

Sex: You've Got Questions, Paul's Got Answers

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Description

Paul addresses questions from the Corinthians about sex and warns against extremes—whether it's abstinence, sexual immorality or sex in marriage. The church has questions, and Paul has answers, but he concludes that serving the Lord faithfully is the goal in any life circumstance, whether married or single.

Transcript

Good morning. Amen. Some of y'all are awake. So 1 Corinthians 7 today, we're going to skip for Mother's Day. We'll have a Mother's Day message. And then the following week is 1 Corinthians 7 part 2. So for both 1 Corinthians 7, if you have a younger child in here, we're going to be talking about some topics that are inappropriate for some ages. If I were to say, I'd probably say 11 and under. But as a parent, you can make that decision. I just wanted to give you kind of a heads up if you needed to get up at some point.

I'm going to share two more things. You'll have some time before we get into the teaching. Well, guys, we got some good news and some bad news. What do y'all want to hear first? The bad news, that's what the first service said. I shouldn't even ask you because I'm going to do what I want. I'm giving you good news first, all right? Don't you love when people do that? They ask you and then they tell you what they want to do anyway.

So the good news is we really do see God working and moving in the lives of people. As you saw all the baptisms last weekend. By the way, we got another baptism May 17th. It's a beach baptism. Amen. My son actually signed up for that baptism. Yeah, yeah, let's go. So I'm excited to go out in the water and baptize my son.

One thing on that is a lady asked me last weekend, and I usually do share this about once a year. When I got saved, meaning I understood what Jesus did and I prayed to receive him, I did not surrender my life to Christ. But I do believe that there was a seed that was planted there. And the pastor told me, you got to get baptized. So the next weekend I got baptized. And to be completely honest, I had no idea what I was doing.

And so then I go into ministry and me and Keith Gallo, I see him in here somewhere. We were doing ministry and I continued to wrestle with whether or not I needed to get re-baptized or not. Because I didn't really know what I was doing when I was that old. I didn't understand it. And now I've come to Christ and I've really surrendered. Like, should I do it again? And one of my brothers in Christ just said, dude, just do it. Just get baptized and be done with all the wrestling and be over with it.

And so it was at a youth event that we did at Sebastian Inlet. Keith Gallo and I were preaching the gospel. Some kids had gotten saved. We were getting ready to baptize them. And I said, you know what, guys? I am going to get baptized first before we baptize anybody else. And I got baptized. Keith Gallo and somebody else baptized me. It was a beautiful time. The water was really cold. It was March. I remember it for many reasons.

I say that because some of you guys, you need to just go ahead and get rebaptized because you don't

remember it. It wasn't special to you. You didn't really understand what you're doing. And so May 17th, we'll do that. Now, that wasn't the good. There's more good news. I got that was a sidetrack. Come back to me. Welcome to my life.

So the good news is we are growing as we saw all the people getting baptized, all these young families, and I love seeing all these young families with little babies and kids coming to here. It just blesses my heart. We've got more kids checking into our kids ministry than we have ever had since we moved in. That's the good news.

Now's the bad news. For the last month and a half, we have been having to turn families away because it's not that we don't have room because we actually have some extra rooms that we could break kids off into, but it's that we don't have enough volunteers. And that's where you come in. Hey guys. So this is just a pastor's heart. I do not want to turn people away. You've got a young mom coming in. She wants to get fed. She wants to check her kid in to have just a moment of time to worship, to not be mom for a moment, and to be poured into and to hear the word of God and for them to come and say, hey, I'm sorry, we're at max capacity because there's safety reasons. And also, you know, the volunteers, we don't want to overwhelm them as well.

And so I do ask you just to pray and consider. It can even be one weekend a month. So we need right now about eight volunteers for our five and under alone every weekend. That would be for our nine and our 11 o'clock service. And we also need a few upstairs, but the need is greater downstairs. So if the Lord would put that in your heart, I encourage you, when you leave today, go over to the kids check-in. Miss Mary will be there, Lord willing, and you will be able to sign up. And even if it's once a month, that would be such a blessing to the body. We don't want to turn people away. Amen?

All right, next order of business. This is what family does. We've got a man of God who is in our school and ministry. His name is Mike. His wife is Jen DeStefano. and he's feeling called to oversee our young adults ministry. So I want to show you all a picture of Mike and his wife, Jen. Amen. If you know anything that would disqualify them from stepping in and overseeing our young adults ministry, I want you over the next week to please contact the church and let us know, not your opinion, but according to 1 Timothy 3, if they are disqualified from being overseers in that ministry.

All right? Sound good? All right, who's ready to get into the word? All right, all right, let's do it. First Corinthians chapter 7. So last weekend we learned all about this body that God has given us. We have a free will choice: is this going to be my body? I'm going to do whatever I want with this body or is this the Lord's body and I'm going to give it to him? And we learned that it is a good thing when we let God be the Lord of our bodies.

Now, this weekend is going to be a little bit different because starting in 1 Corinthians 7, there's a change of pace. Paul has dealt with all these issues. Now he's answering a bunch of questions that were written by the Corinthian church. Now, we have to make some educated assumptions about the questions that are being asked based on the way that Paul is answering those questions, because we don't know for sure, but we can make some solid guesses. And the questions are pertaining to marriage and sex. And so I've titled this week in teaching as **Sex: You've Got Questions. Paul's Got Answers.**

So there are extremes and a lot of things that we do where people can be out of balance on one end all the way to the other. For example, maybe you got whipped when you were a kid and you hate it

being disciplined and that bothered you so much. You've decided now I will never not only whip but I won't even discipline my kids. Some people can be out of balance with either spending or saving. Some people spend too much, some people save a little too much. Some people can be hard workers, they work work work work and that's their life; they give their life and dedication to working hard. Other people, they don't like to work; they like to be lazy and not do anything. And both of those are extremes, but somewhere in the middle is the balance. And there's a healthy balance to life.

In the church of Corinth, there were some extremes with sex. On one extreme, we've already dealt with a lot of that stuff in the first couple of chapters. There was a, we can do whatever we want. This body is mine. I don't care. I can sexually express any way with whoever, however, whenever I want to. And the other people are going, gross. No, you can't. What you should do is be like Jesus and the Apostle Paul, and you should abstain from sex because that is a morally superior life, not only for a single person, but married people should even now abstain from sex. And some of y'all in your heart are saying, **I rebuke that in Jesus' name**. But that was a real discussion that was going on in the church. So they're writing Paul all of these questions about what is the right way? What should I do in this situation? And he's going to answer those questions for us this morning.

So look at verse 1. *Now for the matters you wrote about:* So he's answering questions. **It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman**. But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife and each woman with her own husband.

All righty. So here's the question. It's kind of more of a statement. Paul, it's good for a man not to have sex with a woman, right? And the Apostle Paul is saying, well, if you're single, yes. But because of the Corinthian church, you're very aware of this, this thing called sexual immorality. Because of that, in the struggle that people have, it would be better for you to get married. And if you already are married, the answer is no, it's not good for a married man to abstain from sex. And he's giving a green light in marriage. Enjoy the fruit of marriage. And here's why. **A spouse is our only legitimate source of sexual intimacy**. There is no other solution to expressing ourselves sexually that God has given us other than through marriage that honors him. Anything else would dishonor him, and he has not given us the right to do that. Now, can we of our free will do that? Absolutely. But when you do that, you're claiming that it's your body and you know what's good, and you and I will suffer the consequences of that like we spoke last weekend.

A husband or a wife is God's only solution that honors God when it comes to sexuality. Now, some extremists, they didn't agree with this. They believe that the apostle Paul, the life that he lived, that was a morally pure, superior life. And they're bringing this argument, probably condemning the people that are having sex. Some of the married people genuinely probably want to live for the Lord. They want to be pure. They want to honor God. They watched the life of Paul for a year and a half. And he really was a man of God. And he walked in purity. And he was doing all these things for the Lord. And if the right argument comes in, the enemy can twist things, and people start to believe like, oh man, maybe we really are supposed to in marriage abstain from sex with one another. And they're asking a legitimate question to the apostle Paul.

And he responds in verse 3, **The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife**. Say amen, man. **I will be faithful to my marital duty**. And likewise, the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but yields it to her husband in the same way. The husband does not have authority over his own body, but yields it to his wife. **Do not deprive each other, except perhaps**

by mutual consent and for a time (I think the Greek says short time. I'm just kidding. I added that) **and for a time so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.**

Now, many of you know this from life experience, and I believe whether the enemy is trying to convince you of being super spiritual or don't even worry about being spiritual at all, this statement is true. **Satan's strategy is to promote sexual activity with singles, but then to discourage it in marriage.** So you're not married. He's like, green light, green light, go, go, go. Have as much fun, do as much as you want. That's your body. Enjoy. Because one day you're going to be married. I'm going to flip the script on you. And when you get married, whoa, whoa, whoa, we don't have time for all that anymore. And the apostle Paul is saying, wrong. Don't get that twisted.

Now I know that the apostle Paul is addressing with questions, but there's a lot of practical wisdom for us. And in this area specifically, I'm going to talk about some things that sex is and sex is not within a marriage. **Sex is a gift, and it is not a weapon.** It is meant to unite a marriage, not to divide it. Its intent is to nurture, not to control and manipulate and to have your way. It is intended to create a bond, not conflict, and it should always be motivated by love, not selfishness.

Now usually if there is sex deprivation in a marriage, it is not because two people are trying to be super spiritual and pray and fast. Let's be real. Usually when it happens in a marriage is because there is a cancer in the marriage that needs healing and that is the main issue. And so it's very important that people have these difficult conversations. There can be a season of life where there are medical things that are going on in the body of the man or the woman and both people have to mutually agree that hey during this season we cannot come together that way and that's okay and we understand that. But Paul is very clear on this, that it is not okay in marriage to sexually deprive our spouse.

Now, in the rare case, perhaps you mutually decide to come set apart for a while so that you can pray and seek the Lord. The Apostle Paul says, but hey, but come back together. Why? So that the enemy does not tempt you. So listen to this point. **In a healthy marriage, and yes, it does need to be a healthy marriage for it to work this way, sex is a God-given means to engage in spiritual warfare.** So think about this. Last week, I probably freaked some of y'all out as I shared with you the truth of the Word of God, that when you're married and you come together sexually, that is worship. Well, this weekend, you're learning more that it is also an act of spiritual warfare when you come together.

I think it's important that spouses believe this truth. If we deprive one another, you better believe that there is going to be a foothold or the enemy having access to the marriage. Now, I could exhaust you this morning, as that last point talked about in a healthy marriage, I could exhaust you with some cultural things that happen within an unhealthy marriage. I'm not going to do that, but I am going to share just a few. One is in a marriage where one of the spouses or both spouses are mean or they're critical to each other. That can be a part of the cancer. It could be where one spouse always has to be right. They never apologize. There's no forgiveness that happens in the marriage. That can also, because it's relational intimacy, those things that carry over into bedroom intimacy. It can also be where one or both only care about their own needs. That can cause cancer and deteriorate the sex life in a marriage.

Now, what's really dangerous is when somebody who knows the word of God but isn't really walking out and living it and they want to get what they need, they can then weaponize the Bible. I do not

advise this. Where a husband or a wife who feels like they are being deprived sexually goes to the spouse and goes, look here, woman. First Corinthians 7, it says that ain't your body. They're not to deprive each other. You need to come together. And if you do that, that is super unhealthy. Because the Bible does say that. But by you doing that, you're almost, it's a revelation. It's an indication of maybe why there's some sex deprivation going on in that marriage. And one of the indications is you are emotionally unintelligent.

And so it's very important that we don't do that because here's what happens if somebody does weaponize and let's say the husband or the wife goes, you know what, the word does say that. So I'm going to just submit to the word and come together with this person. But this person could be neglecting them emotionally, mean all the time, never around, only comes around when they want one thing. And so what you think could be helping the marriage actually could be even hurting it even more. As that spouse comes into agreement just out of submission, then they have to struggle in their heart with frustrations, feeling used, becoming bitter, angry, and holding that against the other spouse.

Now something that the younger generation is going to battle with more than the older generation, in some cases maybe not. But I was about 25 years old before they came out with the smartphones. Before that, we had dumb phones. And before that, we had, they're called no phones. You ever heard that? It's like, where's your phone? I don't have a phone. It's at home. But the more that you have been accustomed to growing up with a device in your hand, the more opportunity you have to become addicted to that device. We used to, maybe some of you grew up and your dad or mom, I don't know, I don't, you know, I hear more of the dads. Dad didn't do anything but work and come home and just watch TV all the time. But you know what? This is worse than a TV because you can bring it with you everywhere. And in a relationship, if you're not careful, your phone can become an idol.

And though you are there, you are not present. It's very dangerous. And I think it's something that all of us have to battle. This is not just one spouse. It's all of us have to battle this. And I've got to, and you've got to decide in my marriage, people are more important than screens. And there are people that can walk in and have a conversation with you, and it's like you're not even there. And there needs to be healing, and there needs to be tough conversations, and both people have to agree and have grace with one another. But as I was studying this and looking it up, there are people that even wrote that that has negatively influenced their sex life. Because what happens is they become to get jealous and detach, detach, detach less respect to the point of where it's like, don't even touch me.

Speaking of phones, that was on cue. I told him to do that. No, I'm just praying. So I will give him a pass because he's on our hospital team, and when people need to get prayed on and go to the hospital, he's available, so he gets a pass. Amen? Now everybody else, though, cut your phone off, right? Thank you, Rich. Ain't that crazy, though, how the enemy can attack, and you think that it's your sex life, and man, we're just not having sex, but it's so much deeper than that. You got to be willing to have those tough conversations and pray through those things.

If you are in a sexless marriage, I almost guarantee you there's an underlying issue, the reason why. We offer biblical counseling. We'll meet with people. A lot of those things, you got to walk through and you got to get healing. Sometimes, listen, it doesn't even have to do with the marriage. There could have been sexual abuse by one of the spouses that they happened before they even got

married. And then they come into marriage and that is still a stronghold that they have. And they have to walk through healing with that. And so just quoting a verse isn't going to solve that. Somebody needs the Lord to heal and to repair that. I didn't share that in the first service, but somebody in here needed to hear that because that could be the issue in the marriage. We have amazing men's and women's biblical counseling.

Now, being married is not a superior spiritual condition. Everybody say amen. But neither is being single. And in the church, that's kind of what they were saying. Like, if you're like the Apostle Paul, or if you're like Jesus, then you are really morally awesome. But that's not true. The Apostle Paul, yes, he was single, but he understood not everybody has the gift of celibacy like he did. Look at verse 7. He says, **I wish that all of you were like I am.** Well, I don't, and most of you don't either, because if everybody was like him, y'all wouldn't be here. But each of you has your own gift from God. One has this gift, and one has that gift.

If you've ever struggled in your entire life with sexual desire, guess what gift you don't have? You don't have the gift of celibacy. Well, how do I know if I have that gift, Pastor Kevin? Oh, you'll know. You'll know. I do like that the Apostle Paul does not take his conviction and his calling and try to force that on every other Christian. Amen? Christians are not always good at that. Sometimes Christians, they have a conviction, the Lord speaks something for them specifically, and now they feel like they're on a mission to make every Christian do exactly what they do.

I'm going to give you one example. It's not like this happens a lot, but I have felt this with somebody specifically before, where they were so passionate about adopting someone that God had put it so heavy in their heart, they almost were condemning every other Christian for not adopting people. See, if God calls you to do that, you got to adopt, because with the calling is obedience and the grace that he was supplied to do that. But if God has not called you to do that, now you're doing it out of, you know, you feel condemned because somebody just did it. Well, you might adopt a kid, and the grace of God ain't there to help you. You don't want that.