

Gospel for a Messy Church - I Corinthians Pt. 5

The Kingdom in Everyday Life

I Corinthians 6:12-7:40

May 28th, 2017

I. The KINGDOM view of SEX. (6:12-7:7)

A. Corinthian view #1 - Sex as APPETITE or DESIRE. (6:12-13)

B. Corinthian view #2 - Sex as BAD or DIRTY. (7:1)

C. Sex as a “person shaping COMMITMENT MECHANISM.” (6:16,18; 7:2-5)

Corinth was a lot like the world we live in today. Some people felt sex was nothing more than a physical appetite whereby we could derive pleasure. Others felt that it was something shameful and dirty. Much like what we see in the society around us. But Paul shares the Kingdom view of sex, and it calls us to something more glorious and amazing than we could ever imagine.

1. What similarities do you see between the current cultural ideas about sex and the ideas in Corinth?
2. Why is sex such a difficult subject to talk about in church? How can we talk about it better, and more Biblically informed?
3. What do you think of Tim Keller's quote that sex is “a person shaping commitment mechanism”?

II. The KINGDOM view of MARRIAGE. (7:1-40)

A. The only VEHICLE for “SELF-DONATION”. (6:16-18; 7:2-5)

B. A powerful LIFELONG COMMITMENT. (7:10-14)

C. ONE of two OPTIONS. (7:7-9,38-40)

Just like the Kingdom view of sex, the kingdom view of marriage calls us away from society's distorted perspective. Marriage in the Kingdom is a lifelong commitment of giving yourself fully to another. It's a gift from God and a tool that is used in our growth in Christlikeness. But in a culture that worships romance and the perfect marriage, we often forget that this is a gift from the One we worship, and not an idol that we worship.

4. Does Paul's description of the Kingdom view of sex help in understanding why sex is reserved for marriage? Why?
5. Chapter 7 is always used to work out details around the legitimacy or non-legitimacy of marriage and divorce. Is this all that the passage is about? What is the point of the whole chapter in your own words?
6. In what ways do you think our culture (and our church culture) have idealized and idolized marriage today? Why would that be a problem?

III. The KINGDOM view of SINGLENES.

A. The WISDOM of the Kingdom is radically DIFFERENT... (7:8,17-24)

B. ...BECAUSE we are living IN-BETWEEN. (7:29-31)

C. RECEIVING it as a GIFT to all. (7:7,32-35)

In our world singleness is often seen as a negative. Our culture worships the romantic ideal of a soulmate, and often those who remain single are seen as missing out on something that is an indispensable part of life. In Corinth (Roman Culture) there were no singles, not being married was a mark of shame, not to mention the inability to have children to take care of you in old age. But Paul reminds believers that devotion to God is what sustains us, not marriage.

7. How does Paul's counter-cultural assertion that singleness is good...and on par with marriage impact the way we live today?
8. Jeff talked about our living "in-between". What does that mean? And how does that impact our day to day lives?

IV. Living in the WISDOM of the KINGDOM. (7:35)

A. Grace says, "Live where you ARE, not where you WERE." (7:17; Phil 3:12-14)

B. Don't OVERVALUE marriage or UNDERVALUE singleness. (7:7,27-28)

C. Live as a FAMILY that is "IN-BETWEEN". (7:17-24; 29-31; Lk. 8:20-21; Col. 3:1-3)

Throughout this letter Paul has been contrasting "Corinthian Wisdom" with the "Wisdom of the Kingdom of God." The call is to live in light of the Kingdom wisdom in our day to day lives. This wisdom constantly challenges the things our society upholds all around us. It challenges our ideas around sex and marriage, and calls us to live with the mind of Christ in a world that thinks very differently.

9. What does, "Live where you ARE, not where you WERE" mean for you at this point in your life?
10. In what ways have we as a church undervalued singleness or overvalued marriage and what do we need to do to rectify that?
11. What are some ways you can live out being the family of God this week?