

SUSTAINABLE MARRIAGES #4—SEX MATTERS

1 Corinthians 7:1-5

For this week's discussion in small groups, we are going to divide into two groups—a men's and a women's group. This will allow for a different kind of discussion and provide for freer dialog about this topic. Our hope is that small groups create a healthy space where honest accountable relationships can form. Some of you may want to continue this conversation on an ongoing basis apart from the normal meeting time. This is a great way to deepen your walk with God in the context of community. NOTE: Confidentiality is always needed in small group. That is especially true as we discuss this important topic.

GETTING STARTED

On the scale below, how comfortable are you with talking about this topic? Circle one and explain why you feel that way.

Total Horror 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Total Comfort

As you grew up, where did you learn most of your information about sex? Church? Family? Friends? School? Magazines? Movies? Experience?

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. These verses say that the Bible is given to us by God for a reason—what is the ultimate goal for which the Bible was given to us (v 17)? What are the four ways may the Scripture be used in our lives (v 16)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Since this is true, how should we view the Bible's teaching about sexuality?

Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-13. What kinds of things enslave people sexually in our culture? [Men talk about things that enslave men in our culture, women talk about things that enslave women in our culture.]

In this passage, Paul says that we have a choice to make: we can be enslaved to sexual immorality or we can flee sexual immorality. **Read 1 Corinthians 6:17-20,** and list the reasons given for why a believer should want to flee sexual immorality.

Which one of the reasons listed above is most compelling to you personally?

For some, the teaching about sexuality can *feel* like a mixed message—sex is good but you must flee from it. How can we flee sexual immorality but still see sex as something designed by God as a beautiful, enjoyable and powerful bond?

Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-5. How would you summarize the main point of these verses in a single thought or simple sentence?

In verse 4, what does it mean that you “do not have authority over” your own body?

Paul is teaching us that we need to practice the *reciprocal surrendering of our self to another*. The idea is that when a man and a woman marry one another they voluntarily “gift” their body to their lover. It is a gift exchange of the most vulnerable, intimate and personal kind. How would a relationship change if both spouses viewed sexuality in this way?

LIVING IT OUT

What is the most significant barrier keeping you from experiencing all that God intended for you in this area?

From this sermon or this discussion, what was the most significant or applicable point to you?

How can this group help you to honor God in this area of your life?

These sermon notes are produced each week for further study and discussion in our small groups. If you are interested in joining a small group, please contact Leslie Ann Yell at smallgroups@chathamchurch.org or 545-9589.