are less important than the sustance of the relationship.

Now if two people enter into a relationship where one is a covenanter and one is a consumer- it’ll turn bad for the covenanter because they’ll be exploited. You will be hurt.

But if both are covenanters and both say we are done with a consumer relationship- and they both are in a covenant relationship which is what it means to get married--- OH My Three things will wonderfully happen

*1. You will finally be in a zone of security*.

As a consumer relationship you are always performing a have to meet the other persons need or you’re out. That’s a lot of pressure to perform. But in a covenant relationship you have a safe zone to let go of the façade you can be yourself- you can share insecurities- you can be vulnerable, you can stop selling and promoting and be yourself in a relationship that is a zone of safety.

*2. When you are committed to someone despite your feeling- deeper feelings grow*.

For example like a parenting relationship to children there is a lot of investment of love, care and concern, with sometimes not as much reward back- yet because of that investment deeper feelings grow- this happens in a covenant marital relationship as well.

*3. There is a freedom*

When you are a slave to your feelings of love that are based on meeting needs or not, or don’t feel in love or someone not performing – the consumer relationship of feeling good- you will be miserable!

You’re a slave to feelings- where do feelings come from? Physiology past, circumstances all set your feeling and we can be like a puppet on a string.

Make the choice and promise “I’ll adjust to you because the relationship is more important. Regardless of my feelings and needs When Both people have that- there is a freedom.

So when you have a zone of security, and deeper feeling are growing and freedom is experiencing… ***what does this have to do with sex? Everything!*** Because Sex is not a consumer good , it’s a covenant good.

A Consumer good is a way to keep someone in a relationship, because you have a need. I need sex every so often it helps me feel good about myself. It makes me feel adored and loved. And I’ll go out and find someone that will meet that need.

The Bible does not say that sex is a consumer good. It was designed to be a covenant good. In a covenant marriage the act of sex within marriage is a vehicle for engaging the whole person in an act of self giving and self commitment. When we in marriage make ourselves physically naked and vulnerable. in giving up our independence and by making this promise It’s a sign of what we do with our whole life.

It’s the difference in viewpoint

Consumer/Contract: I take thee for me.

Covenant: I give myself to thee.

Consumer/Contract: You had better do it!

Covenant: How may I serve you?

Consumer/Contract: What do I get?

Covenant: What can I give?

Consumer/Contract: I’ll meet you halfway.

Covenant: I’ll give you 100% plus.

Consumer/Contract: I have to

Covenant: I want to

Sex outside of marriage is asking someone to do with their body what you are not doing with your life. You say let’s be physically vulnerable and naked but not whole life vulnerable and naked.

C. S. Lewis refers to this when he says, "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 the other kinds of union which were intended to go along with it and make up the total union."

***4. Sex is godly... and is to be honored (Heb. 13:4***)

"Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous."

How to honor marriage and the marriage bed?

Undefiled: Stay pure- stay a virgin- stay away from porn Hold out for the best God has for you--

Young people/old people… renew your mind and don’t think that Sex is bad and dirty- what happens is in the Christians life we say bad/dirty bad/ dirty/ bad /dirty for years and then we get married and its finally beautiful..

If you’ve been abused or have grown up with an improper view of sex- God can redeem that- it still a beautiful thing- God is not done with you... renew your mind ask Jesus to heal the wounds. Don’t live in that life of shame and regret- God redeems

Sex is a beautiful and honorable thing. It is a godly thing. In the context of the marriage bed

Two recommended resources in renewing your mind:

First A Church Statement on Human Sexuality: Homosexuality and Same-Sex “Marriage” A Resource for EFCA Churches

* A very well thought out treatise for both the single and married believer- back table

Second from Desiring God Sex and the Supremacy of God.

* Chapters –again- on singlness and sex, healing sexuality. And the goodness and purpose of sexuality if you are no a book reader and you prefer listening or watching video—all on the website for free!

So the first truth that helps us shape our worldview is the truth of the delight and goodness of sex- as designed by God.

Let’s look at the second

**2. The Damaging Effects of Sin on Sexuality**

You’ve heard the phrase: “What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas?” what accompanies this phrase is the idea that we can have a pocketed and protected area where sin can happen and have no effect on our lives. Its not true- “What happened in the Garden didn’t stay in the Garden.”

**I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again: Sin complicates matters**

Adam broke creation perfection by disobeying God. Sin spread throughout all mankind Rom 5:12

 God made this very clear in the garden: Eat of the fruit and you will die. Go against my commands and there are complications and consequences

Death is one of them,- spiritually and physically-

Disease is one of them

Disaster is one of them

Disabilities mental and physical are one of them

Dispositions and temptations are one of them

Dysfunction is one of them

You know … I say sin complicates matters… its really just a polite understatement -- to the truth. The truth—The damaging effects of sin is corruption. In both mankind and creation.- We are in bondage to it.

All of creation is in the grip of futility

Look at this verse

 “For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.” Romans 8:20-22

* Sin does not just complicate this life it corrupts
* Restatement: Sin corrupts this life- this life that is- this side of creation and heaven. it corrupts-- our lives and even our loves

In relation to our sexuality

 1. Sin turns sex from an act that points to the glory of God to becoming a god

* Sin turns its desires and pleasure up side down on its head and makes it more important than it needs to be.
* As a result we believe the lie and then, we create an idol that we turn to for meaning and comfort or… [PAUSE] … we cower in insecurity and inadequacy.

Look at how Paul summarizes it…

“because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.” Romans 1:25

 Sin turns sex into a god. Sin exchanges the proper worship of the Lord in the act of sex into a a perverted worship of sex itself.

2. Sin has corrupted our sexuality.

* It has become disordered and broken
* A Broken sexuality for both male and females can result into two things: It results in our Sexual passions to be either inhibited or distorted.
* A broken sexuality exhibits it’s desires- either the inhibited one or the distorted one - in a selfish way… the consumer way- instead of a covenant way.
* A broken sexuality will naturally lean toward expressing itself in a sinful manner because the hearts of all mankind- men and woman, are sinful.
* Keep in mind: Sexual sin – like any behavioral sin is just the fruit of a deeper darker root of sin found first in the hearts of men and woman—not in there libido or lack thereof.

Again seeing how Paul summarizes this:

“For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Romans 1:21

* How we view sex… sexuality … our needs emotions… wants … how we identify ourselves and pursue all these thing as in light of a world that leaves wanting a heart still broken… is all viewed in futility and and the darkness of our hearts abd as result we… “Claim to be wise”

“Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.” Romans 1:22-23

Now neither a distorted or an inhibited sex drive are natural.

Listen to what John Piper has to say- he’s talking about the homosexual disordering:

 *“What is "Natural"? The point of all this is that, whatever the physical or social or personal origins of the homosexual disordering of our sexuality, none of that would define it as good or "natural" or "normal." In a world where God is the Creator and Designer of life, "natural" means in sync with God's purpose and design, not just anything that has physical causes.*

*Having a physical root makes nothing right.*

*Physically-based, aggressive tendencies may lead to violent behavior, but we don't condone it. Physically-based lethargic tendencies may lead to laziness and neglect, but we don't condone it. Frenetic tendencies may lead to disruption and workaholism.*

 *A gloomy bent may lead to suicidal thoughts. An anxious bent may lead to paranoia. Addictive tendencies may lead to alcoholism or bondage to gambling or deadly smoking. A low frustration threshold may lead to outbursts of rage.*

*Strong sexual desires may lead to lust or pornography or fornication or adultery or polygamy.*

*In other words, in a world where the effect of sin permeates to the roots of nature and disorders all of life, we cannot define as good and natural whatever has physical roots. There must be a higher norm than fallen nature. There are many physically-based abnormalities in the world. Therefore having a physical base or root is not sufficient reason for condoning anything as natural or good.”*

So The Damaging Effects of Sin on our Sexuality include creating an idol in our heart and corrupting and disordering of our sexual desires.

So lets keep those in mind

 Sex was created as a good thing But sin has damaged or corrupted sex purpose. So sex for its meaning and holy expression in a marriage- is a good thing. Sex outside of God’s guidelines- that is sinfull.

Why is it good to keep these in mind-?

So that we as Christians don’t throw the baby out with the bathwater when it comes to sex. We want to our children to have a healthy view of sex, we want a watching world to know we having a healthy pure good sex life can point to glorifying God

**3. The Divine Grace of the Savior**

Now let’s turn back to our account of Jesus and the woman caught in adultery.

Here is Jesus teaching on the temple courts. The scribes and Pharisee bring a woman caught in the very act of having an adulterous affair with a man not her husband.

And for all we know- she may have been enjoying it because it felt right- she was having her needs met- and she may have been falling in love with him.

She is ripped from that moment of sexual pursuit and dragged to temple courts right in front of Jesus

ILL: What if I told you this morning there was a young woman visiting this morning who came straight from her adulterous affair last night?

What if I told you there are few brothers and a sister in the Lord who just few hours ago at 1:00 amturned their computers off after viewed porn ?

What if I told you there were two brothers and two sisters in the Lord that sit with us every week and individually struggle with the temptation of SSA and homosexual thoughts?

How would you respond?

Let’s see how Jesus responded.

We as God’s people need to know deeply the following Scriptural realities if we are desire to handle this like Jesus did.

 1. Jesus wasn’t shocked at her sin.

Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. 7 And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.” 8 And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. 9 But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him John 8:6-9

* He started writing on the ground- what did he write? We are not sure. But the point is He didn’t overreact. In fact he displays tremendous self control in answering their bantering and consistent badgering of the question. He just stands up address the heart of the issue and then goes back to what he was doing. Jesus as Fuly God was not shocked by her sin.
* The Father is not shocked by your most shocking sin. He knows you.
* When you know the most darkest corners of your sinful heart should you really be in shock over the most most shocking sins of others?
* Cheer up you are worse than you think you are-God knows it and is not shocked by it.

2. Jesus showed love and mercy to the woman still in her sin.

Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”

 John 8:10-11

* As far as we can tell from this account, the woman, had not pleaded for forgiveness and mercy yet. In the deeper sovereignty of God Jesus chose to grant mercy and show great love to the woman in adultery. Does this sound familiar

“but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

* It is a beautiful picture of the unconditional election of God and choice of God in saving his people. Even while we were sinners
* Does God’s grace make you more gracious with others?
* For those in sexual sin… Has God’s grace birthed in you a heart overflowing with love and gratitude to obey God’s command of go and sin no more? Have you a

***In closing***

Statistics have revealed hundreds of Christian struggling sexually with in the family of God.

* Pastors who have committed adultery with church attenders.
* Priests who have molested children.
* Average Joe and Jane Christian, succumbing to internet pornography- woman rising in that category in the past 5 years.
* Average Joe and Jane Christian, revealing that some do struggle with their sexual identity and same sex affections and attractions- and in some cases indulging them.

Yet the other trend we see recently is the healing and redeeming grace of God at work in all of these circumstances,

* Saving marriage
* Healing the abuser and the abused
* Freeing the addicted
* Empowering the fighter
* Helping the brokenhearted.

So we know in light of this : the Gospel of Jesus Christ is still the power of God to save and redeem all sinners, to forgive and heal all the broken hearted. To establish new identities that are in Christ.

If you are you in need of him to do any of those things in your life- come to the foot of the cross and cry out to Jesus for He is better and His grace is greater than our sin. Let’s pray