

Getting our Understanding about Sexuality Right in Light of the Bible

"So God created man in his own image...male and female He created them... And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply.'" (Genesis 1:27,28)
"And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed." (Genesis 2:25)

In his chapter, "The Morally Corrupt: Why Unbelief is So Appealing," Dinesh D'Souza, drawing on documented statements of self-admission by several leading atheists, makes a compelling case that disbelief in God is founded as much on the quest both *from* moral bondage and *for* sexual freedom, as it is on so-called damaging intellectual arguments for the non-existence of God (What's So Great About Christianity? (Tyndale, 2007), ch. 23). Christopher Hitchens is quoted as stating, "*The divorce between sexual life and fear...can now at last be attempted on the sole condition that we banish all religions from the discourse*" (p.273 in text. Cited from God is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything." (Twelve Books, 2007) p.283). In the same chapter similar admissions are referenced from Aldous Huxley, Julian Huxley, Czeslaw Milosz, Friedrich Nietzsche, Jean-Paul Sartre, Bertrand Russell, and Marquis de Sade.

Yet surely the Bible has more to say than "thou shalt not" when it comes to matters of sex and sexuality! Christian theology is not limited to the matter of redemption in Jesus Christ, which of course lies at the *center* of the saving message of the Gospel. Christian theology also affirms God as Trinity: that is, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And out of that Trinitarian declaration Christian theology affirms the doctrine of creation, which in turn affirms that God made all of physical existence including our sexuality. That we are sexual beings is NOT an accident. Neither is it a mistake. It was from God's very intentional will that we were created bodily as male or female. It is furthermore God's intentional will that we experience sexual attraction for the opposite sex. The Christian interpretation of the reality of our sexuality is not to decry it in embarrassment, any more than it is to "spend" our sexuality in violation of the will of our Creator. Even though sex is not to be worshipped as though it is a god, it is to be received and celebrated under God as one of His very good gifts (and perhaps the most powerful of all). And as with every other powerful gift, sexuality calls for our careful understanding of the will of the one who made it a part of His design and gave it to us in the first place.

Biblical illiteracy (ignorance) is a rampant problem in our day. Critics of the Bible will suggest that the Scriptures themselves view sexuality negatively. But that is not true. What the Bible actually does, to the contrary, is provide serious instruction in how to express this aspect of life in a constructive, as opposed to destructive, manner.

I find these acknowledgements to be shocking on account of the *frankness* of the admissions, but NOT for the *contents* of their admissions. The personal experience of virtually the entire human race across recorded history is that sexuality is a very powerful force that is difficult to channel within conventional boundaries. Christianity has so far failed to present an enduring, positive, and compelling theological response to the reality of the power of human sexuality. Instead, our track record is generally limited to the reactionary and the negative.

I do not approve of and neither do I advocate abandoning faith in God for the pursuit of sexual license. Indeed it is absolutely required that we squarely face the devastating consequences to real human beings (including helpless children) which follow in the wake of sexual irresponsibility. This damage includes the betrayal of wives by their husbands or vice-versa in the aftermath of breaking vows that were made on their wedding day. For similar reasons, "living together" results in the insecurity and vulnerability of one or both partners (usually the woman) because no promises of commitment were ever made in the first place. And who can fully comprehend the damage to children when parents break up so that the leadership "team" is suddenly reduced down to one, single, struggling parent who was never made to be able to "do it all?"