

Taking it Home:

For Parents

- With your child read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Together, discuss the characteristics of a healthy, loving relationship as seen in this passage.
- With your child read Psalm 139:14. Some questions you may ask include:
 - On a scale of 1-10 (1 being poorly and 10 being fabulously), how do you think God did in making you?
 - Is there any area you wish God would have improved on? (Use this as an opportunity to affirm your child and encourage their emotional well-being.)
 - If age appropriate, you may want to talk about God's making them "male" or "female."

For Individuals

- Read Psalm 139:14. Take some time to reflect on this passage. Right down as many positive attributes as you can that celebrate the uniqueness of you.
- The reality is that many, as they were growing up, heard messages contrary to Psalm 139:14. They heard condescending messages, put-downs, and ridicule. Some only received "affirmation" through sexual innuendo or even abuse. If that's you, though it may be hard, list the names, the cut-downs, and the innuendos on a piece of paper. When you're done cross through every one of them and beside each one write, "I am wonderfully made."

For a restatement of Pastor Matthew's sermon points, visit pastormatthew.net and click on the "Write This Down" tab.

Crazy Sex | Embracing God's Best in a world gone crazy Dr. Matthew R. St. John
Balance in a Broken World Bethel Church
Genesis 2:25 ; Solomon 5:1 May 15, 2011

Balance in a Broken World

Notes:

Quick Review: Every one of us is a part of a family; each one with varying degrees of health and/or dysfunction. The messages and expectations in the context of sex have been passed down from one generation to the next. For some it was the constant barrage of "Don't do it..." rooted in fear of pregnancy, shame on the family, or other messages of guilt. It's a marked contrast between the joy and celebration of sex seen in Song of Solomon 5 and the absence of guilt and shame as seen in Genesis 2. A family is responsible to create an environment where sex, in the context of a committed covenant relationship, is normal and appropriate. It's time to break the dysfunctional chains that keep us from experiencing satisfaction in our own relationships and keep us from passing on a healthy view of sex to emerging generations.

For more information about Growth Groups, Growth Group homework, and a podcast of sermons with homework, visit www.bethelfc.com.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of May 15, 2011

Genesis 2:25 ; Solomon 5:1; Deuteronomy 6:4ff

My Story:

- The messages you received as a youth were often mixed. Parents would say, “Don’t do it...” (and then offer nothing but silence). Churches have been known to say, “Don’t do it because it is dirty, rotten, and sinful, so save it until you’re married!” The culture says, “Have at it—just use protection.” What are the messages you heard (or are hearing) about sex from:
 - your parents?
 - the church?
 - the culture?
- Perhaps you’re one who has heard on numerous occasions that “Sex is dirty.” This, of course, would have significant ramifications on your honeymoon night and for years to come. How do the various mixed-messages about sex affect for good or for bad the sexual relationship within a marriage?

Growing Deeper:

For Parents

- Jim Burns in *Teaching Your Children Healthy Sexuality* has said, “You may have been a teenager once, but you were never their age.” In what ways do you think that the message of today’s culture about sex has changed, for good or bad, from when you were a child?
- Describe the emotions you feel when you think about having “the talk” with your child.
- Read Deuteronomy 6:4-7. It’s evident that parents play a critical role in teaching their children to love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, and body. According to this passage, how often should parents talk to their children about spiritual things? Is this frequency of conversation also true when it comes to talking about sex? Explain.

Growing Deeper Continued:

For Parents

- A strong deterrent that helps prevent the pursuit of false intimacy, sought after in pre-marital sex, is authentic intimacy between parents and their children. Identify the strengths in your parent-child relationship. What are some steps you can take to strengthen your connection with your child?
- Read Matthew 19:4-6. God created us as relational creatures who are to express intimacy with one another. Intimacy is much more than just sex, but includes appropriate touch, emotional connection, edifying conversation, and much, much more. How can nurturing intimacy with your spouse positively influence your children’s perspective of sex?

For Individuals

- Jim Burns in *Teaching Your Children Healthy Sexuality* has said, “You may have been a teenager once, but you were never their age.” In what ways do you think that the message sex has changed over time?
- Read Deuteronomy 6:4-7. It’s evident that parents play a critical role in teaching their children to love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, and body. But, according to this passage, this is about the nation not just the families. What role do you, as an individual, have in helping children in the context of the church community love God with all they’ve got?
- A strong deterrent that helps prevent the pursuit of false intimacy, sought after in pre-marital sex, is authentic intimacy between parents and their children. How has your relationship with your parents affected your view of sexuality?
- Read Matthew 19:4-6. God created us as relational creatures who are to express intimacy with one another. Intimacy is much more than just sex, but includes appropriate touch, emotional connection, edifying conversation, and much, much more. Was intimacy appropriately modeled for you while growing up? How has that influenced your view of sex?