“A Biblical View of Sex and Marriage”

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CENTURION EDUCATION FOUNDATION

By

Dr. Andrew T. Knight

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What is aright Biblical worldview of Sex and marriage?

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Andrew Thomas Knight

DMIN Luther Rice Seminary, 2014

MABA Clarks Summit University, 2018

MRE West Coast Baptist College, 2010

MBS Emmanuel Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004

BB Pensacola Christian College, 1994

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INTRODUCTION

 **Perception of the Problem**

 Sex is part of the human experience to be sure, but the question might be, is the proper

expression of human sexuality for the Christian might be driven by theology or by culture?

Scripture and cultural studies seem to indicate a divergence. Malachi 3:6a “For I am the LORD, I

change not;” Scripture seems to indicate a consistency while the culture seems to be shifting, and

shifting dramatically. George Barna’s research found,

“There are disparities, for instance, between generational cohorts. Overall, Elders and Boomers tend to share a stronger consensus about the purpose of sex. That is, clear majorities among the older generations say sex is for procreation (79% Elders; 71% Boomers), expressing intimacy between two people who love each other (68% Elders; 73% Boomers) or uniting a man and woman in marriage (62% Elders; 50% Boomers).”[[1]](#footnote-1)

One can see that the attitudes shift from one generation to the next as seen in the next

reference from the Barna Group’s research. Barna stated,

“The two younger adult generations are much less likely to embrace these traditional views of sex. Most Gen-Xers and Millennials continue to believe conventional ideas of sex: that it is to express intimacy between two people who love each other (57% Gen-Xers; 56% Millennials) or to procreate (52% Gen-Xers; 51% Millennials). However, the notion that it should unite a man and woman in marriage is endorsed by just one-third of Xers and Millennials.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

It appears that there is a drifting of thought relative to human sexuality between one

generations and the next. In fact the maternity rate has dropped by over 20% in just one

generation. The rationale for sex to unite a man and a woman in marriage dropped by over 20%

and 30% respectively in just one generation. Thus, there must be and is a reason for this seismic

shift in peoples thinking and behavior regarding human sexuality. When one analyzes the two

possible of causations of this problem, either the culture or the biblical principles which govern

human sexuality, one would have to conclude that it is the culture that changed.

**Description of the Problem**

 Chip Ingram addressed this problem of non-biblical worldview of sex and relationships.

Ingram stated, “We’ve made the point that love, sex, and lasting relationships are among the

most passionate desires of people’s hearts. We’ve also noted that most people are simply not

experiencing love and sexual intimacy to the degree or to the extent that they desire.”[[3]](#footnote-3) Ingram

talks in very real terns, relative to human relationships and sexuality. Than he later stated, in

large part the unbiblical philosophy which has permeated the culture. Ingram stated, “That the

culture is saturated with Hollywood’s formula. We sing along with the formula hits. We read

about it, and unconsciously almost all of us have bought into it to one degree or another. I find

the Hollywood formula just as prevalent among Christians as among non-Christians. And the

results are equally disastrous.”[[4]](#footnote-4) Thus the description of the problem is both spiritual and cultural.

The Hollywood philosophy that Ingram describes is a dating modal verses a biblical courtship

modal of moving from singlehood to married life.

**The Problem in Biblical Perspective**

 The philosophy, worldview, and culture of men and women changed when Adam and

Eve were divinely removed from the perfect environment of the Garden of Eden. The culture in

the Garden of Eden was relatively easy to do studies on as there were only two of them! Prior to

the fall the culture, which is to say, the philosophy of sex and marriage, and their whole

worldview changed. Prior to the fall, and just after the Creator had met the need of the man for a

helpmate, marriage was heaven on earth. The first couple went from being in Gen. 2:24c “one

flesh,” to Gen. 3:5d “knowing good and evil,” to Gen. 3:7b “they knew they were naked.” Their

entire philosophy, culture, and worldview had shifted from paradise to peril in one moment of

time. All this and Adam didn’t have a mother-in-law. With the new philosophy, culture, and

worldview that had changed, and brought many devastating challenges to human sexuality and

marriage.

**Old Testament**

Genesis 1:28

 God laid out a plan for mankind for marriage and procreation as found in Genesis 1:28

“And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the

earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and

over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” God’s plan was for marriage to produce

children and fill the earth with God’s image bearers. In other words, it is biblical for the husband

to go out for surf and turf, and romance his wife.

Genesis 2:18

Genesis points out God’s plan for fulfill the man’s need for companionship and a

helpmate as stated in Genesis 2:18 “And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should

be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.” The Lord was pleased at all He had made up

until He made man, who did not yet have a mate. When He made man and had not yet made

woman He said, “It is not good.” So that by inference God could say, “It is good” too!

Genesis 2:24

God’s instructions for the home life and marriage continued with Genesis 2:24

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they

shall be one flesh.” This passage sometimes referred to as, “leave, cleave & weave.” The divine

instructions indicate that each new family unit should have their own dwelling for nesting and

rearing children. One could also conclude that there can only be one head of a home and

specifically one man in a household. Furthermore, a young couple can get counsel for their new

life together but ultimately they must work things out for themselves, and thus they need their

own space to live and grown together.

Proverbs 5:15-19

The Lord also gave instruction relative to human sexuality within the marriage

relationship. The Lord explained it this way,

Proverbs 5:15-19 “Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets. Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee. Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.”

There are a few implications to this passage relative to intimacy with one’s spouse. First,

the divine instruction is to have you intimacy needs met with your spouse, and not anyone else’s

spouse. The instruction from the Lord is to marry young, stay married, and stay excited about

and with one’s wife. Furthermore, beyond staying in love with one’s wife, stay in a life pattern of

intimacy with one’s wife.

Song of Solomon 7:6-12

The Lord uses metaphoric language here to discuss the sexual life between husband and

wife. He recorded this for His people in:

Song of Solomon 7:6-12 “How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights! This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes. I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples; And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak. I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me. Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.”

What the Lord seems to be conveying an ongoing, passionate relationship between

husband and wife. Furthermore, it appears that the sexual relationship between husband and

wife, beyond procreation, is for mutual pleasure and enjoyment that each bring to one another.

This is one of God’s greatest gifts to each marriage partner.

**New Testament**

I Corinthians 6:13-20

 The Apostle Paul while dealing with the church at Corinth relative to their sexual

immorality instructed the Corinthian believers on the sacredness of the marriage relationship and

the body. Paul under inspiration wrote in I Corinthians 6:13-20

“Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.

 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”

Prior to their salvation the Corinthians they had no understanding of a biblical view of

sex and marriage. Once they became Christians their worldview had changed, but only after Paul

taught the Corinthians the biblical view of their bodies and sex within marriage. Prior to the

Corinthians being disciple bay Paul they had continued living in an immoral lifestyle.

Ephesians 5:33

 Paul addressed the church at Ephesus relative to the relationship between husbands and

wives and how they should conduct themselves as those having a Christian worldview of

marriage and sex. Under inspiration Paul penned the Words in Ephesians 5:33 “Nevertheless let

every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she

reverence her husband.” The marriage relationship has a special one that is a picture of Christ

and His Church. The biblical worldview of marriage and sex is counter to that of a vast of the

culture of the World. The treatment of women in most cultures of the world is shameful in their

treatment of women. The biblical way that women are treated stands out from all other cultures

and sub-cultures. The result is a relationship that is heaven on earth, and one where husband and

wife see Christ in each other.

Hebrews 13:4

 The Lord gave a contrast between the way He views immoral sex, outside of marriage,

and the way He views sex that is blessed by Him in marriage, as referenced in Hebrews 13:4

“Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will

judge.” God is a good and pleasing thing in the Lord’s sight, and is the Lord’s divine plan to

bless the husband and wife through the institution of marriage. The worldview of sex and

marriage for most of our culture is that sex before marriage is acceptable because the couple is in

love and they intend to marry anyhow. And, “the road to hell is paved with good intentions.”[[5]](#footnote-5)

The Culture of the Bible believing couple, who are serious about living for the Lord have a much

different worldview of sex and marriage. the Christian couple have a worldview that they want to

live right and be blessed in their marriage, and while they are on the path leading to marriage.

**A Biblical Husband**

 A biblical husband conducts himself with their wife far differently than do unsaved men

treat their wife. The Apostle Paul stated in Ephesians 5:25-26, “Husbands, love your wives, even

as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it

with the washing of water by the word,” This is the implementation of biblical principles into the

institution of marriage. Marriage is the first institution which the Lord created and is the most

basic of relationships within society. John Piper and Wayne Grudem addressed the conduct of a

Christian man toward his wife this way, “First, the loving husband gives himself. In his

leadership role as head, he seeks to lead by giving of himself to his wife in ways analogous to

how Christ gave Himself to His bride. Christ’s giving of himself was personal and sacrificial.”[[6]](#footnote-6)

Sometimes this form of leadership is referred to as servant leadership, and other times as

follower-first leadership.

The matter of leadership within the biblical worldview of sex and marriage was also

addressed in Scripture, Ephesians 5:22-24 “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands,

as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the

church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let

the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.” This view of leadership is counter to popular

culture, but it is the divine plan for marriages in order to be blessed. Piper and Grudem stated,

“Since by God’s decree marriage partners are ‘one flesh,’ God wants them to function together

under one head, not as two autonomous individuals living together. Since Paul is concerned

about that unity, we should be concerned about it too.”[[7]](#footnote-7) God by His nature is One of order He

has structured the husband and wife relationship with the mad as head of the home, but with

careful instruction to love his wife.

**A Biblical Wife**

 Proverbs 31 maybe the most referenced passage relative to godly women mentioned in

the Bible. Certainly this woman is a superb Christian example for women to follow, who want to

pattern their marriage relationship after a godly example. Proverbs 13:10-12 “Who can find a

virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in

her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her

life.” This passage depicts the heart of a Christian woman who has dedicated her heart, life, and

marriage to the Lord. Relative to Sarah and Abraham Gien Karssen stated,

“Abraham had obeyed immediately. And Sarah had adjusted to the decision. They had suddenly become seminomads, instead of citizens of a wealthy, comfortable city. As with most women, she hadn’t found it easy to leave her home and loved ones behind to face an unknown future. But she had obeyed he husband and trusted God who had spoken to him.”[[8]](#footnote-8)

Sarah was not a perfect Old Testament believer, but when one looks upon the horizon of

her life it is reasonable to conclude that she was a God fearing woman, and one that had the faith

to follow the Lord and submit to her husband Abraham. Their life together was not without their

challenges, and yet their life together is one to be admired and modeled.

Carolyn McCulley, shortly after her conversion to Christ had a crash collision with her

worldview of how marital relationships should work. When she was first confronted with the

“submission” and “love” dynamic found in Ephesians 5:22-25 she pretty much lost it! But the

Lord did a work in her heart, and this passage taught her the biblical worldview of husband-wife

relationships. She wrote,

“Submission! Surely that was an ancient concept that no one practiced anymore! There was no way on God’s green earth that I would ever concede that women are inferior and must live as second-class to men. That passage was just wrong, wrong, wrong. All my feminist offences roused themselves in objection.”[[9]](#footnote-9) What was happening after McCulley’s salvation conversion was her worldview had to convert to a biblical worldview.

McCulley continued, “Once again, I read the rest of the offending passage. Though the

first part was for wives, the verses that followed for husbands were far more challenging and

provided a definition of leadership that was not for self-glory but for the benefit of another.”[[10]](#footnote-10)

McCulley offered a great service to women by sharing her testimony of her worldview

conversion towards a biblical view of womanhood, and a biblical mandate of submission of the

woman and for the husband to love his wife!

**Biblical Intimacy**

The biblical worldview of intimacy, contrary to the ungodly, is that the godly view of sex

is that it is for one’s marital partner and not one’s self. J. Budziszewski wrote, “Mutual and total

self-giving, strong feelings of attachment, intense pleasure, and the procreation of new life are

linked by human nature in simple complex of meanings and purpose.”[[11]](#footnote-11) The Lord did give a

command to procreate, but in the process He gave pleasure and a means of bonding the marital

relationship.

Budziszewski continued, “All those things about a woman that arise from this difference,

such as warmth, tender mildness, and sensitivity to the emotions of other, are signs of this

potentiality. The more fully they are developed, the more intense and beautiful her womanhood,

and the deeper its complement to manhood.”[[12]](#footnote-12) The Lord used our opposites to complete and

develop each other into the person Christ wants us to be.

Timothy Clinton and George Ohlschlager explained. “Viewing sex as God’s good creation. We are often asked, ‘Why did God create sex?’ the answer is that he wanted to teach us about intimate relationships, which are so dear to His heart. He wanted us to understand His very makeup and image. It’s no surprise that a God who calls us to reflect Him in characteristics such as holiness, love, and forgiveness would also call us to reflect Him in intimacy and oneness. As the doctrine of the Trinity demonstrates, God is an intimate one. He created us male and female—distinctly different—and He called us to be one. Sexuality is the Almighty’s grand medaphor, providing special insight into Himself.”[[13]](#footnote-13)

 Clinton and Ohlschlager explanation of oneness continued,

“Clearly, God designed sex for physical pleasure. Our bodies are wonderfully made to respond to sexual stimulation with great delight. Denying this reality is not any more true to God’s design for sex than acting as if sex is only about physical pleasure and not also about deeply connecting with one’s spouse. Sex with one’s husband or wife provides a unique opportunity to explore each other physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.”[[14]](#footnote-14)

Clinton and Ohlschlager help Christians to understand the difference between an ungodly

worldview of sex and a biblical worldview of sex within marriage. It is significant that the

marriage couples reveal the image of God, especially His goodness. The connection between

physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of sex within marriage, and the parallel with the Trinity

is helpful to understand the spiritual connection.

CONCLUSION

 This writing on the subject of the Biblical View of Sex and Marriage began with

discussing the perception of the problem. A few statistics of sexuality in our current culture were

offered by George Barna. The statistics relative to the culture of the recent generations were

given to point out the shift in our society. This writing also gave a description of the problem of

an ungodly worldview of sex and marriage. This description identified at least some of the

causes of the ungodly worldview of sex and marriage. the contrast came by offering the problem

in a biblical prospective. Some foundational Scripture from Genesis was offered which builds a

biblical worldview of sex and marriage. Both Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures

were given which continues to build a biblical worldview. Next a biblical worldview for

husbands was offered with an emphasis on Ephesians chapter five. Than a biblical worldview of

women was discussed and looking at Proverbs, Ephesians, and a couple female Christian

authors. Finally a biblical worldview of sex was discussed along with a couple authors who are

experts in the fields of ethics and Christian counseling. The intent of this writing was to make

clear how a Christian ought to view marriage and sex. And to demonstrate the purpose, heart and

love God has for His people and how His plan is to bless marriages.

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