

Tyson Ziegler

SESSION 3 | Sexuality Redeemed: Flourishing in Singleness and in Marriage

RECOMMENDED TEXT

Making All Things New: Restoring Joy to the Sexually Broken by David Powlison

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Week 1: Understanding the Competing Worldviews Informing Sexuality

Week 2: Understanding & Caring for those Struggling with Sexual Sin & Brokenness

Week 3: Sexuality Redeemed: Flourishing in Singleness and in Marriage

Week 4: When Homosexuality Comes Home

- **God created us as his image bearers to glorify him in every aspect of our lives (including our sexuality!).** To this end, God designed us to flourish as men and women, whether **single** or **married**, we are equal in worth, yet with unique, complementary distinctions rooted in God's design, and expressed in and through our various roles and relationships.

This means that our desires do not reign. Instead, Christ reigns and our sexuality takes its rightful place in our lives.

- “Our sexuality was designed to be a willing servant of love. It becomes distorted by our willfulness or our fear. [Through the Gospel] it is being remade into a willing servant of love.”
- Every willing learner must learn (and often relearn) broad-spectrum self-control as a core expression of love.

I. SINGLENESS REDEEMED THROUGH THE GOSPEL

- Our Identity: Hidden in Christ

- Col. 3:3; Gal. 2:20

- Our Bodies and our Calling: Not Our Own
 - 1 Cor. 6:19-20

 - Paul recognizes singleness as a gift (1 Cor 7:7).

 - Energy, resources, and passion can be focused towards serving the Lord and his Kingdom purposes.

- Our Time and our Passion (or pursuit?): Resourced For His Fulfillment
 - 1 Cor. 7:32-35; 2 Cor. 5:9; 1 Cor. 10:31

 - “What we desire and describe as a healthy, tender, passionate, enduring, mutually satisfying relationship, God simply calls marriage.”

 - “The most modest single people make the most passionate married people.”

 - “Marriage is not for quitters.”
 - Give yourself now to the “labor that love requires.” For now, that is purposeful living and patient waiting. In marriage, it is covenant faithfulness and good hard work.

Since the fall, man has been tempted to utilize everything at his disposal for his own well-being—our sexuality notwithstanding—both in our relation to one another and especially in our relationship to God.

Commentary point #1: God's design in marriage is meant to provide the pinnacle of His creation with an understanding of the distinction of marriage, and since the Adam's fall and the advent of sin, this same design now brings order to the chaos of male/female relationships, and reclaims the wisdom and beauty of God's ways over our self-centered treatment of male-female relationships. provide the pinnacle of His creation with an understanding of the distinction of marriage.

II. MARRIAGE AS STORY: RECONCILED THROUGH GOD'S MERCY

- “This requirement (of leaving and cleaving) elevates the marital union above all other personal loyalties, under God. If, in marrying, a man withdraws his primary allegiance from his parents and redirects it to his wife so that they enter into a ‘one flesh’ existence, how much more does this distinguish marriage from all other relationships as well! Marriage is so profound a union that not only *may* one put one’s wife ahead of all others, one *must* do so.”^[2]

- The Nashville Statement
 - WE AFFIRM that God has designed marriage to be a covenantal, sexual, procreative, lifelong union of one man and one woman, as husband and wife, and is meant to signify the covenant love between Christ and his bride the church.

 - WE DENY that God has designed marriage to be a homosexual, polygamous, polyamorous relationship. We also deny that marriage is a mere human contract rather than a covenant made before God.

 - Exodus 34: A narrative of defiance

 - Hosea: God’s call of repentance

- Is. 54 and 62: God's enduring affection

III. A CULTURE BENT ON CHAOS

- Culture has sought to manipulate the image of marriage
 - Redefine marriage
 - “Something’s wrong with a one size fits all definition of marriage” – Psychology Today
 - There are other ways to find happiness in monogamous relationships
 - Definition of idolatry expressed sexually
 - Minimize the sanctity and the relevance of marriage
 - Cultural counterfeits lead to a culture of death
 - “Young people desperately need to hear the biblical ethic framed in positive terms showing that it overcomes the two-story divide—that it integrates body and person. When young people learn how to “reckon with someone’s personhood,” the result is relationships that are far healthier and more fulfilling.”^[3]

Commentary point #2: Because of sin, our disposition to serve self has corrupted every relationship. Now, mankind suffers under the sin nature hell bent on the destructive tendency of seeking personal gratification as the primary goal of life.

III. RELATIONSHIPS RESTORED: CHAOS ANNULLED

- The Bridegroom of the Gospels
 - Mt. 9; 25; Mk. 2; Lk. 5; Jn. 3

- The Selfless Servant Leader
 - Eph. 5:25-ff

- The Consummation: The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come!”
 - Rev. 22:17

Commentary point 3: The gospel gives us the ability to comprehend God’s grand design and submit our sexuality to the joy established in his divine intent through the Spirit’s illumination and power.

RECOMMENDED READING

- David Powlison: Making All Things New
- John Ensor: Doing Things Right in Matters of the Heart
- Nancy Percy: Love Thy Body
- Andrew Walker: God and the Transgender Debate
- Rosaria Butterfield: The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert
- Seagraves and Leavine: Gender: A Conversation Guide for Parents and Pastors
- Kevin DeYoung: What Does the Bible Really Teach About Homosexuality?
- Sam Allberry: Is God Anti-Gay?
- Denny Burk: Transforming Homosexuality
- Vaughan Roberts: Transgender
- Piper and Taylor, eds., Sex and the Supremacy of Christ
- Ray Ortlund, Jr.: God’s Unfaithful Wife

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SEXUALITY: CREATED BY GOD, DISTORTED BY SIN, REDEEMED BY CHRIST

- Carl Trueman: *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*
- CBMW: Council of Biblical Manhood & Womanhood
(<https://www.cbmw.org/>)

¹ David Powlison, *Making All Things New: Restoring Joy To The Sexually Broken* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017).

² Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr, *God's Unfaithful Wife: A Biblical Theology of Spiritual Adultery*, New Studies in Biblical Theology; (InterVarsity Press, 2002).

³ Nancy Pearcey, *Love Thy Body: Answering Hard Questions about Life and Sexuality* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2018).