

God-Honoring, Good Sex.

Geoffrey R. Kirkland
Christ Fellowship Bible Church

God has given marriage to humankind for many reasons. Marriage serves to point to the great Marriage between Christ and His Bride, the Church. It is to be a means of sanctification, a blessing of companionship, the means of procreation, a relationship of companionship, and a protection from fornication. In this essay, I want to address the biblical reality of the beauty of God-honoring and truly ravishing sex. This is the intimate coming together between a man and a woman within the covenant of marriage that brings God great glory. Far from being bad and something that must be shunned, Christian couples should seek to worship God at all times -- and that includes the marriage bed. So what does the Bible say about God-honoring, good sex? How is it achieved? What needs to be understood? Is this really legitimate? In what follow, I'll provide a few thoughts that will foster a high view of the delightfulness of sex as God designed it for a husband and wife within the marriage covenant.

1. A good understanding of sex.

Marriage can really *only* be ultimately understood when viewed in the context of the gospel. After all, the Apostle Paul reveals that marriage is ultimately about Christ and the Church. Every marriage relationship serves to be a pointer to the Ultimate Marriage between Christ and His Bride. So it is also with sex. As there is nothing more intimate than sexual intimacy within the marriage covenant, so in a similar sense, all believers long for the ultimate marriage and closeness with Christ in the truest sense that we will enjoy in the future when we behold our Bridegroom face to face. Now believers do not see Him. But we will! We shall! Jesus also reveals that there is no marriage in heaven (and, thus, no sexual relations & no procreation) and so we enjoy the delightfulness of marriage and the blessings within marriage for this age only. Marriage and intimacy point us to a greater *marriage* and an eternal *intimacy* with Christ that all believers will enjoy with God forever and ever. The amazingly close and breathtakingly intimate union between a man and a woman in marriage is to delightfully remind believers of the eternally close and breathtaking intimate nearness that we will have with Jesus Christ forever and ever in glory!

2. A good exclusivity within sex.

God designed marriage, from the very beginning, to be between one man and one woman alone. A full and total exclusivity is demanded within marriage. There must be no intruders and no unfaithfulness in marital intimacy. There should be no third party, no pornographic stimulants, no outside invaders during the intimacy between a husband and a wife. This is why the Scriptures call for men to rejoice in the wife of one's youth. There must be a full exclusivity in marriage and in sex -- a real, genuine, honest commitment to one another *alone*. It's like the lovers in Song of Solomon: I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine. Total exclusivity is required!

3. A good communication about sex.

As with every part of marriage, it thrives on good communication. Wherever there is conflict and turmoil, there's a breakdown of communication somewhere along the line. Good communication requires humility, patience, clarity, honesty, truthfulness, carefulness in tone, and

clarification (so as to ensure there's no misunderstanding). Both the husband and the wife must communicate their desires and likes (and dislikes) in sexual relations. They must honestly and openly speak with one another what they enjoy and don't enjoy in physical relations in bed. Great enjoyment in sexual intimacy requires great openness in honest communication with one another. And not just openness and communication at the outset of the marriage but continuously throughout the marriage. Even during the act of lovemaking couples can communicate and seek to know and learn what the other person enjoys and what brings the spouse pleasure. Good and unhindered communication is absolutely vital for enjoyable, God-honoring sex.

4. A good selflessness during sex.

It is more blessed to give than to receive. Do nothing from selfishness. Regard one another as more important than yourselves. Look out for the interests of others. All of these statements are from the Word of God. The principle of selflessness certainly applies to all of life including the area of sexual intimacy in marriage. All sexual sin (*all!*) flows from selfishness in some way. Pornography, masturbation, adultery, prostitution, lust and any other sin all comes from a heart of selfishness (the idol of self-love in that instance). The goal in sexual intimacy is not *what can I get out of this* but rather the goal must be how can I serve and bring pleasure *to my spouse*. And here's the amazing reality: if both the husband and the wife are selfless and seeking to please the other person, *then both people are fulfilled*. And the sexual fulfillment and pleasure comes not from selfishness but from each person seeking to please and fulfill the desires of the spouse. Both people are satisfied. God is honored. The goal of sex is *always* to be: how can I please my spouse? It is this others-oriented view of sex within marriage that fuels great enjoyment.

5. A good conscience in sex.

Perhaps there's nothing more debilitating than living with a guilty conscience. But to live with a clear conscience before God and men is truly to live life fully and with joy. When the husband can approach his wife, come into her, and seek to love her *with a clear conscience* is a blessing that is beyond description. But when a man's conscience is clouded with shame and gloomy from lust and guilty from sexual sin, he must come openly and honestly before God and before his wife and acknowledge his sin, confess it, repent of it, and seek to replace that sin with godly habits of holiness and purity. It is possible to be sexually pure as a believer. But when you as a believer sin, there is a Righteous Advocate who pleads on your behalf. Strive vigilantly to be pure and maintain purity in your heart, mind and life. Be a *one woman man* or a *one man woman*. When you can make love with your spouse and say: I am *fully yours* and *only yours*, it is a blessed and joyful blessing. Maintain a good conscience before God and before your spouse!

6. A good mutual-delight in sex.

The man's body does not belong to himself but to his wife. He must, therefore, seek to serve her and fulfill his 'duty' to his wife. And the wife's body likewise does not belong to herself but to her husband. She must, therefore, strive to serve him and fulfill her 'duty' to her husband. Never must the mindset be: I want sex because *I want*.... Rather, believers must fight hard to have the mindset of a self-giver: I long to make love with my spouse so that I can please them for their joy and benefit. When the husband strives to please his wife and when the wife endeavors to please her husband, both are mutually delighted and selflessly satisfied. Both are

happy. Both have served one another. Both are pleased and ravished with each other. And there are no intruders that have crept into the marriage bed.