

Sermon Notes  
1 Corinthians Series – Lesson 21  
Sleeping with the Enemy?  
1 Cor. 7:1-11  
June 10, 2018  
David Lien

Note: I reused thoughts and illustrations from Tim Keller and Kris Vallotton

### Overview

1. The Nature of Sex: How should we think about it?
2. The Arena of Sex: When should we do it? (Context)
3. The Weapon of Sex: How should we use it?
4. The Lesson of Sex: What else is God saying through it?

### I. The Nature of Sex

#### A. False Beliefs

1. Sex is to be worshipped—temple prostitutes
2. Sex is a mere appetite—"Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food" (1 Corinthians 6:13)
3. Sex is unspiritual—It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." (1 Corinthians 7:1)

#### B. Paul's Revolutionary Statements

1. Sex is a mingling of souls (6:16)
  - Illustration: gluing two pieces of wood together
  - Soul tie—no divorce!!!
2. The husband does not have authority over his own body
3. It is good to remain single
4. The husband should not divorce his wife
5. Better for widows **not** to remarry
6. Married people should live as if they are not married (v. 29)

#### C. The Christian Sex Ethic

NT teaches that sexual relationships are:

1. Optional—gift, single as I am, exercise self-control (v.9); sex does not complete you; enter marriage at own risk, seriously, to die for another
2. Exclusive: own wife, own husband, no authority over own body
3. Binding—come together again, one flesh, lest Satan tempt you
4. Loving—do not deprive, give, give!

5. Passionate—burn, passions are strong (v.36)
6. Purifying—because of temptation to sexual immorality, better than to burn; to secure undivided devotion to the Lord (v.35)
7. Permanent—should not divorce (v.12)

## II. The Arena of Sex

Two holy options:

1. Celibacy—no sex
  - Jesus, Paul, Anna, Philip's 4 daughters
2. Monogamy—frequent sex
  - Both are “gifts” but of “different kinds.”
  - Both promote peace and wholeness
  - Both are spiritual and honor God

## III. The Weapon of Sex

Illustration: double edged sword

### A. Against your spouse

\*\*\*Know what Satan wants you to do

- 2 Cor. 2:10-11
- Eph. 5:11

#### 1. Withholding

- You create a divide when you withhold love from your spouse IN ANY WAY
- Do you withhold encouraging words?
- Do you withhold a listening ear?
- Do you withhold quality time?
- Do you withhold affectionate or romantic touch?
- Do you withhold gifts or the commemoration of important dates?
- Do you withhold interest in your partner's interests?

#### 2. Withdrawing

- Resentment from the one denied
- Scorn from the one denying—“why do they want it all the time?”
- Commercialism—deal-making: what do I have to do for you to get what I want from you? Earning expressions of love
- Lack of understanding and mercy
- Lack of self-surrender and self-death
- Temptation to the unsatisfied
- Trust dissolves because you create a one-way street; one partner is always lacking what the other sparingly dispenses

(Again, this goes for **all forms of love**)

\*\*\*Sexless marriages are so dangerous that Paul allows this fasting exception only as a concession. Undertake it with caution and wisdom

## B. Against Satan

\*\*\* Know the spiritual impact of loving, humble service on THEIR terms

- 1 Pet. 3:7
- James 4:6-7

Marital sex should foster:

### 1. Thanksgiving

“Each has his own GIFT from God”

- Do you thank God for your spouse?
- Do you thank God for the holiness He produces in you through your singleness or spouse?

### 2. Self control

“Lest Satan tempt you”

“Better to marry than burn.”

- Sexless marriages can be easily infiltrated by Satan
- Close the door to intimacy with your spouse, open it to Satan

### 3. Submission

- Love them on **their** terms not yours
- Talk about the frequency of sex and accommodate one another’s sex drives
- No authority over your own body

### 4. Other forms of Love

- You are called to use your *hands* to speak the love languages of touch and service, your *wallet* to speak the language of gift-giving, your *tongue* to speak the language of affirmation, your *ear* to speak the language of sympathy (not being a fixer!!), and the *seat* of your pants to speak the language of quality time—plant it in a chair and **be with them!**

These are forms of humility, godliness, openness, unity and love which expose and extinguish Satan’s devices.

## IV. The Lesson of Sex—what else is God saying?

\*\*\*Romans 13:6-7

- You owe love to everyone, in the form they can and should receive it!
- It would be absurd to say I love the police because I baked them cookies, but then constantly break traffic laws and run them down in conversation
- That’s not the way they receive honor!

- How does your spouse receive it? You don't have the authority to decide how they will receive your love! You don't even have authority over your own body!
- You are called to use your *hands* to speak the love languages of touch and service, your *wallet* to speak the language of gift-giving, your *tongue* to speak the language of affirmation, your *ear* to speak the language of sympathy (not being a fixer!!), and the *seat* of your pants to speak the language of quality time—plant it in a chair and **be with them!**

What are you withholding? What are you denying to the ones to whom it truly belongs?

1. Time and charity to the needy?
2. Taxes to the government?
3. Honor to your boss?
4. A Greeting to the new and lonely and outcast and shady?

You OWE:

5. A blind eye to your spouse's mistakes and inconvenient flaws
6. Good performance and hard work at a frustrating job
7. Availability to a hurting friend
8. Pleasant words and a gentle tone of voice to your spouse
9. Transparency and vulnerability to your spouse, kids, and small group
10. Respect to the president, police, teachers, Congress, or senators from the opposition party
11. Submission to the senior pastor when you speak about his sermons
12. Support to the worship team, no matter their performance
13. Silence to a friend who's trusted you with a secret
14. The gospel to a long-unsaved acquaintance or family member
15. Forgiveness to all. Every time.
16. A totally clean slate and renewed warmth to the one you have forgiven.

These forms of love BELONG to the ones around us, who live in relationship to us. We cannot withhold them without walking in active sin against the God of love

V. Jesus

- He is the spouse of our souls
- His burning passion drove Him into an eternal covenant with us
- He sees the church as His Bride, a beautiful **gift** from the Father
- He came to us in a way we could relate to and receive
- He withheld no love from us (Ps.84:11)
- He gave up authority over His own body to make us whole
- He tenderly considers our needs
- He speaks to us gently and honors us as co-rulers
- He bound us to Him in a way Satan can never separate (Rom.8:38-39)
- He will never divorce us