

“We Need to Have a Sex Talk”

1Corinthians 7:1-9

May 5, 2019

INTRO ...Marriage & Family in 2019 ...a Ship Tossed at Sea!!

- ***The number of single adults today***

Public disenchantment with marriage is reflected in national surveys. Half of American adults believe society is just as well off if people have priorities other than marriage and children, according to the recent Pew report.

...But what if marriage stopped forcing young people to conform to an outdated tradition? This hot topic was explored by Psychology Today’s Susan Pease Gadoua’s in a recent opinion piece, [“Millennials are Changing the Rules on Marriage.”](#)

...“Rather than having only a choice to marry the same old way, or to not marry, let’s get a little imaginative and come up with marital options that would be better suited to a variety of people, including a short-term trial union for younger couples, a child-rearing marriage for those who’d like to be nothing more than co-parents, or a socially acceptable live apart arrangement.”

*...Will the millennial generation usher in a new era that saves American marriage by allowing it to evolve? Radical as it may seem, they just might. **Meg Murphy**, “Why Millennials Refuse to Get Married”— See more at: <http://www.bentley.edu/impact/articles/nowuknow-why-millennials-refuse-get-married#sthash.qMX6M5CH.dpuf>*

- ***Family is no longer at the epicenter of curing social ills!***
- ***As the family disintegrates it is leaving young people with a lack of cohesive ideas, principles, and absolutes***
- ***The sexual immorality culture has trained people in pornography and then given them marriage partners that don’t meet expectations.***

...In a storm—ships need BALAST!...we need some thoughts and principles and social constructs that have Weight, that we don’t easily dismiss or ignore!

1Cor 7 is filled with weighty principles as it pertains to marriage, sexuality, and family.

WARNING (Preparatory Disclaimer): **What will you do if you find yourself on the 'wrong end' of the principles Paul's about to discuss?**

- *How have you managed your singleness? ...How have you managed your sexual urges as a single? ...Have you pursued marriage? ...Have you pursued an unbiblical divorce? ...Have you deprioritized or disowned the biblical roles & responsibilities of a husband or wife?*
- **You will need to prepare yourself to be "teachable" ...**
...Paul's statements represented some significant adjustments to the Corinthians as well! ...This is not just 21st Century Offensive!

"Roman marriages were for the most part arranged and involved little personal choice on the part of the participants, at least among the prosperous. The disposition of property was all-important, and marriage became a means of enhancing one's property and status. Hence, one often reads that a cardinal characteristic of good Roman marriages was 'concordia', a state of peace or harmony between husband and wife, rather than great love or affection. ...the relationship between husband and wife was often much like that between father and daughter or uncle and niece, because a man was often considerably older than his wife." Ben Witherington, "Conflict and Community in Corinth", p. 170

"Because most marriages were arranged there could never at the outset be any assurance of harmony between husband and wife, and in the likely absence of any strong affective tie characteristic of modern marriage, the potential for discord was always as great as that of concord. Affective expectations in Roman marriage had to be low..." K. Bradley, "Discovering the Roman Family" (from "Conflict and Community in Corinth", p. 171)

"...one of the more surprising elements of Paul's teaching here, at least to Christian women of a more well-to-do and Roman background, would be the advice about not abstaining from sex except during times of prayer. Roman matrons had been brought up to expect that once one had one's two to three children, one might expect to forego sexual relations thereafter. In the Roman view, sex in marriage was for procreation, not recreation." Rouselle, "Body Politics" (from "Conflict and Community in Corinth", p. 178)

1Cor 7:1-9

*"Paul gives us an incredibly balanced and humanizing view of sexuality. Hedonism essentially says, "Have sex with anyone you want. The body is a morally neutral zone. As long as the adults are consenting, there are no moral implications." This view ultimately dehumanizes the participants by removing the soul from the picture of sexuality, thereby animalizing human beings. Asceticism, on the other hand, says, "Don't have sex with anyone! The body is a morally evil zone." Even within the context of marriage, sexuality is viewed as a weakness and potentially a sin. This view ultimately dehumanizes individuals by rejecting an essential part of their humanity—the body. ...Biblical sexuality, on the other hand, promotes an individual having sex with an individual of the opposite gender within the context of marriage. It declares that the body is good. God has given us bodies to steward for his glory and our enjoyment. ...Biblical sexuality is the only view of sexuality that can properly account for the body and the soul." **Stephen Um**, "First Corinthians", PTW Series*

*...**Sex is intrinsically important to the landscape of life** (for men & women, for singles & married) ...and it is important to recognize some of our personal, subjective contributions to the 'Objective Thoughts' the Bible is Here Providing for Us ...We bring a Man's or Woman's perspective ...We bring a pleasure or Taboo perspective ...we bring bad experiences or no experiences ...we bring cultural expectations & boundaries ...we bring a personal set of hormones & physiology*

v. 1 ...*"Now concerning the matters about which you wrote" "it is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman"*

v. 2 ...*"But because of temptation..."*

- **What this is NOT—**
- **Our life strategy needs to be prepared to address the reality of temptation!**
- **Is your life designed to wisely manage temptation—in the Sexual categories? ...in Significant Categories??**
- **Notice the God-ordained strategy that is consistent with God's design for sexuality—Sexual expression gets answered within a marriage. ...Implications of such a truth:**

- Your marriage is sufficient for your sexual needs.
- If you're not married, then you're not engaging sex.

**v. 3-5 ...This is both instruction to married husbands/wives ...AND...
important awareness for any considering marriage!**

- **Sexual intimacy is the 'right' of each marriage partner. It is a matter of covenantal authority.**
 - In a marriage covenant your entire life is given to this other person. You die to singleness and take up a new identity that is joined to your partner. Your personal preference doesn't rule the day, your identity as one in marriage does!
—we Need BALLAST in our ships! ...v. 3-5 is helpful ballast that will help you and your marriage not to tip over!
 - v. 3 ...husbands and wives SHOULD give each other their conjugal rights
- **Sexual intimacy has moments of exceptions**
 - v. 5 ... "do not deprive... except perhaps by agreement for a limited time"
- **Sexual intimacy can be used by the devil to increase the weight of temptations**

"He is saying that married people who don't engage in sexual relations are in danger of being tempted to immoral pursuits elsewhere. Some have even suggested that part of the problem in chapter 6 – Christian men visiting prostitutes – may have been caused by Christian wives deciding to abstain from sex in order to develop their spiritual lives more fully." N.T. Wright, "1st Corinthians for Everyone" Series

...These aren't pleasant thoughts—but they may prove to be "Ballast Principles" in my ship.

Are Christians "Fighting for the Family"?

...It's one thing for us to shout back at CNN that "liberal policies are destroying the family, which is the foundation of society!!!" ...but we give ourselves a pass in these "Ballast Principles" that may not suit our personal preference or season. ...according to God, these things matter! Sexual intimacy has boundaries and principles that we need to value, agree with, and maintain in our marriages

...if you're single—this is what you're getting yourself into! ...Read the fine print and take serious the cost of building this house. You are signing on for sexual intimacy with ONE PERSON for the rest of your life!!—and— "You ARE signing on FOR SEXUAL INTIMACY with one person For the REST OF YOUR LIFE!!" (Not just during the honeymoon years or while things are 'new')

Managing Sex is a Ballast in Marriage Issue—and Marriage is a Ballast in Society Issue!!