

“Purity with a Capital “G”?”

Presentation Handout

What’s the Big Deal?

- The Boston Celtics basketball team seemed to be heading back to its glory days again. They were in the 2022 NBA finals for the first time since 2010. Hope and expectations ran high for the franchise and their fans as the new season was about to start! Until...
 - Until...their head coach’s, Ime Udoka, high-profile affair scandal broke in the news.
 - Coach Udoka’s affair was with a married female staff member. This “affair” (no pun intended) was a violation of the teams’ professional code of conduct, resulting in the team suspending him for the entire 2022-2023 season.
 - Udoka’s fiancé, Nia Long, who he was engaged to for nearly a decade and who they share a 10-year-old-son, was blindsided by the cheating allegations. Miss Long had no idea about the affair until the Celtics announced Udoka’s suspension.
 - My heart goes out to her and their son! Their lives have been emotionally turned upside down.
 - Because of Coach Udoka’s actions multiple lives have been hurt and upended, the sports world is in shock, and the Celtics promising upcoming new season is in shambles, at this moment.

TAKE-AWAY: So, what’s the big deal? I (presenter – David) don’t say this to belittle his fiancé, his son, or the family of the woman he had the affair with. I can’t imagine how devastating this situation is! Yet, in a world of no real right or wrong—moral absolutes—why is this affair such a big deal? It seems, according to our culture, one can do whatever they want?!

Yet, there’s all this press-news with an aura of shock. Why? According to our culture this shouldn’t be a big deal. Our culture can’t have it both ways. And the suspension is not because of the affair and how it hurt his fiancé, son, or the other woman’s family, but because the coach broke the franchise’s code of conduct. Do you see the irony in all this?!

Bombarded...

- We’re bombarded every day from our culture with overt sexual overtones, alternative sexual lifestyles, and gender issues! They’ve become common place—“old news.”
 - They blast us blatantly and brazenly through: TV shows, movies, billboards, magazine covers, Facebook, Instagram, internet, etc.
 - The messages we hear are: *Flaunt it—don’t be ashamed, it’s who you are! Don’t let anyone tell you what to do! Do what you want, it’s ok! Do what feels good! Do what is right for you! You deserve to be happy!*
 - These messages emphasize one’s personal human choice regardless of God’s counsel/will with the idea...that somehow doing one’s own way/will is a good thing. However, research shows otherwise:

- Cohabitation:
 - ❖ 40% of opposite-sex couples who “slid” into a cohabitation arrangement before marriage reported lower levels of marital quality *{lovetoknow.com}*.
 - ❖ Couples who cohabitated before marriage had a 33% higher chance of divorcing than couples who moved in together after the wedding ceremony *{https://sites.utexas.edu/cohabitation}*. (Some researchers say this survey information is incorrect and there is no real risk factor *{Arielle Kuperberg, University of NC at Greensboro}*).
 - ❖ 18.7% of couples who cohabitated together before getting engaged suggested divorce at some point in their marriage in comparison to 10.2% of couples who did not live together before marriage *{lovetoknow.com | J Fam Psychol. 2009 Feb; 23 (1): 107-111}*.
 - ✓ The highest risk factor for divorce is living together before engagement.
 - ❖ 1.8 million Americans over 50 years of age cohabit/live together because getting married would be inconvenient—losing Social Security and/or pension benefits, messing up inheritances, etc. *{lovetoknow.com | Forbes 10/26/2007}*.
 - ❖ Within 4 ½ years, 27% of same-sex couples and 28% of opposite-sex couples who were cohabitating but not married ended their relationships.
- Non-marital sex and divorce *{Institute for Family Studies, Nicholas H. Wolfinger, 06/06/2016, Counterintuitive Trends in the Link Between Premarital Sex and Marital Stability}*
 - ❖ Women who married as virgins had the lowest rate of divorce (6% - 2000s).
 - ❖ It was higher for those who did have pre-marital sex, particularly if they had multiple partners.
- Transgender-effect: a study comparing ages 12-29 transgender to non-transgender youth and young adults *{Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, 01/7/2015, https://www.hsph.harvard.edu}*:
 - ❖ Depression – 50.6% transgender vs. 20.6% non-transgender
 - ❖ Anxiety – 26.7% vs. 10%
 - ❖ Attempted suicide – 17.25 vs. 6.1%
 - ❖ Engaged in self-harm without lethal intent – 16.7% vs. 4.4%

TAKE-AWAY: In these studies results we see the “Garden-Lie Factor.”

The Garden-Lie Factor

- Satan promised Eve she (and by implication Adam and all human beings) would be happier—experiencing life to the fullest—disobeying God’s parameters, instead of obeying them.
 - Plucking the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good & Evil symbolized human beings’ abandonment of God’s description of right and wrong for living life to the fullest and now deciding for themselves what is right and wrong—best for their lives.
 - This independence from God’s parameters/counsel is reflected in the above research results. Interestingly, God did know best all along, didn’t He?!

- Amazingly, we discover from secular research God’s counsel/parameters actually promote the best for our lives, not restrict, as Satan in the Garden of Eden lead Adam & Eve to believe, and us humans too.

TAKE-AWAY: So, living, by His grace, a sexually pure life or by the gender designations that God created human beings with is actually the best for us all, leading to a fulfilled life of “happiness!!” Not, the other way around!

The “Happiness” Factor

- **Psalm 1**¹

- **V. 1** ~

- “Blessed” = “happy/happiness”—a life of satisfaction/contentment {*Matthew 5*}.
 - ❖ We experience true happiness only when we follow God’s plan for our lives—sexual purity in this particular case.
- “Scornful”
 - ❖ Progressive involvement with evil =
 - ✓ following evil advice ->
 - ✓ adopting evil practices ->
 - ✓ identifying with defiant rebels.
 - ❖ Evil described through:
 - ✓ thoughts/plans (“counsel”)
 - ✓ actions (“path”)
 - ✓ words (“scornful”)
 - ❖ If one progressively believes Satan’s “propaganda”/deceptive lies about sexual purity (for him impurity/immorality) that he bombards all humans with through our culture, social media, etc., he/she will experience pain, heartache, etc. like the surveys revealed at the beginning of this handout.

- **V. 2** {compare *Psalm 19 & 119*} ~

- “Law of the Lord” -> “delight” and “meditates”/ponders
 - ❖ Not a legalistic concentration on the law (God’s counsel in the Bible), but a delight in the gift of grace from the Lawgiver/God {compare *Joshua 1:8*}.
- Obedience to God’s counsel for sexual purity, by His grace, will bring happiness/joy because one realizes God is protecting them so they can experience His best for their lives.

- **V. 3** ~

- “Tree”
 - ❖ A description of the righteous follower of God who is living obediently by God’s pure, empowering grace {*Psalm 92:12-15*}.
 - ❖ This is the only way any human being can live God’s standard of sexual purity! We must be a “tree planted.”
- “Planted”
 - ❖ Literally “transplanted”
 - ❖ Unless one is “planted”/“rooted” in God’s unconditional love and empowering grace, he/she will **not** be able to live sexually pure for Him.

¹ Dybdahl, J. L. (Ed.). (2010). [Andrews Study Bible Notes](#) (p. 673). Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press.

- ❖ This is why biblical sexual purity (purity with a capital “G”) is **only** possible through indwelling power, not one’s own power!
- “Rivers”
 - ❖ Literally “artificial water-channels”/irrigation channels
 - ❖ God takes the initiative to provide an environment for optimal growth.
 - ❖ This is how one “prosper” {*Joshua 1:7-8*}.
 - ✓ God’s counsel is always best for human beings. This doesn’t mean everything will be perfect in one’s life or one won’t suffer. What it does mean is: one doesn’t bring upon themselves undo pain and heartache that otherwise they wouldn’t suffer (see *the survey statistics at the beginning of the handout*).
- **V. 4** ~
 - “Chaff”
 - ❖ Chaff has no substance or life. It’s worthless, trash—the husks, leftovers, byproduct of winnowing or threshing.
 - ❖ ***Strangely, the tree seems bound to one location but is actually truly free and flourishing, while the chaff appears free but is prisoner to the swirling wind.***
 - ❖ Heart obedience to God’s counsel, in this case sexual purity, always leads to freedom, not bondage or restriction, as Satan would claim {*Galatians 5:13a*}. Instead, it’s sexual impurity/immorality that binds and destroys.
- **V. 6** ~
 - “Knows” = an ongoing experiential knowing—in a personal covenant relationship with God
 - ❖ This is the only way this life of obedience in sexual purity happens (purity with a capital “G”). It’s the only way it will bring “blessing”/’happiness” to the one who follows His counsel!

TAKE-AWAY: So, what is God’s biblical counsel/parameters for how to live a sexually pure life that produces “blessing”/’happiness” in one’s life?

A Life of Biblical Sexual Purity

- Sex is a beautiful, holy gift from God to be expressed/experienced only in a covenant marriage relationship between a man and woman as husband and wife.
 - **Genesis 2:24-25**
 - It’s part of the emotional bonding/intimacy between a husband & wife.
 - ❖ God’s plan = growing emotional bonding in dating -> commitment in engagement -> wedding ceremony -> sexual union
 - **Song of Solomon**
 - **1:2-3:5** – The courtship/dating time
 - ❖ There’s no reference to sexual intercourse in this section until after the wedding {*4:16-5:1*}.
 - **3:6-5:1** – Bridal procession & wedding
 - ❖ Solomon praises the Shulamite’s virginity through descriptions as: “a garden enclosed,” “a spring shut up,” and “a fountain sealed.”

- ❖ According to God’s beautiful plan, their courtship/dating did not involve pre-marital sex.
- ❖ They waited until after the wedding ceremony in **4:16-5:1** to consummate their wedding with sexual intercourse.
 - ✓ These verses are the **center** of the Song of Solomon. Maybe God is trying to emphasize that His plan for sexual purity is still the best plan to experience His best for our lives.
 - ✓ “Eat, O friends!” is an authoritative voice pronouncing approval and blessing upon their marriage and it’s sexual consummation, which seems to be the voice of God. He approves! He’s the author of sexual expression! It’s His beautiful gift to a husband and wife.
- **5:2-8:14** – The life of love after marriage
 - ❖ The rest of the book depicts the couple’s married life with numerous references to foreplay and sexual intercourse/union.
 - ❖ God’s plan for sexual purity and enjoyment is still the best way!
- **1 Corinthians 7:1-5; Hebrews 13:4**
 - Physical sexual expression is good, holy, pure, and a gift from God when expressed in the parameters of a covenant marriage relationship where a man and woman are growing together in emotional intimacy as husband and wife.
- **Alternative sexual expressions/practices**
 - Adultery {**Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 5:18; Proverbs 6:32-33; Matthew 19:7-9 (8); Mark 10:17-(19); Luke 18:18-(20); John 8:3-4, 10-11; Galatians 5:(19)-20; 2 Peter 2:12-15 (14)**}
 - Obviously, any physical sexual activity with another who is not one’s spouse is adultery.
 - Jesus also amplifies a deeper meaning for adultery by saying it involves lustful thoughts and desires in one’s mind as well as emotional bonding, even though there’s no physical sexual activity {**Matthew 5:27-28; 15:19; Proverbs 6:25**}.
 - With this definition of adultery—lustful thoughts and desires in one’s mind and heart = adultery—pornography, watching some TV shows, movies, social media, etc. could be adultery or lead to adultery.
 - Jesus’ second radical teaching on adultery is the idea that divorce could cause someone to commit adultery {**Matthew 5:31-32; 19:8-10; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18**} .
 - ❖ I (*presenter - David*) want to acknowledge the pain and struggles that come with divorce. Many do not want to be divorced, but they are anyway.
 - ❖ I (*presenter - David*) also acknowledge the sad, terrible things that can happen to one spouse in a marital relationship—not only physical abuse, but also emotional or verbal abuse, neglect, etc.
 - ❖ With this being said Jesus’ only reason for divorce is: sexual immorality/impurity/fornication (in some Bible versions) – more on this in our next presentation: *Living 09*.
 - ❖ Based on Jesus’ teaching, any other reason for divorce is not valid and if the divorced individual(s) remarry they commit adultery.
 - Homosexual—gay/lesbian lifestyles
 - Sodom & Gomorrah {**Genesis 19:4-9**}

- ❖ The men’s homosexual desires and activities are called “sin” by God {*Genesis 18:20*} and doing “wickedly” by Lot {*Genesis 19:7*}.
- ❖ Their homosexual sin brings judgment upon them from God {*Genesis 19:23-25*}. God detests homosexual/gay/lesbian sexual practices. We’ll address below how He feels about the people who struggle with this sin.
- Pentateuch
 - ❖ *Leviticus 18:22; 20:13*
 - ✓ God calls homosexuality an “abomination”.
 - ✓ Abomination = detestable, offensive.
 - ✓ Moses includes homosexual practices in the same context as adultery {*18:20; 20:10-12, 19-21*}, child sacrifice to Molech {*18:21*}, bestiality—humans having sex with animals {*18:23; 20:15-16*}, incest {*20:17, 19*}, and polygamy {*20:14*}.
 - ✓ These practices defile the land/the nation that practices them, causing a “vomiting-out” judgment upon them {*18:24-26*}.
 - ✓ These sexual sins, including homosexuality, are an abomination for all of humanity, not just Israelites as discovered in the prohibitions given for the Gentile Christians from the Jerusalem Council {*Acts 15:28-29*}.
 - ✓ There is no ritual remedy {*18:28-29*} because homosexuality and these other sexual perversions are a distortion of God’s perfect creation order.
 - ❖ *Deuteronomy 23:17-18 (also 1 Kings 14:24; 15:12; 22:46)*
 - ✓ Prostitution, particularly male prostitution, is an “abomination” to God.
 - ✓ The original Hebrew makes it clear the male prostitutes (“dogs”) refers to male-with-male sex.
 - ✓ This homosexual prohibition is found in the section of *Deuteronomy* that elaborates on the seventh commandment, indicating it probably refers to all homosexual/lesbian sexual activities.
- Benjaminite’s of Gibeah {*Judges 19:22-23; 20:5-(6)*}
 - ❖ Their homosexual desires are labeled doing “wickedly” or “outrage” {*19:23*} and “lewdness” {*20:6*}.
- *Ezekiel 16:49-50; 18:10-13*
 - ❖ The word “abomination” used in *16:50 & 18:12* is in the singular and is the same word used in *Leviticus 18:22 & 20:13* to describe homosexual/lesbian sexual activities.
 - ❖ Again, homosexual/lesbian practices are described as an abomination to God!
- *Romans 1:24-27*
 - ❖ Paul calls homosexual and lesbian sexual practices: morally unclean/lewd.
- *1 Corinthians 6:9-11*
 - ❖ Paul lists (*based on NKJV Bible*) the following practices and the individuals who practice them as unrighteous, noting they will **not** inherit the kingdom of heaven—God does not accept/approve:
 - ✓ “fornicators” (*Greek “pornoí”*) = sexually immoral individuals (specifically incest based on the context of *1 Corinthians 5* with *Leviticus 18:6-8* as the Old Testament foundation)
 - ✓ “adulterers” (*Greek “moichoí”*) = adulterous individuals

- ✓ “homosexuals” (Greek “malakoi”) = soft men (a male who makes himself like a female to attract other males)
 - ✓ “sodomites” (Greek “nokoitai”) = men who lie with other males (on top)
- ❖ It’s clear from both the Old Testament & New Testament that all homosexual/lesbian sexual behavior is sin—not accepted/approved by God!
 - ✓ How God views the ones who struggle in this area is a different story/response as we’ll address below.
- Polygamy/Incest {*Leviticus 20:14, 17, 19*}
 - God calls polygamy an “abomination” = detestable, offensive.
 - Moses includes polygamy in a list of abominations along with homosexual practices {*Leviticus 18:22; 20:13*}, adultery {*18:20; 20:10-12, 19-21*}, child sacrifice to Molech {*18:21*}, and bestiality—humans having sex with animals {*18:23; 20:15-16*}.
 - These practices defile the land/the nation that practices them, causing a “vomiting-out” judgment upon them {*18:24-26*}.
 - These sexual sins are an abomination for all of humanity, not just Israelites as discovered in the prohibitions given for the Gentile Christians from the Jerusalem Council {*Acts 15:28-29*}.
 - There is no ritual remedy {*18:28-29*} because polygamy and incest along with these other sexual perversions are a distortion of God’s perfect creation order.
- Transgender/Gender identity confusion
 - This area seems to be on the increase in our culture with pressure to quickly identify and/or respond with medical surgery or hormonal treatments.
 - ❖ This is dangerous for two reasons:
 - ✓ Research discovered 85% of young people desist by the time they are adults if not before {*Frontiers in Psychiatry: 10.3389/psyt.2021.632784*}.
 - ✓ The human brain’s prefrontal cortex, where one makes rationale choices, is not fully developed/matured until age 25.
 - ❖ Obviously, any permanent change at an early age is non-reversible if the individual changed their thinking/perception later in life.
 - ❖ Also suggestive pressure from our culture and social media can cause young people to identify because it seems right to them to do so.
 - Biblical background for understanding transgender/gender identity confusion.
 - ❖ *Genesis 1:27*
 - ✓ God’s original creation was male and female with set gender designations along with their gender specific anatomy.
 - ✓ The Bible does not recognize any other option because it’s unnatural based on God’s original creation. God did not create human beings as transgender or with gender identity confusion. It’s the result of sin!
 - ✓ It is recognized, though, that trauma, life experiences, culture/social media pressure, etc. can be very persuasive otherwise. Yet, these are all distortions caused by Satan who is the author of confusion.
 - ✓ Satan knows any distortion of God’s beautiful, original creation plan only bring heartache, not freedom or peace, as the opening statistics verify! This has always been his plan/desire!

God's Love, Care & Response...

- I (*presenter – David*) am a “realist,” acknowledging we live in a broken, sinful world where life is not perfect as God planned. However, this **doesn't** nullify God's beautiful, biblical plan. His truth is **still** truth. It **hasn't** changed!
- God loves every human being and longs to help them reach His ideal for them!
 - So, He has given powerful promises of help and transformation {*Ezekiel 36:26-27; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Galatians 5:16; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 2 Peter 1:2-4*}!
 - He understands human beings' weaknesses and is still willing to help {*John 8:2-(11)*}.
- Temptations or sinful tendencies **not** lived out are **not** sin
 - It's when one dwells on them and/or lives them out in one's mind/thoughts or actions that they become sin.
 - With this in mind:
 - Individuals who struggle with same-sex attractions, homosexuality, etc. but do not live them out, could be church members and hold offices in the church. They would need good Christian counseling, encouragement, love, etc.
 - Those struggling with pornography should be encouraged to get good Christian counseling with love and encouragement. This could be reason for church discipline based on the individual's attitude.
 - Those who commit adultery should admit it and deal with it through good Christian counseling—personal and/or marital—along with love, encouragement, and Christian mentoring. This would be reason for church discipline.
 - If someone is struggling with transgender/gender identity issues they should be encouraged through much prayer, Christian mentoring, and good Christian counseling, etc.
 - Those living out these lifestyles should not be members or hold church office, yet they should still be loved and ministered to while attending church.
 - ***No matter what someone maybe struggling with or living out, we should still treat them with love, care, and concern, even though we don't agree with their unbiblical lifestyle. God is willing to redeem and restore anyone. This is power of the gospel!***

Dealing with Sexual Impurity/Immorality or Gender Issues

- Pray, pray! Claim God's promises!
- Admit the sin struggle and your need for help and healing
- Make a commit by the grace of God to deal with it.
- Put into place accountability protections: blockers, no private use of devices, accountability partner, support groups, etc.
- Deal with the real issue and/or grow in healing through good Christian counseling.
- Men, women are not sexual objects for lust and women, don't be an unknowing sexual temptation for men.
 - Women, men are visual beings, stimulated by visual sight. Watch what you wear.
 - Be modest in what you wear and how you act around a man. You don't want to be a stumbling block to him or give him a wrong idea.
 - Modesty involves a humble, self-control that cares about others.

- It embraces God's value on you, not outward focus on looks and enticement.
- Men, it's your responsibility to act in integrity and sexual purity regardless of how a woman acts or dresses. Their actions doesn't give you a right to lust after her, treat her like an object to fulfill lustful passion, or take advantage of her!
 - Actually, *Ephesians 5* calls men to "present her/wife a pure and spotless bride," referencing a husband presenting his wife to God.
 - ❖ While men and women are both charged to express self-control for their own individual purity, only men are charged specifically with being responsible for the sexual wholeness of the opposite gender.
 - ❖ This seems to place the ultimate responsibility for respecting human sexuality squarely on the shoulders of men not woman.
 - ❖ Protecting a sister's sexual integrity is one of the highest forms of respect that a man can show to a woman.

LIVING CHOICE: Will you by God's grace, covet to live a sexually pure life in Jesus—mind, body, spirit—doing whatever it takes for this to happen so God is honored by your life and you can experience His full blessing in your life?