

June 5, 2016

SEXUAL IMMORALITY: WHO CARES?

ROMANS 1.18-25 (WITH 1COR 6.12-20; PROV 5; MT 5.27-30)

“Nature” in Rom 1.26 = “created order.” Man is acting “against the created order” in sexual immorality.

Rom 1.24-25 - dealing with heterosexual sexual immorality; “lusts” and “dishonoring their bodies” point to this.

Read 1Cor 6.12-20

1. *Why is sexual sin such a big deal?*

People have reduced sexual relations to the scientific “mechanics” and consider it just another bodily activity. Corinthians, armed with a bad view of the body, took the same stance. (Cf. 1Cor 6.13)

However, sexual relations are a different sort of activity than other bodily activities ... and people know it.

a) God did not design our bodies for sexual immorality

1Cor 6.13: “the body was not made for sexual immorality, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body;”

The body was made for sexual relations but *not* sexual immorality. (Cf. Heb 13.4)

The “mechanics” used outside of proper context are destructive to the body. This is not a limit on freedom but conforming to the proper use that is according to the purposeful design of the body.

God’s laws are reflective of his own character and, thus, what we are and are to be as his image. Obeying him is the only way to be truly human.

Your body was designed to experience a oneness with another that is only realized within the covenant of marriage.

b) Sexual immorality dishonors the body

Rom 1.24, “Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the **dishonoring of their bodies** among themselves.”

To honor something or someone is to give it its due respect, recognizing its dignity. We are to agree with God’s definition and judgment of our bodies as “very good” (Ge 1.31). We respect his design.

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel [body?] in sanctification and **honor**.” (1Thes 4.3-4)

Proper honor is not idolizing the body. In fact, that is dishonor. Proper honor is treating the body in a way that is consistent with God’s creation of it; his design and purpose for the body.

Bodies dishonored in sexual immorality: Dishonors *my* body. 1Cor 6.18.

Sexual immorality changes you in ways that other sins don’t change you. Unlike other sins, sexual sins bond your body to other bodies and, in some way, rip you into pieces. In sexual immorality I’m engaged in a self-destruction.

Dishonors *your* body. The act of sexual immorality is not only slowing murdering my own self/body, but it is also encouraging you to murder yourself. (Cf. Pr 5.3-6)

For Christians: Dishonors *Christ’s* body. 1Cor 6.15

Our *bodies* are united to the body of Christ. What you do with your body you are doing with the body of Christ since you are a member of it.

Paul is dealing with “prostitutes.” Any time we use our sexual abilities for unworthy purposes, we prostitute ourselves, and those who offer themselves to us prostitute themselves.

Those who engage in sexual immorality are Harlot Follies in Proverbs, and Christ is not to be joined to a harlot/prostitute because he is not promiscuous. He gives himself to one: his wife, the church.

c) Sexual immorality rejects the fundamentals of our humanity

God created and *defined* man as male and female who would only have sexual relations—one-fleshness—within the bonds of the covenant of marriage. Anything else is a rejection of our humanity.

Our sexuality and its expressions are not peripheral to our being human/man. These are the foundations of who we are as image of God.

2. Why should anyone else care about the sexual relations of others?

“It’s my body. What two consenting adults do is nobody else’s business. Sex is a private matter.”

What you do with your body sexually is a public concern (e.g., family, church, and general society).

Laws for Israel: sexual sins were also criminal. Why? Man *is* image of God in the totality of his existence. Laws put in place to restrain evil that would pervert or destroy that image, and, thus, rip society apart.

a) The birth and rearing of children

Children are new people in a society with whom the rest of society must relate. Their birth and how the context of their rearing is of public interest.

Some will answer: “We have birth control!” Yes, and divorcing sexual relations from the production of children continues to create a society that is selfish and fruitless and eventually dies.

b) Disease

STDs don’t only affect the sexually immoral but others as well. \$10 billion shared by all Americans is spent on STDs other than AIDS (source: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK232938/>)

Contaminate blood supplies.

Nevertheless, if you remain sexually active, you become a risk to others.

c) Your relationships shape who you are as a public person and, therefore, the society has an interest in what type of person you are becoming.

Lauren Winner: “What we do with our bodies, what we do sexually, shapes our persons. How we comport ourselves sexually shapes who we are. If we believe that sex forms us, then it goes without saying that it is public business, because how we build the persons we are—persons who are social and communal and political and economic beings—is itself a matter of social concern.... Because sex forms us, sex is a community matter.” (Winner, *Real Sex*, 51)

Reflections and responses:

1) Your sexual relationships are the business of the church.

2) Sexual sin and its destruction don’t have to be the last word concerning who you are.