

# **Not Even a Hint**

## **Leader's Guide**

**Rev. Paul Murphy**



## Introduction

**Leaders:** *The goal of this introduction is to get the gospel correct and use that as motivation for the rest of the study.* It is important to begin the study by emphasizing the Gospel of God's grace. You are aiming for the hearts of these youth. The motivation of their hearts needs to be grace not guilt nor anything else.

The title of this study is "NOT EVEN A HINT." That phrase comes from Ephesians 5:1-3. The key word in these verses is not the title of the study. Rather, it is "Therefore" in verse 1. Whenever you see the word "therefore" in the Bible, it is there for a reason. And the reason is important for us to note if we are to avoid errors and maintain Paul's purpose in writing. We need to be sure we have our Gospel grammar correct. If we do not we will only promote moralism and niceness, but we will not gain Gospel purity.

The structure of Paul's letters is always two-fold. First Paul tells us the Gospel, then he tells us application, i.e., what difference the Gospel ought to make in the lives of those who have been changed by it. The order is important – Gospel first then only afterwards how to live. If that order is reversed, then we are only promoting works righteousness, i.e., live like this and God will then accept you. NO!

We are not talking about being good people. Nor are we talking about being nice people (God spare us from nice-ianity!). We are not talking about morality even. We are talking about a response to God's grace given to us in his Son Jesus Christ. The Gospel is what God has done for hell-deserving sinners in the life, death and resurrection of his Son. What we do should be in loving thankful response to his grace. Hence the therefore.

Notice then that Paul says that sexual immorality and impurity is improper for those who have been rescued by the Gospel. Those are the very kinds of things that we have been saved from, not for. Ephesians 4:17 & 19 says "you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do...they have given themselves up to sensuality." We are not to live like them but instead are called to be different. Christians, God's redeemed people, have been called out of the world and its lifestyles to be different and to live according to a different standard, God's holy Law. We are to be holy as our God is holy. We are to love him as he has loved us. What does the Gospel call for in terms of how we live our lives? Purity.

## Chapter 1

**Leaders:** *The goal of this lesson is to understand why the Church is losing the battle for purity with our young people. The reason is that while the Bible makes this teaching a priority, we are silent.*

1. How many sermon series, Sunday school classes, or bible studies have you heard or attended that addressed sex as presented in the Bible? Yet our culture is “preaching” about it all day, every day in music, movies, TV, social media, etc. It is no wonder that the Church is losing the battle for sexual purity.

### Questions:

- a. Why is the subject of sex such a rare topic in the Church?
- b. How often is the topic of sex addressed in the Bible?
- c. Is the culture of the N.T. Church like or unlike our culture today?

**Leaders:** *The N.T. Church thought that because this problem of immorality and impurity was so prevalent that it was a priority. Look at the teaching of the Apostles with the students. Make sure they have their Bibles open; ask students to read each passage out loud for all to hear.*

Acts 15:19-20, 28-29: In verse 28 “these requirements” is actually “these essentials!”

Notice that verse 25 says “it seemed good to us, i.e., the assembly of the Jerusalem Council. In verse 22 “it seemed good to the apostles and the elders.” In verse 28 we read, “it seemed good to the Holy Spirit.” And it concludes in verse 29 with “...sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these you will do well.” Could there be a more compelling testimony of the priority of purity than the entire assembly, the apostles and elders, and the Holy Spirit? In fact there is. The apostle Paul addresses sexual immorality in ten of his thirteen letters in the N.T. The risen and reigning Jesus himself writes to two of the churches in Revelation about this matter (Pergamum and Thyatira).

- a. Why do we hear crickets and radio silence about this in the Church?
- b. Is the Church guilty of having our heads in the sand like an ostrich?

***Leaders** - Obviously this is a subject that requires discretion. But it is also something about which we should not be silent. Pray for wisdom in leading discussions. Be sensitive that there may be some students who are guilty and may need personal counsel. Also be aware of parents' potential objections to this topic being covered, i.e., it is their responsibility and not yours. While that needs to be respected, you may need to deal with teaching the parents the same lesson from the Bible.*

Here is a time to discuss how sexual relations are portrayed in our secular culture. Inquire about the “preaching” coming from the “pulpits” of our culture, i.e., music, movies, etc. Be sure to address the alarming and epidemic rate of pornography use. My working assumption as a Pastor is that men especially are viewing porn. The following are statistics compiled by Christian Blogger and Pastor Tim Challies ([www.challies.com](http://www.challies.com)). *The primary source for this information was Barna's study, The Porn Phenomenon.*

- ▲ In 2016, people watched 4.6 billion hours of pornography *at just one website* (the biggest porn site in the world).
- ▲ At age 11, the average child has already been exposed to explicit pornographic content through the Internet. 93% of boys and 62% of girls are exposed to internet-based pornography during their adolescent years.
- ▲ 70% of teens and young adults define porn by its function, not its form. Pornography is not defined first as nudity or even presentations of sexuality, but as anything intended to bring about sexual arousal.
- ▲ 57% of young adults admit to seeking out porn at least once per month.
- ▲ 96% of young adults are encouraging, accepting, or neutral in their view toward pornography. Early exposure to pornography and the negligence of parents to adequately address it leaves young adults believing pornography is normal and acceptable and its use unremarkable.
- ▲ 61% of pornography is watched on a mobile phone. In the United States that is as high as 70%.
- ▲ Today, 33% of women aged 25 and under go searching for porn at least once per month.
- ▲ 62% of teens and young adults have received a sexually explicit image. Meanwhile, 41% have sent one (sexting), usually to their boyfriend or girlfriend.
- ▲ 36% of young adults watch pornography to get tips or ideas that they can apply to their own sexual relationships.
- ▲ 80% of porn users feel no sense of guilt when using porn.

2. When the Bible speaks about sexual immorality the term is porneia from which we derive our English word pornography. The term literally means all forms of sexuality outside of a committed marriage between a man and a woman. God's problem is not with sex! It is when sex is used or practiced where it was not designed to be used or practiced. Sex is God's idea! He is concerned that it be enjoyed to the best possible way.

**Questions:**

- a. When the culture of today talks about sex, what does the Bible call it?
  - b. If young people are not getting their ideas about sex from the Church or from their families, where are they getting ideas?
  - c. What is the message of our culture about sex? Purity? Virginity?
  - d. How is the Bible's view of sex regarded by our own young people?
3. Ephesians 6:10-20 teaches that Christians are engaged in spiritual warfare. The battle for sexual purity is a major part of that battle. We are living in the midst of a major moral revolution, a sex-saturated society. The Church must equip our youth in how to think and behave righteously. We cannot afford to be silent.

**Questions:**

- a. Where does spiritual warfare primarily occur?
- b. If our three enemies are the world, the flesh, and the devil, how does each tempt us to sin? How does the world? The flesh? The devil?
- c. What are your weapons in this war?
- d. How does the Gospel apply when you do sin?

***Leaders:** The battle rages in the hearts and minds of our youth. They should be aware of and sensitive to the workings of sin. James 1:13-14 details the process of succumbing to sinful desire. Show them that this arises in their hearts and minds first of all. The gateway is the eyes. "Be careful little eyes what you see." This is critically important with sexual sin.*

*Teach them that God has given them supernatural resources for this battle, (offensively) prayer and the Sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17-18) as well as (defensively) armor.*

*Be very clear and emphatic about the Gospel here. God's abounding grace and the love of Christ are vitally important when sexual sin has occurred. Grace meets us, heals us, and motivates us on to living that pleases God.*

**Conclusions:**

Read Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 4:22-24.

*Focus on the following:*

- 1. The location of these passages is AFTER Paul has set forth the Gospel, i.e., this is to be the response.*
- 2. Note the centrality of the mind and thinking in these passages. We need to think God's thoughts after him and have our worldviews formed by God's Word, not our culture.*

## Chapter 2

**Leaders:** *The goal of this lesson is to discover and promote the purposes for sex according to God's design and plan.*

1. Psalm 119:9-11 says, "How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your Word." Therefore youth need to be taught the Word by which they are expected to live.

It was never God's design for people to have sexually transmitted diseases. It was not God's design for people to raise children out of wedlock. It was not God's design for a young girl to lose her virginity to a boy who "loves her" only for him to start dating the next girl, leaving her with an aching heart and lost purity. All of that was man's design; man's agenda when we started running our sex lives according to our plan and not God's. The preventive (or corrective as the case may be) action is to know what God's purposes for sex are as taught in His Word.

**Leaders:** *Together with the young people survey the landscape of our culture when it comes to sex. It is littered with broken lives. When we ignore God's design and purpose, we always reap sad results.*

2. Sex in the Bible is purpose-driven not pleasure-driven. God has no problem with sex. He invented and designed it. But it is to serve His purposes not ours. It is fully enjoyed only when it serves those purposes. There are four purposes for sex in the Bible. One is procreation (Genesis 1:26-28). The second is consummation (Genesis 2:18-24). The third is recreation (Proverbs 5:15-20). The fourth is protection (1 Corinthians 7:1-5). All four are only to happen in the context of a lifelong, committed, covenantal relationship between a man and a woman, i.e., marriage. When God's design is ignored there are serious consequences and complications.

**Leaders:** *Read each of these passages with the students. Explain each one of them.*

The first purpose for sex is procreation. What is the blessing in Genesis 1:26-28?

Sex is the first blessing mentioned in the Bible. One, obviously God does not have a problem with sex. He invented it. It is a good gift from God. Two, notice what the blessing is – not an orgasm, the blessing is children. These tell us that sex is purpose-driven and not pleasure-driven.

In Genesis 2:18-24 we see the second purpose for sex, consummation. Yet it is also much more; there is the first marriage. In a perfect creation, before the entrance of sin, when God each creation day had declared his work 'good', there was one thing that was not good. "It was not good for man to be alone." So God created a woman for the man.

Notice that human beings are unique creatures, distinct from and different from all other creatures. Humans alone are made in the image and likeness of God. Humans alone have souls. We were

created by and for a relationship with God. He intended us to know him and be known by him. Hence humans have an innate heart yearning to know and be known by God but also by another human. This is why it was not good for man to be alone.

Sex was designed to be the culmination, the conclusion, and the climax of a relationship between two humans. And marriage is what distinguishes that relationship from all other relationships. Genesis 2 says that Adam and Eve were naked and unashamed. This refers to not just physical nakedness but to their total vulnerability and transparency with each other; they knew each other and were known by the other. In marriage the couple vows to love for better or for worse as long as they both shall live. That is a picture of the Gospel. God knows all about us (including all our sins past, present, and future) yet “while we were yet sinners Christ died for us,” i.e., He loved us knowing the worst about us.

This is why sex is reserved for marriage. It is because only in marriage does that relationship between two humans with eternal souls culminate in a depth and breadth of relationship that is distinct from sex in all other creatures. Sex outside of marriage is just a lie. It is using another person for your gratification and not to cement the relationship.

**Questions:**

- a. How is sex for humans different than sex for other creatures?
- b. Jeremiah 17:9-10 tells us about our hearts and that the Lord knows our hearts. How does that tell us the Gospel? How does that relate to marriage?
- c. What is the difference between an acquaintance, a friend, a close friend, and your best friend? Why is your spouse to be your best friend? What does that have to do with sex?
- d. In the KJV when a man had sex with a woman it was said that “he knew” her. Why is that a profound statement about the male/female relationship?

Proverbs 5:17-20. The third purpose for sex according to the Bible is for recreation. Sex is fun and enjoyable. A couple is supposed to be intoxicated with love. God is not opposed to or scared of sex. Look at the Song of Songs in the Bible. That is hot stuff filled with allusions and metaphors to the delights of sexual love between a husband and wife. The rabbis forbade young people to read it until they were 18!

God wants couples to be intoxicated with love and sex. And marriage is the place he designed for it to be enjoyed. Secular studies have shown that couples that engage in pre-marital sex or live together

prior to marriage neither have satisfying, long-term sex lives nor remain together for a long time. On the other hand, there are secular studies that have shown that those couples who have the most satisfying relationships and the best sex lives are those who have one partner for their entire lives. These seem to prove the wisdom of God's design. Our sex-saturated society has bought the lie instead. The results of that are tragic.

Notice verse 17 in our text. "...for yourself alone, and not for strangers..." Sex is intended to be exclusive between two people. The sexual relationship is designed to be enjoyed when there is an exclusive commitment between a couple in marriage.

**Questions:**

- a. Given what we looked at in Genesis 2 and the purpose for sex taught there, why do you think committed couples in an exclusive sexual relationship are more satisfied than couples that are not?
- b. Is marriage only about legal sex? Or is there more to it than that?
- c. What contributes to a strong marriage relationship? What makes it enduring?
- d. Why are passages like Proverbs 5 and Song of Songs in the Bible? Isn't it inappropriate?
- e. Should these passages be preached from the pulpit? How are they Christ-centered?

1 Corinthians 7:1-5. The fourth purpose for sex according to the Bible is protection. Sex in marriage protects us from the devil's attacks. Remember that we are engaged in spiritual warfare here. Peter tells us that the devil goes around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Paul tells us that we are aware of the devil's schemes. As the father of lies he seeks to get Christians, especially young vulnerable Christians, to believe the lie that sex is pleasure-driven not purpose-driven. It is important to note this because we have never-dying souls that are at stake.

Note verse 5. Sex in marriage is to be regular and continuous. God created marriage as the place for sex to be enjoyed fully. And enjoying regular sex in marriage prevents the devil from tempting one to sin.

Notice also verse 1. In the NIV it is translated "It is not good for a man to touch a woman." The ESV correctly translates the intent when it speaks of sexual relations, not simply touching a woman. However I would like to use the NIV translation to relate a lesson:

If I go into the Metropolitan Museum of Art in NYC there are many masterpieces by Van Gogh, Rembrandt, etc. If I were to try to touch them, a guard would quickly approach me to say “No touching, that is a masterpiece.” But if I went into an art gallery and bought a painting and placed it in my home, then I would be able to touch it all I wanted. Get the point? Paul says that each person is a masterpiece created uniquely by God (Ephesians 2:10 the word is *poiema* from which we get our English word poem. Each person is a work of art, a masterpiece, if you will). Parents, grandparents, teachers, elders, and numerous others have poured into each masterpiece. All have contributed to make that person a unique masterpiece. Don’t touch it, i.e., have sexual relations with that person. Don’t ruin the masterpiece. If you want it, get married and then touch and enjoy to your heart’s content.

**Questions:**

- a. How is the devil using sex to lure singles into sin?
  
- b. What are some of the devil’s schemes to tempt you into sexual sin?
  
- c. Since the devil is a liar (John 8:44), what are some of his lies seen or heard in our culture about sexual sin?
  
- d. When is a young man or woman mature enough to consider a life-long commitment like marriage?

**CONCLUSIONS:**

The catechism defines what is good in **Q & A 91 as 1**. What is done from true faith, done according to God’s Law, and done for God’s glory.

Since sex is a good gift of God, how and when should two people have sex?

## Chapter 3

*Leaders: The goal of this lesson is to promote purity in our young people. The focus is on positive means youth can use to stay pure for themselves and for each other. We do not want to promote purity by guilt manipulation “If you have sex you’re going to die and burn in hell.” Nor do we want to use scare tactics. Rather, set forth some ways that are easily understood and able to be put into practice.*

1. What is the price of your virginity? Read Deuteronomy 22:28-29. The price is 50 shekels. That would be approximately 5-7 years’ wages. If the average wage in the USA is \$50,000 then the price of your virginity is about \$250,000-\$350,000.

### Questions:

- a. How much do young ladies spend to make themselves beautiful (hair styled, manicures, etc.)? How much does the price of virginity contribute to your beauty?
  - b. What is the value placed on sexual purity in our culture?
  - c. How would this O.T. Law, if universally shared by all in our culture, shape our culture differently?
2. How to deal with lust, especially pornography? Lust and porn are all about you, yourself – self-satisfaction and self-gratification, solo sex. This is 180 degrees the opposite of how God wants us to relate to others. Love, according to Scripture, is other-oriented. It is thinking of others before self. Love is giving of yourself to another or others. Read John 3:16, Ephesians 5:22-33 and 1 Corinthians 13. See how love is giving not getting, doing not feeling, an action not an emotion?

Just think of the two great commandments (love God and neighbor), i.e., we were created to be oriented to God and others. If we did not have mirrors, we would not even know what we looked like because God created us to be other-oriented.

This is very important to learn as you begin dating and considering marriage. And it carries over right into the marriage bed. The greatest pleasure is giving pleasure, not being pleased. That is the exact opposite of what our sex-saturated society preaches.

### Questions:

- a. How is love the cure for lust?
- b. How is porn use the opposite of love?

- c. Is solo sex OK? Can you have solo sex without lusting?
3. Accountability. There is good software out there for those struggling with pornography (Covenant Eyes and others). But also utilize human accountability. The best accountability is not software, but another person. Enlist a pastor, an elder, a friend (one who doesn't struggle with porn). Say to them "Help me, tell me, hold me accountable." Harvestusa.org has good teaching on their website that promotes proactive accountability.

***Leaders:** Accountability software is OK, but be very careful to communicate the difference between the inability to sin (which software provides) and not desiring to sin (which is a heart matter). What we want to promote is to so change our desires that we no longer want to sin. Realize that geographical location means very little any more. The internet and its easy accessibility anywhere means the "world" is invading our youth at all times and in all places.*

**Questions:**

- a. Are your digital devices sources of temptation or sin for you?
  - b. Would you be willing to be transparent and vulnerable with another person in order to be accountable or to help hold another accountable?
4. Be aware that sex is seductive. Ted Tripp writes, "It seduces you with the prospect of contentment-producing pleasure but leaves you empty and craving more...it sells you the lie that physical pleasure is the pathway to spiritual peace. Sex is the work of the Creator's hands but tends to promise you only what the Creator can deliver...Sex is powerfully pleasurable, but it cannot satisfy your heart...If you look to creation to get what only the Creator can give you; it always results in addiction of some kind. The thing you hoped would serve you pulls you into its service. What seemed like freedom ends up being bondage. The thing is not the problem; what you've asked of it is." (Online article *Ten Things You Should Know About Sex*)

***Leaders:** Here is where you can lead the young people using your own experience and spiritual maturity to nurture them to a close walk with the Lord. Perhaps emphasize what spiritual disciplines have helped you in your walk with Christ.*

**Questions:**

- a. How are you guarding your heart?
- b. How are you cultivating a relationship with Jesus Christ in order to satisfy your heart? Psalm 37:4 says "Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart." How can you (or are you) delighting yourself in the Lord?

5. Beware of emotional intimacy. What I mean by this is the often seen deceit of being “just friends.” A relationship begins, perhaps harmlessly at first, between members of the opposite sex. But soon romantic feelings develop in one of the persons. If they make this known to the other person (who does not have similar romantic feelings) the rejoinder is “Can we just be friends?” Then the relationship continues. This always leads to hurt feelings and heartbreak. Members of the opposite sex cannot be “just friends” sharing their hearts with one another when such behavior is intended to be done in a committed relationship. You must DTR – Define The Relationship at the outset.

Elisabeth Elliot writes, “Resist the temptation to trifle with other people’s feelings. It may be fun to ‘play the fish’ like a trout on a fly line, but it is cruel, it is dishonest, and it is dangerous.” (*Passion and Purity*)

*Leaders: Men and women are made different emotionally as well as physically. Men want to care for women and women want to be cared for by men. Things in male/female relationships like transparency, vulnerability, opening one’s heart to another are best reserved for a committed relationship and not just friends. Help the young people to appreciate the difference between a “platonic” friendship and an emotional one.*

**Questions:**

- a. Can a man and a woman be “just friends”? What do you think?
6. Set boundaries in your relationship. Discuss, plan, and commit to what you will and will not do in a dating relationship. One wise mother of five advises, “Introducing physical intimacy too soon clouds your judgment and discernment. Once that boundary has been crossed, it’s very often difficult to go back and show restraint. It has a way of taking center stage, and now even the time you spend apart is not given to personal growth, reflection, prayer, waiting on the Lord, or serving others but can be eaten up with longing, desire, or lusting... You want each other physically. That wins. Any conflicts or differences in your faith, ideals of family life, church, money, education of future children, etc. will be easily overlooked because you ‘really connect’ on the physical level.”

Here is a true story. A young man drove to pick up a young girl for a date. He got out of his car, opened the door to let her in, then went back and got into his side of the car. When he sat down he looked over at the girl and saw she was praying. He later said, “That ruined everything I had planned for the night.”

*Leaders: While we don’t want youth to start by making guidelines because “they have no value in restraining sensual indulgence” (Colossians 2:23), rules can help them put their convictions into action. The starting point has to be a heart desire to honor God with our bodies and to serve each other.*

Here are some guidelines others have found helpful:

- A. Don't caress each other.
- B. Don't cuddle close with each other.
- C. Don't be alone with each other at late hours.
- D. Define what are appropriate physical expressions.

*Communicate that the greatest concern is the direction and intention of their hearts. Rules and guidelines are tools not masters.*

*What are some of the things that you found helpful when you were dating?*

7. See attachment entitled "Spiritual Resources for Your War Against Personal Sin."

**Conclusion:**

As we began with the Gospel, so we want to end with the Gospel also.

Read Psalm 51 – this records David's repentance after committing adultery with Bathsheba. If someone has sinned sexually, they cannot regain their physical purity, but they can be pure in God's eyes.

The catechism correctly highlights this in **Q & A 60**: "How are you righteous before God?"

**A.** Only by true faith in Jesus Christ.

Even though my conscience accuses me of having grievously sinned against all God's commandments, of never having kept any of them, and of still being inclined toward all evil, nevertheless, without any merit of my own, but of sheer grace, God grants and credits to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner, and as if I had been as perfectly obedient as Christ was obedient for me."

Furthermore the Gospel teaches us. Read Titus 2:11-12: "For *the grace of God* has appeared, bringing salvation *for all people*, training us to renounce ungodliness and *worldly passions*, and to live *self-controlled, upright, and godly lives* in the present age."



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## **Student Questions**

**Rev. Paul Murphy**



## Introduction

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## Chapter 1

1. How many sermon series, Sunday school classes, or bible studies have you heard or attended that addressed sex as presented in the Bible? Yet our culture is “preaching” about it all day, every day in music, movies, TV, social media, etc. It is no wonder that the Church is losing the battle for sexual purity.

### Questions:

- a. Why is the subject of sex such a rare topic in the Church?
- b. How often is the topic of sex addressed in the Bible?
- c. Is the culture of the N.T. Church like or unlike our culture today?

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  - b. If young people are not getting their ideas about sex from the Church or from their families, where are they getting ideas?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. What is the message of our culture about sex? Purity? Virginity?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - d. How is the Bible's view of sex regarded by our own young people?
3. Ephesians 6:10-20 teaches that Christians are engaged in spiritual warfare. The battle for sexual purity is a major part of that battle. We are living in the midst of a major moral revolution, a sex-saturated society. The Church must equip our youth in how to think and behave righteously. We cannot afford to be silent.

**Questions:**

- a. Where does spiritual warfare primarily occur?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. If our three enemies are the world, the flesh, and the devil, how does each tempt us to sin? How does the world? The flesh? The devil?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- c. What are your weapons in this war?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- d. How does the Gospel apply when you do sin?

**Conclusions:**

Read Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 4:22-24.

## Chapter 2

1. Psalm 119:9-11 says, “How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your Word.” Therefore youth need to be taught the Word by which they are expected to live.

It was never God’s design for people to have sexually transmitted diseases. It was not God’s design for people to raise children out of wedlock. It was not God’s design for a young girl to lose her virginity to a boy who “loves her” only for him to start dating the next girl, leaving her with an aching heart and lost purity. All of that was man’s design; man’s agenda when we started running our sex lives according to our plan and not God’s. The preventive (or corrective as the case may be) action is to know what God’s purposes for sex are as taught in His Word.

2. Sex in the Bible is purpose-driven not pleasure-driven. God has no problem with sex. He invented and designed it. But it is to serve His purposes not ours. It is fully enjoyed only when it serves those purposes. There are four purposes for sex in the Bible. One is procreation (Genesis 1:26-28). The second is consummation (Genesis 2:18-24). The third is recreation (Proverbs 5:15-20). The fourth is protection (1 Corinthians 7:1-5). All four are only to happen in the context of a lifelong, committed, covenantal relationship between a man and a woman, i.e., marriage. When God’s design is ignored there are serious consequences and complications.

The first purpose for sex is procreation. What is the blessing in Genesis 1:26-28?

Sex is the first blessing mentioned in the Bible. One, obviously God does not have a problem with sex. He invented it. It is a good gift from God. Two, notice what the blessing is – not an orgasm, the blessing is children. These tell us that sex is purpose-driven and not pleasure-driven.

In Genesis 2:18-24 we see the second purpose for sex, consummation. Yet it is also much more; there is the first marriage. In a perfect creation, before the entrance of sin, when God each creation day had declared his work ‘good’, there was one thing that was not good. “It was not good for man to be alone.” So God created a woman for the man.

Notice that human beings are unique creatures, distinct from and different from all other creatures. Humans alone are made in the image and likeness of God. Humans alone have souls. We were created by and for a relationship with God. He intended us to know him and be known by him. Hence humans have an innate heart yearning to know and be known by God but also by another human. This is why it was not good for man to be alone.

Sex was designed to be the culmination, the conclusion, and the climax of a relationship between two humans. And marriage is what distinguishes that relationship from all other relationships. Genesis 2 says that Adam and Eve were naked and unashamed. This refers to not just physical nakedness but to

their total vulnerability and transparency with each other; they knew each other and were known by the other. In marriage the couple vows to love for better or for worse as long as they both shall live. That is a picture of the Gospel. God knows all about us (including all our sins past, present, and future) yet “while we were yet sinners Christ died for us,” i.e., He loved us knowing the worst about us.

This is why sex is reserved for marriage. It is because only in marriage does that relationship between two humans with eternal souls culminate in a depth and breadth of relationship that is distinct from sex in all other creatures. Sex outside of marriage is just a lie. It is using another person for your gratification and not to cement the relationship.

**Questions:**

- a. How is sex for humans different than sex for other creatures?
  
- b. Jeremiah 17:9-10 tells us about our hearts and that the Lord knows our hearts. How does that tell us the Gospel? How does that relate to marriage?
  
- c. What is the difference between an acquaintance, a friend, a close friend, and your best friend? Why is your spouse to be your best friend? What does that have to do with sex?
  
- d. In the KJV when a man had sex with a woman it was said that “he knew” her. Why is that a profound statement about the male/female relationship?

Proverbs 5:17-20. The third purpose for sex according to the Bible is for recreation. Sex is fun and enjoyable. A couple is supposed to be intoxicated with love. God is not opposed to or scared of sex. Look at the Song of Songs in the Bible. That is hot stuff filled with allusions and metaphors to the delights of sexual love between a husband and wife. The rabbis forbade young people to read it until they were 18!

God wants couples to be intoxicated with love and sex. And marriage is the place he designed for it to be enjoyed. Secular studies have shown that couples that engage in pre-marital sex or live together prior to marriage neither have satisfying, long-term sex lives nor remain together for a long time. On the other hand, there are secular studies that have shown that those couples who have the most satisfying relationships and the best sex lives are those who have one partner for their entire lives.

These seem to prove the wisdom of God’s design. Our sex-saturated society has bought the lie instead. The results of that are tragic.

Notice verse 17 in our text. “...for yourself alone, and not for strangers...” Sex is intended to be exclusive between two people. The sexual relationship is designed to be enjoyed when there is an exclusive commitment between a couple in marriage.

**Questions:**

- a. Given what we looked at in Genesis 2 and the purpose for sex taught there, why do you think committed couples in an exclusive sexual relationship are more satisfied than couples that are not?
  
- b. Is marriage only about legal sex? Or is there more to it than that?
  
- c. What contributes to a strong marriage relationship? What makes it enduring?
  
- d. Why are passages like Proverbs 5 and Song of Songs in the Bible? Isn’t it inappropriate?
  
- e. Should these passages be preached from the pulpit? How are they Christ-centered?

1 Corinthians 7:1-5. The fourth purpose for sex according to the Bible is protection. Sex in marriage protects us from the devil’s attacks. Remember that we are engaged in spiritual warfare here. Peter tells us that the devil goes around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Paul tells us that we are aware of the devil’s schemes. As the father of lies he seeks to get Christians, especially young vulnerable Christians, to believe the lie that sex is pleasure-driven not purpose-driven. It is important to note this because we have never-dying souls that are at stake.

Note verse 5. Sex in marriage is to be regular and continuous. God created marriage as the place for sex to be enjoyed fully. And enjoying regular sex in marriage prevents the devil from tempting one to sin.

Notice also verse 1. In the NIV it is translated “It is not good for a man to touch a woman.” The ESV correctly translates the intent when it speaks of sexual relations, not simply touching a woman. However I would like to use the NIV translation to relate a lesson:

If I go into the Metropolitan Museum of Art in NYC there are many masterpieces by Van Gogh, Rembrandt, etc. If I were to try to touch them, a guard would quickly approach me to say “No touching, that is a masterpiece.” But if I went into an art gallery and bought a painting and placed it in my home, then I would be able to touch it all I wanted. Get the point? Paul says that each person is a masterpiece created uniquely by God (Ephesians 2:10 the word is *poiema* from which we get our English word poem. Each person is a work of art, a masterpiece, if you will). Parents, grandparents, teachers, elders, and numerous others have poured into each masterpiece. All have contributed to make that person a unique masterpiece. Don’t touch it, i.e., have sexual relations with that person. Don’t ruin the masterpiece. If you want it, get married and then touch and enjoy to your heart’s content.

**Questions:**

- a. How is the devil using sex to lure singles into sin?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. What are some of the devil’s schemes to tempt you into sexual sin?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- c. Since the devil is a liar (John 8:44), what are some of his lies seen or heard in our culture about sexual sin?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- d. When is a young man or woman mature enough to consider a life-long commitment like marriage?

**CONCLUSIONS:**

The catechism defines what is good in **Q & A 91 as 1.** “What is done from true faith, done according to God’s Law, and done for God’s glory.”

Since sex is a good gift of God, how and when should two people have sex?

## Chapter 3

1. What is the price of your virginity? Read Deuteronomy 22:28-29. The price is 50 shekels. That would be approximately 5-7 years' wages. If the average wage in the USA is \$50,000 then the price of your virginity is about \$250,000-\$350,000.

### Questions:

- a. How much do young ladies spend to make themselves beautiful (hair styled, manicures, etc.)? How much does the price of virginity contribute to your beauty?
  - b. What is the value placed on sexual purity in our culture?
  - c. How would this O.T. Law, if universally shared by all in our culture, shape our culture differently?
2. How to deal with lust, especially pornography? Lust and porn are all about you, yourself – self-satisfaction and self-gratification, solo sex. This is 180 degrees the opposite of how God wants us to relate to others. Love, according to Scripture, is other-oriented. It is thinking of others before self. Love is giving of yourself to another or others. Read John 3:16, Ephesians 5:22-33 and 1 Corinthians 13. See how love is giving not getting, doing not feeling, an action not an emotion?

Just think of the two great commandments (love God and neighbor), i.e., we were created to be oriented to God and others. If we did not have mirrors, we would not even know what we looked like because God created us to be other-oriented.

This is very important to learn as you begin dating and considering marriage. And it carries over right into the marriage bed. The greatest pleasure is giving pleasure, not being pleased. That is the exact opposite of what our sex-saturated society preaches.

### Questions:

- a. How is love the cure for lust?

- b. How is porn use the opposite of love?
  - c. Is solo sex OK? Can you have solo sex without lusting?
3. Accountability. There is good software out there for those struggling with pornography (Covenant Eyes and others). But also utilize human accountability. The best accountability is not software, but another person. Enlist a pastor, an elder, a friend (one who doesn't struggle with porn). Say to them "Help me, tell me, hold me accountable." Harvestusa.org has good teaching on their website that promotes proactive accountability.

**Questions:**

- a. Are your digital devices sources of temptation or sin for you?
  - b. Would you be willing to be transparent and vulnerable with another person in order to be accountable or to help hold another accountable?
4. Be aware that sex is seductive. Ted Tripp writes, "It seduces you with the prospect of contentment-producing pleasure but leaves you empty and craving more...it sells you the lie that physical pleasure is the pathway to spiritual peace. Sex is the work of the Creator's hands but tends to promise you only what the Creator can deliver...Sex is powerfully pleasurable, but it cannot satisfy your heart...If you look to creation to get what only the Creator can give you; it always results in addiction of some kind. The thing you hoped would serve you pulls you into its service. What seemed like freedom ends up being bondage. The thing is not the problem; what you've asked of it is." (Online article *Ten Things You Should Know About Sex*)

**Questions:**

- a. How are you guarding your heart?
- b. How are you cultivating a relationship with Jesus Christ in order to satisfy your heart? Psalm 37:4 says "Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart." How can you (or are you) delighting yourself in the Lord?

5. Beware of emotional intimacy. What I mean by this is the often seen deceit of being “just friends.” A relationship begins, perhaps harmlessly at first, between members of the opposite sex. But soon romantic feelings develop in one of the persons. If they make this known to the other person (who does not have similar romantic feelings) the rejoinder is “Can we just be friends?” Then the relationship continues. This always leads to hurt feelings and heartbreak. Members of the opposite sex cannot be “just friends” sharing their hearts with one another when such behavior is intended to be done in a committed relationship. You must DTR – Define The Relationship at the outset.

Elisabeth Elliot writes, “Resist the temptation to trifle with other people’s feelings. It may be fun to ‘play the fish’ like a trout on a fly line, but it is cruel, it is dishonest, and it is dangerous.” (*Passion and Purity*)

**Questions:**

- a. Can a man and a woman be “just friends”? What do you think?
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6. Set boundaries in your relationship. Discuss, plan, and commit to what you will and will not do in a dating relationship. One wise mother of five advises, “Introducing physical intimacy too soon clouds your judgment and discernment. Once that boundary has been crossed, it’s very often difficult to go back and show restraint. It has a way of taking center stage, and now even the time you spend apart is not given to personal growth, reflection, prayer, waiting on the Lord, or serving others but can be eaten up with longing, desire, or lusting... You want each other physically. That wins. Any conflicts or differences in your faith, ideals of family life, church, money, education of future children, etc. will be easily overlooked because you ‘really connect’ on the physical level.”

Here is a true story. A young man drove to pick up a young girl for a date. He got out of his car, opened the door to let her in, then went back and got into his side of the car. When he sat down he looked over at the girl and saw she was praying. He later said, “That ruined everything I had planned for the night.”

Here are some guidelines others have found helpful:

- A. Don’t caress each other.
  - B. Don’t cuddle close with each other.
  - C. Don’t be alone with each other at late hours.
  - D. Define what are appropriate physical expressions.
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7. See attachment entitled “Spiritual Resources for Your War Against Personal Sin.”

**Conclusion:**

As we began with the Gospel, so we want to end with the Gospel also.

Read Psalm 51 – this records David’s repentance after committing adultery with Bathsheba. If someone has sinned sexually, they cannot regain their physical purity, but they can be pure in God’s eyes.

The catechism correctly highlights this in **Q & A 60**: “How are you righteous before God?”

**A.** Only by true faith in Jesus Christ.

Even though my conscience accuses me of having grievously sinned against all God’s commandments, of never having kept any of them, and of still being inclined toward all evil, nevertheless, without any merit of my own, but of sheer grace, God grants and credits to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner, and as if I had been as perfectly obedient as Christ was obedient for me.”

Furthermore the Gospel teaches us. Read Titus 2:11-12: “For *the grace of God* has appeared, bringing salvation *for all people*, training us to renounce ungodliness and *worldly passions*, and *to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives* in the present age.”

# Spiritual Resources for Your War Against Personal Sin

- 1. Guard Your Heart – Proverbs 4:23.** The gates to our hearts are primarily our eyes and ears. **Job 31:1** – Job made a covenant with his eyes not to violate the seventh commandment. **Matthew 5:28-29** – Jesus says to remove any part of the body that causes you to sin against the seventh commandment.  
**Resolve:** Covenant with your eyes and ears not to watch or listen to anything that would desensitize you to the ugliness of sin. Examples: MTV, R-rated movies and videos, certain kinds of music.
- 2. Prayer – Matt 26:41.** In order not to fall into temptation Jesus says that prayer is essential. **1 Cor. 10:13** – Paul says that God promises to answer such prayers with a way of escape from temptation.  
**Resolve:** To daily pray and ask God to give you grace and His Spirit to resist temptation.
- 3. Bible Reading, Meditation, and Memorization – Psalm 119:9, 11.** David tells you how you can stay pure in an impure world. You must hide God’s Word in your heart. This is how Jesus successfully resisted the tempting of satan in the wilderness. **Matt. 4:1-11** – Jesus responded by saying “It is written ...” You cannot do that unless you have read, know, meditated upon and memorized the Word so that God the Holy Spirit can bring it to your mind to help you in time of need.  
**Resolve:** Memorize those passages that deal with God’s will on the seventh commandment, such as **2 Tim. 2:22, Matt. 5:28-29, 1 Thess. 4:3-5**, etc.
- 4. Fasting – Matt. 6:16-18.** Jesus instructs us that fasting is a spiritual exercise that is used for strengthening your prayer life, seeking God’s guidance, seeking divine deliverance or protection, overcoming temptation, dedicating yourself to God, expressing your love to or worship of God. **NOTE WELL** Jesus gives you an incentive to fast in verse 18 when He says that God will reward you.  
**Resolve:** To fast (if medically allowable) as needed for any of the above reasons.
- 5. Cultivate an Awareness of God’s presence – Gen. 39:9.** Joseph, when tempted to sin with Potiphar’s wife, refused because he knew God would see and be offended. **Heb. 4:13** tells us that God sees all things. You will be less likely to fall into sin if you know God is right there with you.  
**Resolve:** To remind yourself that God is always with you wherever you are, whatever you are doing.

(Over)

6. **Enjoy a Personal Relationship with God – Ps. 37:4.** You were created to have intimacy, enjoyment, and security in your relationships. But first and foremost there must be intimacy, enjoyment and security with God in whose image you are made.  
**Resolve:** To “walk with God” on a daily basis by reading His Word so He can talk to you and praying so you can talk to Him. Pay particular attention to His promises, warnings, commands and encouragement.
  
7. **View Your Body as an Instrument to Glorify God – Rom. 12:1-2** – See also **1 Cor. 6:13-20; Rom. 6:13.** Remember that Jesus bought you with His own precious blood. Your body belongs to Him and is to be used as He desires.  
**Resolve:** To daily use the parts of your body, including your mind, to please God not yourself.
  
8. **Exercise Self-Denial and Self-Control – Matt. 16:24, Gal. 5:23.** We live in a society that daily bombards you with messages of self-indulgence and self-gratification. Jesus tells us a better, more satisfying way to live. **1 Thess. 5:6, 8; Titus 2:6, 12; Peter 1:13, 4:7, 5:8; 2 Peter 1:6.**  
**Resolve:** To daily and prayerfully exercise and cultivate this fruit of the Spirit.
  
9. **Develop Positive Peer Pressure – Gal. 1:10.** Paul says that as Christians we are called to please God and not please men. You must not give in to the pressure of your peers if they lead you into sinful behavior. Instead develop pressure on them by living a life that is first of all set on pleasing God. Then let them follow your example.  
**Resolve:** To be a leader in righteousness and not a follower of sinfulness. Commit yourself to living upright, godly, righteous lives.
  
10. **Repentance and Forgiveness – Psalm 51.** If you have sinned sexually you cannot regain your physical purity, but you can be pure in God’s eyes, and that is what counts (#9). **2 Cor. 5:17** says that “... if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” You are now seen by God as being dressed in the robes of the righteousness of His Son Jesus. His purity, cleanliness, and perfect obedience are yours! You are His bride dressed in pure white.  
**Resolve:** To quickly, daily repent of sexual sins whether they be in thought, word, or actions. Receive the forgiveness of Christ. Commit to serve and obey God’s commands out of a heart filled with love and thanks to God for His grace and mercy.