

Beyond the Birds and the Bees

Pure Sex: Reclaiming God's Gift

Part 7

Our children are funny as they start figuring things out about sex. They sift through some confusing and confounding information. The truth is, we adults spend a good deal of time confused and confounded about sex. You'd think that in a sex-saturated society like ours, we'd have it figured out by now. After all, we are told that sexual knowledge leads to sexual satisfaction, and thanks to folks at The Kinsey Institute, Drs. Masters and Johnson, and David Reuben's book, *"Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Sex But Were Afraid To Ask,"* we've got it all figured out. What's left to know? We know how everything works. Or do we? Studies show that even with all this new information and new medications, sexual satisfaction is declining. And there's a reason for that. Most people do not include the most important element in their bedroom, God. And because we don't, like everything else in life, without God, it simply fails to reach its maximum potential.

Outside of God's Guidelines, sex is confusing and confounding... It does not make sense. If God created us sexual beings (which he did), why then do we all face sexual difficulties at some time or other (which we do)? How can something made by God be both wonderful and destructive? The truth is we humans will always be confused, confounded and plagued with sexual difficulties until we learn to consult and include the creator of sex.

So far in our series "Pure Sex: Reclaiming God's Gift" we've talked about how God created sex for procreation and recreation. How God designed sex, within the bounds of marriage, for the blessing of children. How He also created sex for pleasure... who could forget reading from the Song of Solomon.

We've discussed His intention for sex as being between a woman and a man, a married couple, how He intends it to be physically satisfying and emotionally fulfilling. But God wants sex to be more than just a fun thing for married people to do. He wants it to be more than a pleasurable approach to populating the planet.

Today I want to take us beyond the birds and the bees into the full purpose for which God created sex. In his book, *Sacred Sex*, Tim Alan Gardner says, “The discovery of what God intends for sex and how He is involved in the sexual connection between spouses will permanently change a couple’s life. And not just their sex life. Marital sex, when rightly understood and practiced, has benefits that spill over into the rest of a couples’ relationship. Communication, intimacy, problem solving, teamwork, spiritual growth – every aspect of married life works better when a couple’s sex life is practiced according to God’s design.”

In short, once we figure out the intimate role that God wants to play in our lives, the problem-plagued bedroom is transformed into a sacred place of celebration. A place not in the house but in the heart. A place of love. A place of relationship. A place of wholeness. A place of oneness. A place originally created by God.

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh (Gen. 2:24 NKJV).

“One flesh.”

Not a temporary joining. Not a “hook-up buddy” not a “friend with benefits,” but “One Flesh” Now **that** is confounding. How can that be? How can two people become one and not just two people but two people who are so very different at their core? Two complete DNA mismatches. Different physically. Different Emotionally. Different sexually. Different hormonally. Different in personality. Listen how David Clarke describes it in his book, *A Marriage After God’s Own Heart*:

“Marriage is the one human relationship that has the greatest potential for conflict. Just think about it. The husband won’t talk; the wife won’t stop talking. He can’t remember anything that happened more than ten minutes ago; she remembers everything that ever happened to her. The wife wants to describe, in excruciating detail, every event of her day. And she wants her husband to listen and show interest in her monologue. She’ll spend 45 minutes talking about an event that lasted only five minutes. The husband will sum up his entire day with just one word: ‘OK,’ ‘Fine,’ or ‘Good.’ He likes movies with plenty of gun fights, explosions, bodies in the streets, and high-tech special effects. His movies don’t contain much in the way of complicated, sophisticated conversations. Most of the dialogue goes like

this: 'I'm gonna kill you, sucka.' She prefers movies filled with romance, relationships and people talking about romance and relationships. She doesn't like to see movie characters die violent deaths for no good reason. But it's ok if someone dies after a long illness and has spent two hours talking about death and how hard it is to leave a cherished lover. She's watched the six-volume set of Pride and Prejudice and says it gets better every time she sees it."

Now talk to me about this "one flesh" thing.

How can people with so many differences become one? That is indeed a great mystery.

But it's a mystery that Paul says Christ has revealed. And it was as counter cultural then as it is now. In Ephesians the Apostle Paul writes about two mysteries that God reveals through Christ. Both incredibly counter cultural. First he talks about two groups of people becoming one. The Jewish believers and the Non-Jewish (Gentile) believers.

Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men) — remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. _

For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility (Eph. 2:11–16 NIV).

This was an incredible concept to both Jew and Gentile. The Jews had always been God's chosen, included in His covenants. The Gentiles had always been excluded. And now Paul tells them that Christ has not only destroyed the barrier between the two peoples but has in fact made one new person out of the two of them, one new body (the church) through His

death on the cross. The cross connected Jew and Gentile, God and Man.

And we, the church, are the Body of Christ.

And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all (Eph. 1:22-23 NIV).

And then, a couple of chapters later in chapter four Paul tells them, “Now that God has knit you together in one body, the church, this is how you should act”:

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all (Eph. 4:2–6 NIV).

Sounds almost like something you hear read at a wedding ceremony. In fact, in the next chapter Paul turns his attention to marriage

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their

own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church (Eph. 5:22-32 NIV).

Paul says:

“Man and Wife One Flesh”

“Christ and Church One Flesh”

You see, it is God who gives us “oneness” through Jesus Christ.

The oneness of believers, both Jew and Gentile.

The oneness of husband and wife.

The oneness of Christ and the church.

How incredible to become one with another human being. How much more incredible to be one with “The One” who created the universe. Unlike the oneness of sex, the “Oneness of Christ” is not limited to married people. It is open to all who would call him Redeemer, Savior, Son of God. Just as a married man and woman experience and represent God’s intimacy, so the single man or woman in the oneness of Christ’s Body, the Church can also experience and represent God’s intimacy.

In communion we remember that it was God through Christ who created oneness with mankind. Until Calvary we were separated from God by a curtain of sin. But on Calvary, the curtain was ripped from the top to bottom and our Heavenly Father, through His son Jesus, began a new relationship with us. A life giving relationship. The kind of relationship that should exist between a husband and wife. A relationship filled with loads of love, mountains of mercy, and great peace. Paul put it this way in Ephesians:

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by

grace you have been saved (Eph. 2:4-5 NIV).

God never intended a relationship to be confined solely to the physical realm. Sex alone cannot sustain a relationship. We know that because relationships based entirely on sex never last. Hollywood celebrities have proven that to us for years. Two beautiful bodies but that's about it. A steamy romance, but when the romance runs out of steam; they run out of the relationship. Marilyn Monroe said of her failed marriage to Joe DiMaggio, "*If marriage were only bed, we could have made it.*" You cannot sustain a relationship on sexual love alone. People get bored and bodies fail. Physical intimacy alone is not a foundation on which to build a relationship.

Even the world has figured that out. The Dr. Phils and Dr. Ruths will tell you that the true glue of a relationship lies in an emotional attachment. God never intended a relationship to be limited to an emotional realm. We know that because relationships based solely on feelings never last. Oh they will last longer than those based on the physical but ultimately you cannot sustain a relationship on based only on feelings. Feelings change. The feeling of love will come and go. David Clarke writes; "If you choose to base your marriage on emotional intimacy only, you're doomed to end up in one of two situations. "We Just Kept Drifting Apart" or "I Want a Divorce"

In the "We just kept drifting apart" scenario he tells about a couple who fell in love and got married. The first few years were great. Then kids... a busier life... then busy schedules, then routine, and then one day they realized how things had changed. They were comfortable, content, secure, but not passionate. They cared about each other and they were staying together no matter what, but they wondered if they could ever get their passion back.

The second scenario went like this; I just don't love you anymore. We were young when we got married and my feelings are gone. We're two different people. It's not you, it's me. I've changed. I'm different. I'm not happy. I want a divorce.

Emotional intimacy will not sustain a relationship.

So what is it? What will keep a relationship alive? What will restore a relationship lost? What will sustain a relationship for 40 or 50 years? If it's not physical intimacy, if it's not emotional intimacy, what is it?

Are you ready? Here it is.... It's genuine intimacy.
Genuine intimacy? What's that?

Well it's not so much a what is it? As it is a "who" is it?
To have real intimacy you've got to have real love. And to have real love you've got to go to the source of all love. And the map to the source of all love and genuine intimacy is found in I John 4: 7 & 8

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love (1 Jn. 4:7-8 NIV).

It is in the melding of physical, emotional and spiritual intimacy that will energize every part of your relationship.

So if you're ready to take your relationship beyond the physical, beyond the emotional, beyond the birds and the bees, invite God into your marriage.

Men, let me tell you what that looks like;
Monday morning before you leave for work ask your wife to pray with you. Don't worry about the words God will help you. Just talk to God about blessing her day, about how thankful you are for her and then ask Him to help you at your job.

Now ladies, pay attention here. If you are lucky enough to have a husband who begins to pray with you on Monday morning, please do not act shocked. Please do not faint or question his motives. And the moment he says Amen you start to pray and thank God that you have a husband who will pray with you in the morning.

Oh dear church, get intimate with God and you'll discover a life like none other. Get intimate with God as a couple and you'll discover passion as you've never known.

Gardner, Tim Alan; *Sacred Sex*, Waterbrook Press, 2002

Clarke, David; *A Marriage After God's Own Heart*, Multnomah Publishers, Inc., 2001

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