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SEX (Part 2) [See April Page for Part 1]

APPROPRIATE SEX

Why should we follow God's laws about sex?

BIBLE READING: Proverbs 5:15-21

KEY BIBLE VERSE: *Be happy, yes, rejoice in the wife of your youth.* (Proverbs 5:18, TLB)

Sex is a gift God gives to married people for their mutual enjoyment. God does not intend faithfulness in marriage to be boring, lifeless, pleasureless, and dull. Real happiness comes when we decide to find pleasure in the relationship God has given or will give us and to commit ourselves to making it pleasurable for our spouse. The real danger is in doubting that God knows and cares for us. We then may resent His timing and carelessly pursue sexual pleasure without His blessing.

BIBLE READING: 1 Corinthians 7:1-11

KEY BIBLE VERSE: *So do not refuse these rights to each other. The only exception to this rule would be the agreement of both husband and wife to refrain from the rights of marriage for a limited time, so that they can give themselves more completely to prayer. Afterwards, they should come together again so that Satan won't be able to tempt them because of their lack of self-control.* (1 Corinthians 7:5, TLB)

God designed sex as part of the unique relationship of marriage. The Corinthian church was in turmoil because of the immorality of the culture around them. Some Greeks, in rejecting immorality, rejected sex and marriage altogether. The Corinthian Christians wondered if this was what they should do also, so they asked Paul several questions: Because sex is perverted, shouldn't we also abstain in marriage? If my spouse is unsaved, should I seek a divorce? Should single people and widows remain unmarried? Paul answered many of these questions by saying, For now, stay put. Be content in the situation where God has placed you. If you're married, don't seek to be single. If you're single, don't seek to be married. Live God's way, one day at a time, and He will show you what to do.

Sexuality is a natural, God-given desire. Sexual temptations are difficult to withstand because they appeal to the normal and natural desires that God has given us. Marriage provides God's way to satisfy these natural sexual desires and to strengthen the partners against temptation. Married couples have the responsibility to care for each other. Therefore, husbands and wives should not withhold themselves sexually from one another, but should fulfill each other's needs and desires.

God, as the creator of sex, ought to be our guide in the use of sexuality. Spiritually, our body belongs to God when we become a Christian, because Jesus Christ bought us by paying the price to release us from sin (see 6:19-20). Physically, our body belongs to our spouse because God designed marriage so that, through the union of husband and wife, the two become one (Genesis 2:24). Paul stressed complete equality in sexual relationships. Neither male nor female should seek dominance or autonomy.

BIBLE READING: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

KEY BIBLE VERSE: *For God wants you to be holy and pure and to keep clear of all sexual sin so that each of you will marry in holiness and honor—not in lustful passion as the heathen do, in their ignorance of God and his ways.* (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5, TLB)

To keep from hurting ourselves, sexual desires and activities must be placed under Christ's control. God created sex for procreation and pleasure, and as an expression of love between a husband and wife. Sexual experience must be limited to the marriage relationship to avoid hurting ourselves, our relationship to God, and our relationships with others.¹

Prayer: My God, All my life I've wanted to belong to someone, to find a connection and a refuge of understanding, to have a best friend who knows me—a true companion who will listen to my sorrows and joys. I've had friends who have come and gone throughout my life, but none who met this deep need for belonging. I understand now, that there's a place in my heart that can only be totally filled by You. You have promised never to leave me nor forsake me, and I have placed my faith in those words. Thank You, Lord, for Your faithfulness. Amen.

¹ "SEX"; "The Handbook of Bible Application", Neil S. Wilson, Editor; Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, IL