

QUICK THEOLOGY

Does God Forgive Sexual Sin?



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Introduction

In this book we will be discussing a sensitive topic, but it is one that is near and dear to my heart. If you have been following me for any span of time, you likely know that sexual addiction is part of my testimony. I am excited to be able to talk about this again because it is actually how I got my start as a blogger and a writer. It was the niche I began writing in before my ministry expanded into *Every Woman a Theologian*.

While I am excited to talk about this, I also know that it is a very sensitive topic. For some of you it may even be a bit triggering. If that is you, I pray this book meets you where you are and is healing and encouraging for you. It is also understandable if at some point you need to take a break because it brings up something in your past or something you are working through right now. Just know that God wants you to have freedom, peace, and victory. His love is for you, not just for

everyone else.

In this book, we are going to start by defining sexual sin and discussing why it is considered sin. Then we will get into the details of why and how God forgives it, as well as how to move forward in repentance and freedom.



Purity Culture

If you grew up in purity culture, or perhaps in a more legalistic perspective of Christianity, you likely saw how a lot of the things that were said about sex and sexuality were twisted by legalism. Conversations about sex were dominated by rules that moved us so far away from the biblical sexual ethic that we forgot what it even was.

Many of us found (and still find) ourselves asking questions such as, “If God is good like I’ve been taught, and if God made sex, then why is having sex bad? Is Christian sex the only kind that’s bad? And if it feels good, how can it be wrong?” These questions break my heart, but they are necessary, and they actually lead us to our culture’s primary argument for extramarital sex, which is, “If it feels good, affirms me, and makes me feel loved, then it can’t be wrong.” With that being said, if you are wondering why Jesus Christ calls us to save sex for a covenant marriage between a man and a woman,

then this book is for you.

The logic of “if it feels good, do it” is fundamentally flawed. If we determine moral issues based on our individual feelings, then there is no actual standard for right and wrong whatsoever. This is rooted in deconstruction philosophy (when I say ‘deconstruction philosophy’ I am not talking about deconstruction as it is often used in pop culture; I am talking about the philosophy and the framework of deconstruction, which is when people break things down into their basic parts and strive to append what they believe are westernized assumptions of right and wrong).

It all goes together with subjective morality, or the humanistic view of the world. When we look at the world this way, we can say, “Right and wrong are just a product of culture. There is no objective moral standard. Everybody just has to find their truth.” This is what our culture has done with sexuality. But there is a real issue with this. Just because something feels good does not mean it is the right thing to do for ourselves or for others. This is especially true when it comes to sexuality. Every part of our bodies was designed by God for a specific function: eyes, ears, legs, fingers—all of it. When a body part is used outside of its design, it affects the rest of the body. And sex is not just a bodily function. It

involves thoughts and emotions, and it is inseparably tied to our minds and our hearts.

I was recently watching the movie *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* with my husband. I love this movie—no apologies from me on that front. But one of the characters in the movie is known for her week-long relationships and successive breakups afterwards. Oftentimes this character is sleeping with her dates in the first week or on the first date. Following these encounters, she becomes very emotional and will cry or say “I love you.” This inevitably scares off the man she is dating, and she is left with yet another failed relationship.

The movie presents this girl as being overly emotional and clingy and needy, but in reality those emotions can be a very natural part of having sex. In fact, they are supposed to be there. Sex was designed for an emotional and physical closeness within the context of a lifelong covenant. It was not designed for one-night stands and drive-by experiences. If we follow the messaging of movies like *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* and the myriad other cultural offerings, we would stifle our emotions and separate sex from our desire for lasting love. We would continue to give ourselves to people who want to use us for physical reasons alone or who want to use us for their own pleasure because they're

living out “their truth.” But in the Bible we see something different. Marriage and the sexual relationship within it is a glorious example of the intimate relationship God desires with mankind. It is pointing to a fulfillment that is way beyond sex. It is a kind of relationship founded on commitment, faithfulness, mutual love, sacrifice, and complete vulnerability.

I love this verse from Proverbs that talks about this contrast:

*“Drink water from your own cistern,
flowing water from your own well. Should your
springs be scattered abroad, streams of water in
the streets? Let them be for yourself alone, and
not for strangers with you. Let your fountain be
blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth. A
lovely deer, a graceful doe, let her breasts fill you
at all times with delight; be intoxicated always
in her love.” (Proverbs 5:15-19)*

Okay, so maybe this passage is a little PG-13, but look at the terminology that is used in the first half of the paragraph—‘scattered’, ‘streets’, and ‘strangers’. This is the life of a sexual nomad, not someone committed to the beauty of God-designed love. In contrast, marital sex

is meant to be a reservoir of satisfaction and constant communication with the other person about their needs, desires, and body, not a scattered stream of illicit sex. It is a continual fountain in marriage, always renewed, not like the dark and empty streets of a city. It is a place to rejoice and delight and be intoxicated with love, not to be overcome with temporary lust. It is a place where we should be free to feel all the heights of emotion that accompany sex, and even if we are moved to tears or an “I love you,” we don’t have to be ashamed.

But here’s the thing: Marital sex is not always that way. It is not perfect in a fallen world. And if you have been given poor teaching about sex and marriage that says, “You owe this to your spouse,” or “You have to do whatever he wants or he’s going to leave you,” or “You have to put up with his long-term pornography addiction”—those things are lies. If someone is abusing marital sex (i.e. they are not being sacrificial, honorable, or covenantal in their sexual relationship with their spouse), then they are actually violating the intent of marital sex. I am not saying that marital sex is great all the time or that the reason we save sex for marriage is because it is guaranteed to be great. No, I have been married for almost nine years, and in those nine years my husband and I have had to communicate through a

lot of different seasons where one or both of us struggled in this area. You can hear more of our experience in our episode together in our Marriage series on the Verity podcast.



Sex is for Marriage

Let's move on to why sex is for marriage. First, I want to give a contrast between lust and desire. Many women long to be pursued. This is a desire that I believe is given by God. So when God tells us to reserve sex for marriage, He is not saying you need to deny the existence of your desires or be ashamed that they exist. Instead He is revealing the blueprint for the most fulfilling sexual relationship you can have on earth with your husband. He is also giving us a blueprint for the most fulfilling relationship in general that we can have, which is our relationship with God. Our desire for sex is pointing us to an even greater relationship and to an even greater possibility for spiritual intimacy—the relationship we have with God.

That is why, if you are single and struggling in this area, it is important to recognize that those desires are an opportunity to point you—in desperation, even—to the Lord your God who understands and has compassion

