

Sexuality #3

Grace and Truth – part 15

July 30, 2023

(Much of this material was taken from Robert Cunningham, from Christ for Kentucky).

DAY 1: Are sexual restrictions “hateful” and “bigoted”?

1. This week we will look at the sexual ethic of secular culture.
2. We will offer three critiques that demonstrate how this ethic ultimately falls short.
3. By way of review, we have covered the following in the last two weeks:
Week 1: We looked at sexuality, with Jesus being our guide toward both truth and grace.
Week 2: We looked at the real driver beneath sexuality—identity.
4. Virtually everyone lives with some set of sexual boundaries. The religious among us still see boundaries as important. Most secular people believe there are limits within sexuality.
5. For example, there are still some boundaries to which we can all agree: zoophilia (attraction with animals), pedophilia, and incest are still viewed as deviant, harmful to social order, and prohibited by societal norms and legislation.
6. Why are these examples important?

The act of restricting sexual freedom cannot be called
hateful and *harmful* in itself.

7. We cannot say, “we should never place restrictions on sexuality.” To disagree with someone’s sexuality is not an act of *bigotry* in and of itself. We all simply do this. We all recognize unfettered sexuality is morally wrong, culturally destructive, and does not cultivate human flourishing.
8. Have you had experience of being called a bigot for voicing an opinion contrary to someone else’s opinion? What is the nature of that current relationship?
9. What strikes you from today’s writing?

DAY 2: A religious critique of modern sexuality

1. Even if our culture completely rids itself of all sexual boundaries, there is still a religious critique to be made.
2. We are not relieving ourselves of religious sexual ethics. We are forming a new religious sexual ethic.
3. While some Christians have admittedly been bigoted in their response to LGBT+ people, a new judgmental, self-righteousness has emerged.

The secular west has a sexual ethic. If you don't embrace the new sexual ethic there is no longer room for you in our society.

4. Human sexuality is no longer a sexual discussion. It is now a religious discussion.
5. Try as may to do away with religion, we cannot. There is something woven into our very nature that cannot be ousted. What is taking place? Historic traditional religions are being replaced with modern movements enacted in religious ways.

6. One of the most devout religions of our day is human sexuality.

The pride flag is now a religious banner. Ironically, it is becoming as puritanical as past religious expressions.

- The Pride flag replaces the Christian cross as the chief symbol.
- There is a strict orthodoxy all must adhere to,
- If violated there is discipline, perhaps social excommunication,
- We are resurrecting old blasphemy laws—now called hate speech,
- Hate speech legislation: with the force of law protecting our beliefs and practices to our way of sexual expression and practices.

7. The self-censorship everyone now feels shows you how religious this has become.

8. It is doing to us what religious fundamentalism always does. It is dividing us.

9. There are acceptable insiders and unacceptable outsiders. There is an us v. them hostility, no room for dialogue, no room for disagreement. It is a black and white debate where even friends and family are made enemies.

10. This new social *orthodoxy* is more important to us than even friendship and family.

11. Consider, whether the bigotry of traditional religion under the guise of moral superiority is only being replaced by the bigotry of secular religion in its own form of moral superiority.

12. What strikes you from today's writing?

DAY 3: Historical critique of modern sexuality

1. There is a myth regarding history, that we have finally reached the final frontier. We have cast off all the archaic and repressive norms of the past to finally arrive at the truest ethical understanding of sexuality. This is simply untrue. What we are being sold is nothing new. It is a return to ancient antiquity and antiquity's practices.

2. The ancient Roman Empire was a world promiscuity, unrestrained sexual appetites; homosexuality, heterosexuality, almost anything was open season. There was little to no adherence to marital fidelity, especially for men.

3. Orgies, both private and public were commonplace. Men having sex with young boys was accepted and celebrated as a mentoring right of passage.

4. Into that context emerged Christianity with a sexual ethic of one man with one woman in a covenant of marriage. Nothing was more counter-cultural than Christian ethics which would revolutionize the world.

5. The bible portrays sex as both glorious and dangerous.

a. Sex, within a covenant of marriage between one man and one woman is portrayed in the bible as a thing of beauty. It is to be shared only with your spouse. Why? It is an illustration, experience, and deepening of committed love, for life.

b. Song of Solomon compares sex to fire. Properly ordered, fire gives us light, cooks our meals, gives us heat in the winter. But fire unrestrained is destructive. It burns down homes, communities and millions of acres of forest. The same is true with sex.

6. British historian Tom Holland has demonstrated that the proper ordering of sexuality on the foundation of the Christian ethic was an undeniably positive advancement for humanity, and laid the foundation for flourishing societies.

7. But now the Christian ethic of married monogamy between man and woman, the social basis of the nuclear family is at being questioned, in some circles challenged with the aim of eradication.

8. We must not be so cavalier with human tradition, at breakneck speed. When Barack Obama was elected president, his position on marriage was one man, one woman for life, the historical position. We are now only fifteen years past his position. That is how quickly we are tearing down centuries of ethical consensus.

9. What strikes you from today's writing?

DAY 4: A diversity critique of modern sexuality

1. One of the new secular values is diversity.
2. But there is a fascinating development. Secular mankind is bent on repenting from our imperialistic past, while at the same time forcing our sexual ethic on everyone.
3. We may not be conquering worlds any more, but we are conquering world views.

4. The United States State Department's mission is to represent America and Americans overseas. If you went on the State Dept's Twitter account during Pride Month, you would have seen multiple tweets celebrating and promoting America's deeply held commitment to all things LGBTQ+. What is the message to the world?
 - a. We are here to lecture the world on human sexuality. We are right. The rest of the non-Western world needs our enlightened opinion.
 - b. During Pride Month, many of our embassies were either lit up with Pride colors or even flew the Pride flag.

5. Here is the hard truth no one wants to admit. The sexual revolution is **not** a diverse revolution. It is, by-and-large, a white, elite, academic, western movement. Do westerners not realize that or care that the vast majority of our world – Asia, Africa, Middle East, Central and South America that these cultures ascribe to a different sexual and gender ethic than ours?
6. Do westerners not see the arrogance to proclaiming that the past few decades of western civilization which radically reinterpreted sex and gender is now the one true sexual ethic? The harsh reality is that westerners don't see this and don't care to see this. It's just, "We're right and everyone else is wrong and we are going to colonize the rest of the world with our worldview."
7. To those outside the white, elite, academic world, it feels like the same old imperialistic story.
8. If westerners are serious about repenting of arrogant imperialism, then it will require humility to listen and learn from other cultures. And I don't think the west is capable of such humility.
9. I believe the sexual revolution is far more important to white, academic elites than listening to what Asia and Africa have to say about sexuality and gender. Most U.S. metropolitan elites really don't care what you think in Midwest, rural America.

11. Do we really care what black Africans think about sexuality and gender? Do we really care what black American really think about sexuality and gender? 70% of blacks in America still hold to traditional sexual ethics. Do we care what they think? You can say "Black lives matter," but do black opinions matter?
12. Do we celebrate diversity or not? Then there must be room in our world for disagreement here. And, it looks to me like there is not room to disagree—that is without getting canceled socially, families broken, jobs lost, and careers ruined.
13. On this topic, conformity is more important than diversity, which is sadly just another chapter in the colonization and domination of western civilization on the rest of the world.
14. What strikes you from today's writing?

DAY 5: Conclusion

1. We have explored three critiques of secular sexual ethic and identity: religious, history, and diversity.
2. Would you ponder these critiques?
3. You still may disagree with Christian sexual beliefs, but I hope that these words will say to you we are not automatically hate-filled bigots, to be dismissed or even defeated.
4. And I hope you'll ponder Jesus, who held the balance of **truth and grace**.

5. What is being hurled upon is an ultimatum. "Either affirm my sexuality/identity or you are a hater, and I want nothing to do with haters." This is a double-edged sword.

Not only is it a demand, but it comes with a threat.

6. Mothers, fathers, friends, grandparents, aunts and uncles have had young college students and young adults in their twenties treat their relatives or friends in this despicable way. To gaslight parents who sacrificed for you, loved you in the good times and hard times, helped you along in school, prayed for you, took you to football practices or dance lessons, financially supported you growing up, paid for your college, ...

7. For the Christian truth and grace is our guide. There are four things we must remember:

- a. We cannot affirm the ethics of the LGBTQ+ community; Jesus won't allow that.
- b. We also cannot hate the people of the LGBTQ+ community; Jesus won't allow that.
- c. According to the secularists, these two things cannot coexist together.
- d. According to Jesus they can coexist together and they must coexist together.

8. Do not be surprised if you are viewed as an enemy, called vile names, are persecuted, and dropped or canceled, just as Jesus promised

Matt. 5:10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Luke 6:27 "But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

Luke 6:32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

9. What strikes you from today's writing?