

## **Tough Questions – Why Does the Bible Use Sex as a Metaphor for Spiritual Faithfulness? Part 2 of 3**

Hey Tim Perry here, pastor of Spiritual Discovery at Christ Community Church – coming at you in a new location this week from the chapel at Christ Community Church's Old Mill Campus. This is week 35 of Tough Questions. Thanks for joining me.

We're picking up from our topic from last week, which has to do with spiritual faithfulness and human sexuality. What's the connection between those two? I thought it would be neat to kick off this week's video from this location because it's kind of a special location for me. One of the things I get to do as a pastor is actually conduct people's weddings. I get to meet young couples that are all beautified and ready to go for their special day right here on this stage. I get to watch them as they look into each other's eyes and as they pledge their faithfulness and their love to each other.

Well, what a great setting to continue our conversation about human sexuality and faithfulness to God. The question we're working on is why does God and the Bible use the metaphor of human sexuality to talk about spiritual faithfulness?

Well, if you were with us last week, you know that I took the camera around and I caught quite a few responses from different staff at our church. I wanted you to see a whole bunch more of them because as it turns out, we have lots of very thoughtful people on staff here at Christ Community. Many of them have been helping us with our videos this year with Project 4:4, and you've been seeing their faces on the blog, but I just wanted to focus this question for them and see what their thoughts were. I think you'll really enjoy the wisdom that they have to offer.

Let's check out a few more of them and then I'll come back in a few minutes.

**Jared Kliewer:** "The first thought that comes to my mind is that of commitment level - in that there being no higher covenant relationship on earth. So maybe it's the closest thing that human minds can grasp or get their minds around because it's a high, high level of commitment that doesn't really exist in any other level between any other relationship."

**Caitlin Toews:** "Maybe the Bible uses the metaphor of adultery for Israel's unfaithfulness to show the severe consequences of what they're doing. It gives a really harsh example to compare their behavior to, and perhaps it's just to show, I guess, the seriousness of their offense."

**Lisa Ashton:** "Well, the first thing I think about when I think of just the topic of sexuality in general is that it can be a very sensitive topic. It can invoke very intense feelings, opinions and experiences – and all types of things when people think about it. So when I read these stories in scripture about God making this analogy between promiscuity and unfaithfulness to God, my attention is grabbed because if

I'm in a marriage and the thought of me being unfaithful to my husband just absolutely scares me, and I would never dream in a million years of wanting that to happen. So to get kind of pulled into this story of scripture and say, "yea – that's wrong – I can't believe they would do that – that's so scandalous!" Then when the shoe drops and God says, "no, but this is you, my people and you haven't been faithful to me" – it strikes a chord, it deeply convicts, it breaks my heart and I can, in a strange way, sometimes identify with the intensity of the analogy that God gives through these prophets.

**Robert Murphy:** "Well, I think from my vantage point why God uses marriage as an example to get this point across, when you think about the marriage relationship and just how intimate it is and the kind of love, the kind of friendship that's there, the kind of depth, you are giving of yourself completely. Then you think of what God has done in giving himself completely – Jesus coming to earth and dying for us and giving himself completely for us. I know that I'm married and if you know my story – I'm a recovering porn addict so I think of the times where I gave myself, my emotions, my mind to pornography or mentally in my mind creating these fantasies and not giving myself fully to my wife. When I came clean on that realizing how I was not fully committed to my wife and the hurt that caused her and how our relationship – our marriage was cheapened because of that. And since then, having a greater understanding of really what the depth of God's love for us and the kind of love I need to have for my wife, and understanding that when I give – even if I don't act on it – if I give my mind another woman and I create that fantasy game, that is not fulfilling my vows to Janice. So I can understand why God would use such imagery in trying to get the point across of what idolatry is and just the dangers of it and how it really – it's not just a physical act – it's a mental, emotional act that we can give ourselves to someone else even if we aren't physically doing that. So I think it's really important and I can understand why God does that."

**Wendell Nelson:** "Because spirituality and sexuality are very closely entwined. They both have to do with desire and passion and spirituality – loving the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind is very much about desire and passion. So I just think the two are very closely entwined. I think God gives a picture in sexuality of just a glimpse of some of the goodness of heaven itself and what a relationship with Him is like. It's not the same physical kind of thing – it's way different but it is full of ecstasy, anticipation and joy and all the good things that we enjoy about sexuality."