

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Ephesians 5:3-4

Lesson #31

Birds and Bees

03/04/2018

Quiz

- Until the Protestant Reformation, human sexuality was generally viewed by the church as an obstacle to spiritual health?

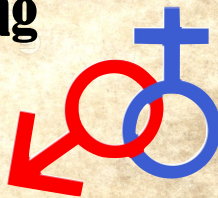
TRUE – The church's general position before the Reformation was – Sex was for procreation ONLY.

- During the colonial period, the rigorous puritanical code reduced the rate of premarital pregnancies to the lowest level in American history?

FALSE – 40% of brides were pregnant at the altar.

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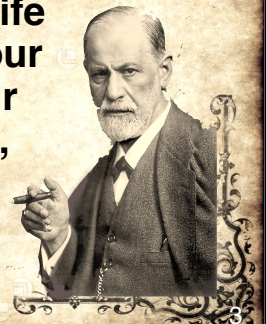
There are few issues in Christian ethics that are more contested than those concerning human sexual behavior.



2

Sigmund Freud

He observed that sexuality is not just sexual acts but a life force that drives our relationships, our work, our hopes, and our fears.



The context is God's SACRIFICIAL LOVE.

Ephesians 5

“¹ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; ² and walk in **love**, just as Christ also loved you, and **gave himself up** for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

The next subject is human SEXUALITY.

4

“¹ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; ² and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

³ **But** immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; ⁴ and *there must be no* filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, **but rather** giving of thanks.” ⁵

Our position in Christ should dictate our practice in life.

Ephesians 4:1

“Walk in a manner **worthy of the calling** with which you have been called.”

Colossians 3

“³ For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. . . ⁵ Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as **dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.**”

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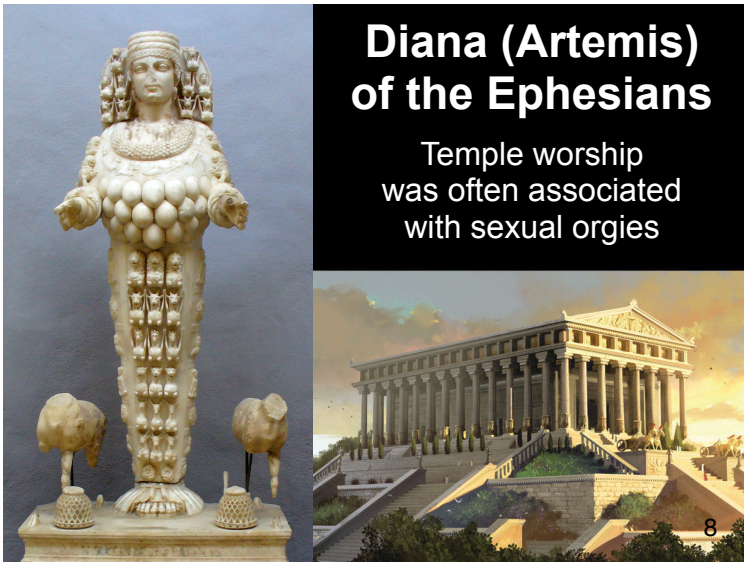
Christians are called to self sacrificing love

When it comes to sex there is no room for **self serving behavior like:**

- “Immorality” - illicit sex (outside marriage).
- “Impurity” - defiled or unclean (unnatural sex).
- “Greed” - covetous, (addictive behavior).
- “Filthy language” - disrespectful of sexuality.

but rather the giving of thanks.

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Diana (Artemis) of the Ephesians

Temple worship
was often associated
with sexual orgies

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Sexual ethics

Four challenges facing the Christian church today:

1. **Face the harsh realities of overt sexual abuse within Evangelical Christian churches.**
 - 93% of sex offenders describe themselves as religious.
 - Statistically, a church of 200 members will have at least 41 child sexual abuse survivors.
 - Those who sexually victimize children likely have victimized dozens over their lifetime.
 - Most children never report sexual abuse, and when they do, it is often ignored.

Source: <http://boz.religionnews.com/2014/01/09/startling-statistics/> 9

Sexual ethics

Four challenges facing the Christian church today:

1. Face the harsh realities of overt sexual abuse within Evangelical Christian churches.
2. **Provide a clear, positive, and holistic theology of human sexuality.**
 - The topic of sex is avoided or handled superficially and with great discomfort.
 - When sex is talked about, the subject is too often rule driven with an emphasis on **“Thou shalt NOT . . . !”**.

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Sexual ethics

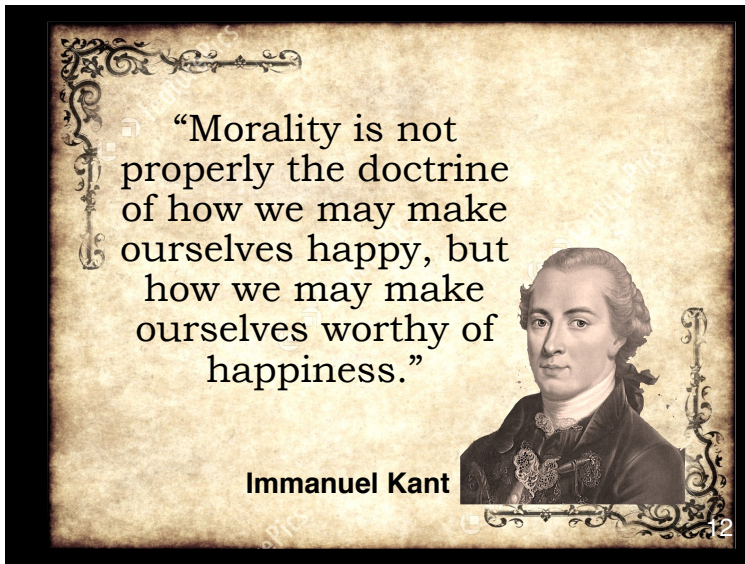
Four challenges facing the Christian church today:

1. Face the harsh realities of overt sexual abuse within Evangelical Christian churches.
2. Provide a clear, positive, and holistic theology of human sexuality.
3. **Take on the popular culture of sex as a therapeutic, self-serving, right (based only on mutual consent, health, & freedom), issue.**

“Does God have anyone
out there for **ME?**”

**“I have a right over
MY body!”**

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Sexual ethics

Four challenges facing the Christian church today:

1. Face the harsh realities of overt sexual abuse within Evangelical Christian churches.
2. Provide a clear, positive, and holistic theology of human sexuality.
3. Take on the popular culture of sex as a therapeutic, self-serving, right (based only on mutual consent, health, & freedom), issue.
4. Don't kill your wounded by excluding, marginalizing, and neglecting those who have struggled and failed in sexual areas.

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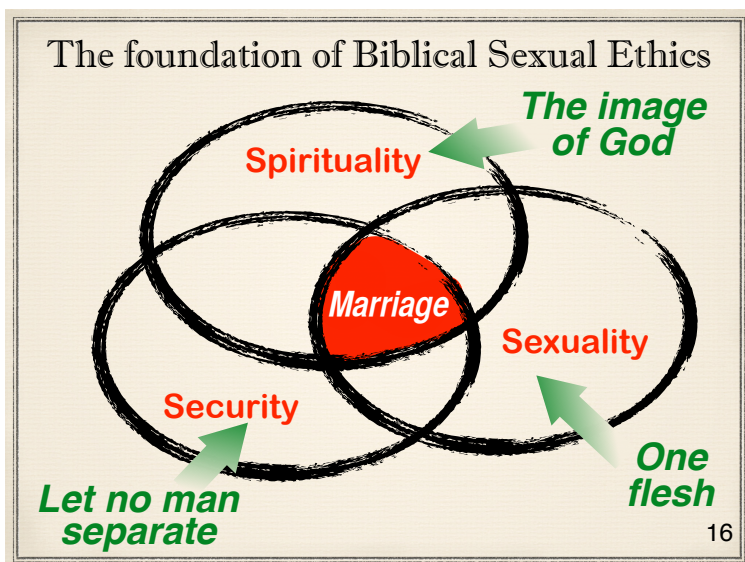
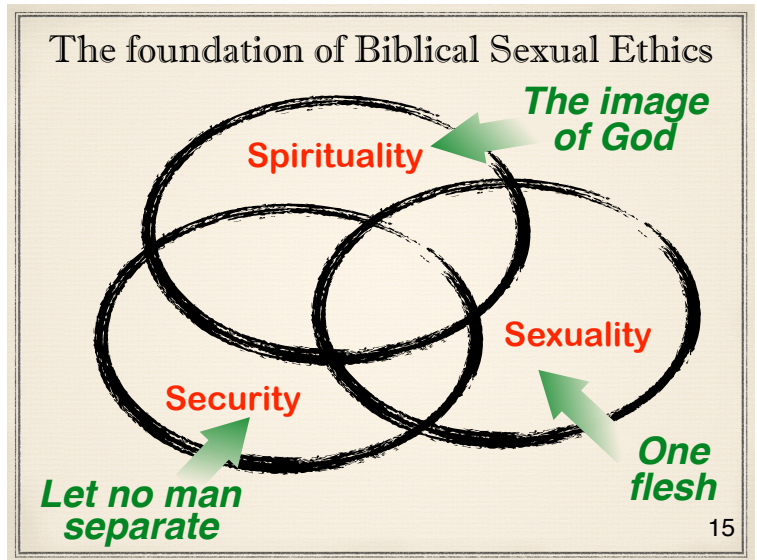
Genesis 1:27 (Spirituality)

“God created man **in His own image**, in the image of God He created him; **male and female** He created them.”

Matthew 19 (Security)

“4 And He answered and said, “Have you not read, that He who created them **from the beginning** made them male and female, 5 and said, ‘For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.’ 6 Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, **let no man separate.**””

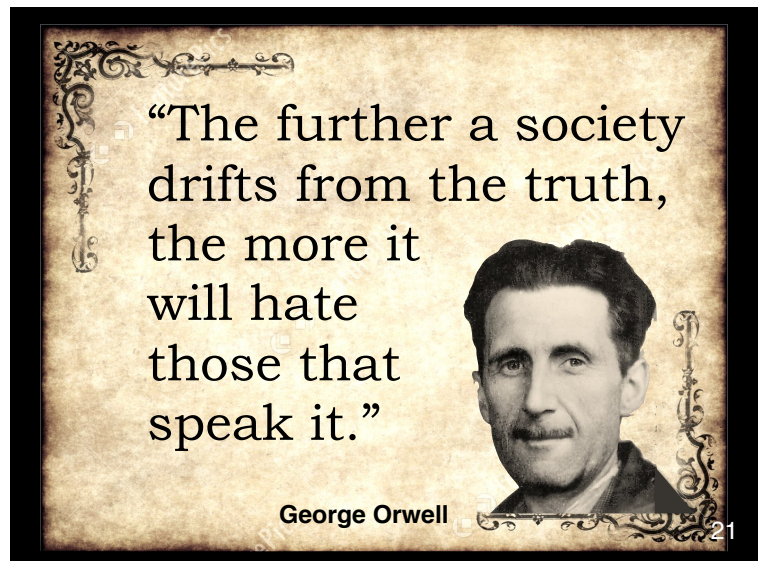
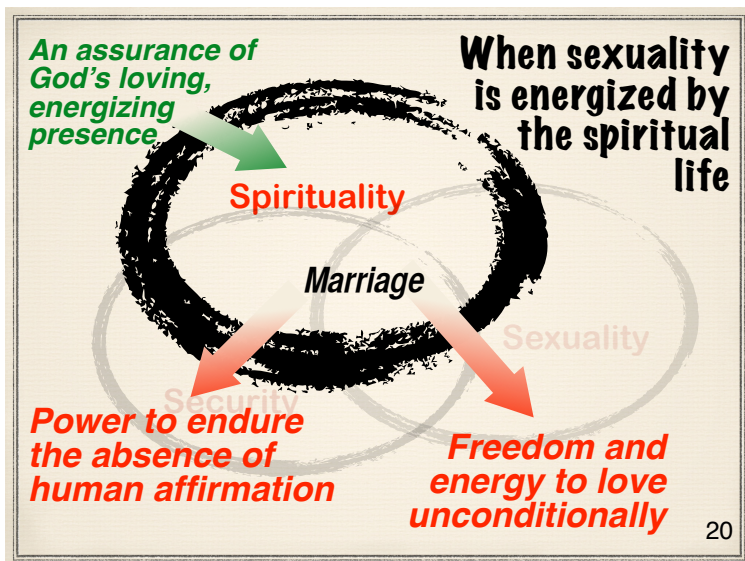
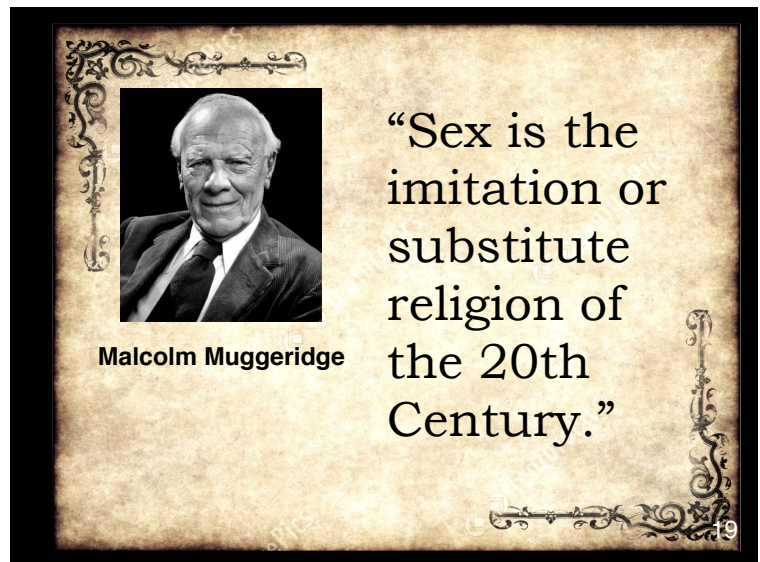
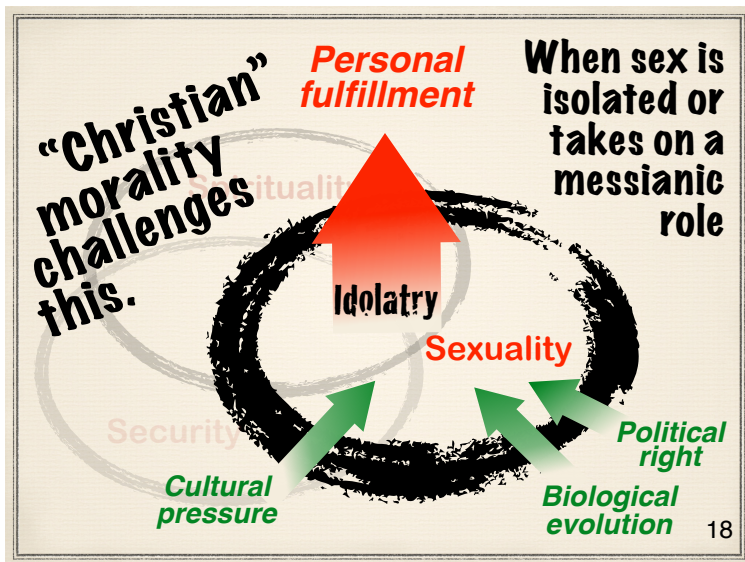
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Why is the marriage covenant so important?

- It is a pledge of **security** that allows a level of **vulnerability and cherishing** that displays the image of God that is appropriate and necessary for **sexual intimacy**.
- It provides an appropriate, loving, **environment** for the **nurture of children**.

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Why are sexual transgressions set apart?

1. Human sexuality and spirituality touch the deepest parts of our being.

- The first things mentioned in Genesis concerning human nature - We are spiritual and sexual.
- Sexual shame and sexual energy play a big role in our psychological and social health and relationships.
- Ancient pagan religions included sexual acts as a part of spiritual worship.

2. Sex is an easy magnate for an empty soul's longing for LIFE.

- It often takes on a messianic role in becoming an idol.
- Historically it has been viewed as a great threat to Christian spirituality.

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Our Functional Messiah is

- what makes us feel most alive.
- what we make our greatest sacrifices to.
- what governs our life decisions.
- what we think about at times of leisure.
- what comforts us when depressed.
- what gives us hope when discouraged.
- what energizes us to give, love, create, and endure.

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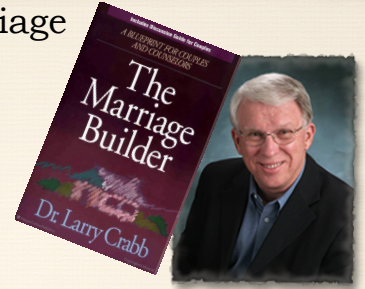
Jesus must be my FUNCTIONAL MESSIAH

*For too many Christians, Jesus is a
FIGUREHEAD MESSIAH*



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“In a healthy marriage
I MINISTER to my
mate, and I don’t
MANIPULATE
them to fulfill my
selfish agenda.”



*Perhaps the greatest distinctive
of Biblical sexual ethics is the
limited role that sex plays in
the nourishing of our soul.*

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A theology of Christian sexual ethics

1. **Sexual stewardship** starts with our identity in Christ.
2. **Sexual sin** is its divorce from security & spirituality.
3. **Sexual shame** drives us to or away from God.

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