

This is What the Heart Looks Like // 7 – “Thou Shalt Have Great Sex”

N Raleigh... Frontline...

The 7th commandment is “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” So I’ve given the title of today’s message “*Thou Shalt Have Great Sex.*” (That is not my attempt to be God’s PR manager, because he doesn’t really need one, but because the focus of this commandment, like all the others, is not to forbid something negative, but to protect something positive. That’s what we’re going to get into today.)

Well, anyway, I was working on this message at home on Thursday when my 7 year old daughter came in stood by my computer... and before I could pay attention to what was going on I heard her read it off the screen... “Comm 7... Thou Shalt Have Great Sex... What *is* great sex, Daddy?” Deer in the headlights... I was thinking, I do not want to have this conversation with you right now... Then she says, “Sex... isn’t that the Latin word for “six?” and I said, “Yes it is...” She said, ‘OK.’ It made total sense to her. “How to have great... the number 6.” Dad’s preaching on math this weekend.

I told one of our pastors that and he said, “That moment when Kharis looked at your message and said, ‘What is great sex, Dad?’... Well, now you know how every parent has felt at some point in your message.” “Mom, what did Pastor J.D. mean by that?”

So, listen close... this message should not be that bad, it’s pretty tame... but if you have a kid in here younger than 6th grade, you might consider taking them to some of our excellent programming meeting on campus. If you have a kid in here in 7th grade or above, I promise

you I won’t cover anything they haven’t discussed thoroughly at school, and so it should be appropriate for them.

Well, there is probably no more relevant, or no more unpopular command than this one. Especially in RDU.

RDU has the highest percentage of 25 to 34 year olds anywhere in the country—and the majority of them are single... the average marriage age for men and women has gone up almost 5 years in our generation... we’re getting married 5 years later than our parents and grandparents did.

- Why do you think young singles today are waiting longer to get married? Do you think it’s so they can get better prepared for marriage? (You know, read marriage books, memorize verses, become deft at applying the principles of Proverbs...) no, they are naked and breaking this commandment... they don’t want to mess with marriage yet, and can have sex w/o it.
- A recent study showed that 41% of American adults have cohabitated at some point with someone who is not their spouse—an increase of almost 72% in 10 years... so this command is pretty relevant and pretty counter-cultural.

So, here’s what I am going to do... I am

(1) going to briefly **review for you why God gives us these kinds of laws.** A lot of people have a problem with any kind of commands or rules, as if that kills our freedom and inhibits our ability to be who we really are, and so I want to go over why God gives these commands to us... Then,

(2) I am going to explain to you **what this commandment actually forbids;** then

(3) I’m going to explain to you **why it forbids those things,** why certain kinds of sex are bad; and then I’m going to show you...

(4) **how you and I can bring this area of our life into the blessing of God.** How you can overcome sexual temptations and addictions. And along the way I will say humorous, slightly inappropriate things to keep your attention.

I. Why God's Laws are Good

- There is a general assumption in our culture that rules are bad. We love freedom in this country, which is good, and we think real freedom is essential to any happiness, and true freedom, we believe, comes from throwing off any external constraints and following only the dictates of our own hearts.

But there are 2 deeply-ingrained myths in American culture about this... 2 ways this thinking has gone wrong... that the Bible just flatly disagrees with.

Myth #1: We are the freest when we operate independent of any rules

- Again, this should all be review... but this is a myth because you are most alive, you most thrive, when you **are operating according to how you are designed, not necessarily when you have cast off all constraints.** The illustration I used a few weeks ago was of a fish... if a fish decides that it is sick and tired of being constrained to the land and hops up onto the shore one day, it's freedom is short-lived. It will die. If you try to set a fish free by taking it out of the water and putting it on the land, you're not helping it, you're killing it. The fish is freest when it's in the water, because it is designed to be in the water.
- **So it's a myth to say we are freest when we operate independent of any rules. Real freedom is found not in living by our desire, but by our design.**

Myth #2: Our desires are the best path to knowing what is best for us.

- From the time we are born, from **Arielle the Mermaid** to **Miley Cyrus** to **Oprah Winfrey** we are taught that the way to happiness is to follow our hearts. The Bible says this is a dangerous myth... as

your heart might desire a lot of bad things without you even realizing it...

- **The 1st week I used several examples to show you it wasn't true:**
 - **Eating: I have a strong desire for fatty foods.** I'll go out to dinner and my body tells me to order a bloomin' onion followed by a 14 oz ribeye smothered in blue cheese with a side of clarified butter... but my doctor tells me it would be **better to go to the salad bar and stuff my plate with alfalfa sprout and garganzo beans.** "But Dr. I want to listen to my heart."
 - **Or, sometimes when someone does something really rude to me on the road, and we pull up at a light,** I feel like getting out of the car, beating that guy like a rented mule, and getting back in my car. But doesn't mean that's what I should do, or that's what is helpful. "Oh, but I've got to be true to myself." Sometimes your "self" is wrong.
 - My point: We desire all kinds of things that are harmful for us! Why would we think sexual desires are always right?
 - **Illus.** There is this scene in 90210 where one of the teenage girls comes up to a minister to ask if it's wrong to have sex with this boy... "Only your heart can tell you that." She says "thanks," hugs him, and walks out. End of the scene. How dumb. I expected so much more from 90210.
 - I see that and I think, I should be a screen writer. I could have written a much more interesting scene... what if in response, she said, "**Just follow my heart? You mean it doesn't matter how selfish, or exploitative, dishonest, manipulative, or immoral it is?**" He would have said, "Well, No, that's not what I meant." And then she'd say, "**Yeah, because, I mean, 'just follow my heart'... isn't that what Hitler did? And look at where it got the world.**" And then he would have said "Well, but no, that's not what I meant." And then she would have said, "**So, you mean there are some**

higher moral standards that I must submit even my heart to?” And then the minister would have said, “Yeah” and then he would have been doing his job... teaching people that our desires are not the final verdict on what is good, the designs of the Almighty God are.¹

- Let me just ask you: Do you have a time in your life that you followed your heart and it got you into trouble?
- So, my point is this: **God’s laws are good; they are freedom for us, not captivity.** They flow out the design of a good and loving God for us, not the arbitrary dictates of a controlling tyrant. They lead to our blessing, not our misery.

II. What is included in this commandment?

A lot of people have the question when reading this commandment, *“What exactly does this command forbid? This command says not to commit adultery, which is having sex with someone who is married to someone else, but what else is off limits? How far can I go with my girlfriend before I break this command? What about if you are engaged? And what about homosexuality? Is that included”*

As I said at the beginning, the underlying focus of this commandment is not on what is prohibited, but what is affirmed. This commandment is a protection of something, so we should focus on what is being protected.

There is an understanding of marriage going back to the 1st chapters of Genesis (Adam and Eve), and that is that marriage is 1 man and 1 woman united for life. That’s what this commandment is built to protect.

Again, sometimes we sell this commandment short because we see it only in terms of the negative—*don’t* commit adultery. Behind it is a very positive command: Thou shalt have great sex! And God knows how to do that... God created sex; He created the pleasure in it, and He knows how it will best work.

So what kind of sex is off limits? Simply, any sex outside of His original design, which is sex between a man and a woman united in marriage for life (I’ll explain why that is in a minute, but first, let’s just establish the definitions). God’s design for sex is between 1 man and 1 woman united in marriage for life.

In the NT, the word for any sex outside of the marriage of a man and woman is “*porneia*” (where we get our word “pornography” and “fornication”: *porneia* is a junk-drawer word that means **any** sex outside of the marriage of a man and a woman.

- In fact, Jesus said in Matthew 5 that *porneia* even included fantasizing about having sex with someone to whom you are not married.
- So, if it is sexually erotic, it is reserved for a man and woman united in marriage.
- Someone says to me: “What about oral sex? Does that count as sex?” Well, is that act sexual?” Yes *porneia*.
- College student says: “But what if we don’t go all the way?” Again, is what you are doing sexual? Would you do it with your grandmother? Then it’s considered *porneia*. Maybe that’s an overstatement... At this point I’m not ruling out harmless demonstrations of affection. But, it’s like I’ve told you before, you cross a line from affection to foreplay, and you know it. And, as I’ve told you before, you got no business lighting a rocket you don’t intend to launch.
- “But we really love each other.” Great. Have you united in marriage?” *porneia*.
- “But we’re engaged.” Is engaged different from marriage? Yes. Then it is *porneia*. You’ve signed the contract on the house, but you haven’t closed yet, so you can’t move your stuff in.

¹ Adapted from an illustration by Tim Keller in a sermon I can’t remember.

- “What about friends with benefits?” Quit asking stupid questions.
- “What about homosexual marriage?” (Well, again, is that sex between 1 man and 1 woman united in marriage? Then, it is considered *porneia*. People sometimes will say, “You know, Jesus never talked about homosexuality?” But he most certainly did. 11 times in the Gospels he affirms the Pentateuch’s understanding of blessed sex, which is sex between a man and woman in marriage. Anything outside of that was *porneia*.)
- So, that’s what is covered by this commandment.

III. Why is sex outside of marriage bad?

People understand most of the other commandments... They’re like, “I get the ‘not-killing’ thing; I see why stealing is wrong... But what’s wrong with 2 consenting, loving adults coming together in this way?” For a lot of people, this makes them doubt God’s goodness... like our plans are better. He makes arbitrary rules.

Here’s why sex outside of marriage is bad. Sex for us is not just biology.

The Apostle Paul explains to us that God created us in His image and marriage to point beyond itself to something divine and eternal. A lot of people recognize that, even if they are no believers, that there is something mysterious happening in sex. That’s b/c you are made I in the image of God. Sex is not just biology.

Let me explain a little deeper:

- You see, rather than simply telling us, “This is what I’m like,” (here’s a list of verses to memorize about my attributes), He gives us some earthly pictures so we learn about Him in the things we sense and feel in real life. Well, marriage, and sex, is one of those, and one of the clearest of those. Sex is like an appetizer. It whets your appetite for something greater, something grander.

Which is why, at some of the places where God most clearly talks about His relationship to us, He does so in the terms of marriage and sex! For example,

- **In the Exodus, when God promises to deliver Israel,**
 - He makes 4 promises to them (these are all in Exodus 6):
 - I will bring you out.
 - I will rescue you.
 - I will redeem you.
 - I will take you to be mine.
 - When Jewish people hear that story, they usually catch something that we miss. Those are the 4 phrases used in a Jewish marriage vow. God is calling out a bride;
 - Here’s something else... The whole mountain was covered with a thick cloud and the brightness of God’s glory. When Jewish people get married they take a prayer shawl and put it on 4 poles and hold it over the head of the bride and groom, called a “chuppah” (HOO-pah).² The whole relationship is set up like a marriage.
- At the end of Revelation, when God takes His people into heaven, the 1st thing they participate in is called the “marriage supper of Jesus.” We are going to the eternal honeymoon. **So, the point: Earthly marriages were given to us as a picture of God’s relationship to us.**³
- 3 parts of the marriage relationship that mirror Gods’ relationship to us, and **these 3 things find their ultimate expression in sex.**
 - **First, in marriage there is a complete fusion of persons**
 - Total oneness. They stand on the altar and all that is hers becomes his, all that is his becomes hers. Their futures, their families, the baggage from their pasts, their bank accounts, their possessions, their bodies...
 - Well, the final element in all that is physically, your bodies become one. Don’t mean to be too graphic, but in sex your bodies interlock and literally become one.

² Rob Bell, *Sex God*, 132–33.

³ *Ibid.*

There is fusion, an intermingling of bodies. Here's the thing: the oneness of the body is part of a larger whole. You are one in every other area of your life, too. Your possessions, your futures, your families, everything.

- **Second, there is exclusivity**
 - When I got married, I told her, I'll have no other. She didn't become #1 of girls on a list, she became the only 1. This makes sense in sex, right? Even if you're not married, when you're having sex with someone, you don't want them out playing the field on you. Girls, you don't want a guy who says, "Baby, of all the girls I regularly have sex with, I think you're my favorite..."
 - So, exclusivity is a part of a sexual relationship.
- **Third, there is unconditional acceptance**
 - What's supposed to happen in marriage is you experience unconditional acceptance because someone sees you exactly for who you are and loves you anyway. I've told you before that human beings have this deep desire to be **known and loved**...
EXPLAIN
 - This is most seen in sex. You see, when you have sex, you are naked. In the Bible, nakedness is you in all of your vulnerability and weakness. When you are naked with someone you are saying to them, I see you, all of you... and accept you as you are... and love you over all those things... and I will *never* leave you or forsake you... I'm yours forever.

Now, you see, those 3 words, are 3 of the most descriptive words about our relationship to God.

- Total fusion: God completely unites Himself to us (again—it's an intimate of a union as you could imagine; He lives inside of us.)
- Exclusivity: we have no other gods but Him

- Unconditional acceptance: God sees us for all that we were, in all our inglorious nakedness and shame, and loves us just as we are.

So, here's the point: **sex** is an echo of **God's love**. For every human being, not just Christians, but every human being created in the image of God, sex is an echo of God's love. (Do you get that? *This* relates to that.)

We're not just animals. **Sex is different for us and the animals.**

- Watching a Discovery Channel special... showed the mating patterns of peacocks... how they spread their tailfeathers out, dance, make noises...
 - There is no point at which the female bird asks the male, "You know, I just really need to know that you want me for more than my body."
 - She doesn't say to him, "I don't like the way you've been looking at some of my jungle bird friends."
 - They don't go off on a picnic, make love, and then cuddle and talk about how they're going to build a life and change the jungle together.
- No, it's just biology for them. It is propagation of their species...

But we are different; sex for us is different, and you know that... and that's because we are made in the image of God.

- When you reduce sex to just biology or a good time, you **dehumanize** us; you **reduce us** to the level of animals; you take the mystery and glory that God put into us and rob us of it.
 - **Know of a guy who is a believer now** who talks about the years he spent before becoming a Christian exploiting women for sex. He was a master at finding a woman who was in a vulnerable state, or a young girl with a bad relationship with her dad and exploiting that for his own pleasure. But he made this statement I

think is significant. He said, “I finally realized that the way I treated women not only robbed them of their humanity, but me of mine as well.” He said eventually he couldn’t even stand to look in the mirror... he’d loathed what he had become. He said, **“I felt like I had become a monster.”**

- **People often think the Bible has too low a view of sex** (the Bible needs to loosen up and realize how awesome sex is.) It’s actually exactly the opposite. The Bible has an extremely HIGH view of sex. It realizes there is something beautiful and mysterious going on during it that literally puts you in touch with Deity.
- **And when you make it about just biology, you dehumanize us...**
 - **Sex touches the most intimate, personal, vulnerable part of our bodies...** it exposes us in the most open of ways... our lover who touches us in those intimate places is caressing not only the most intimate parts of our body but in so doing also our souls... so of course it should only be done in a relationship where you are one, in every possible way, for life.
 - It’s interesting to see people who don’t believe in any kind of God recognize this... A book came out a few years ago called *The End of Sex*: written by one of the senior editors of *Look* magazine who had been one of the primary spokesmen for the sexual liberation of the 60’s... in this book he wrote many years later, called *The End of Sex*, he says “I know, I see now that every game has its rules. I was a proponent of sexual liberation but now I see that sex has rules, and unless you play by the rules, sex can create a depth of loneliness like nothing else can.”⁴

- So many of you who resist this commandment because you are afraid of missing out on something. The Bible tells you what it tells you about sex precisely because it *doesn’t* want you miss out on something.
- Listen, can I play daddy for a minute? I went around and asked our pastoral team how they 1st talked with their parents about sex. I found that even on a staff like ours, where people come from mostly decent homes, most of them never really talked about this with their parents in a helpful way... I imagine that is true for many of you students in here, so let me do that... I especially want to talk with you girls...
 - **God’s plans for you are good. You are a treasure; you are precious;** and God wants you to give your body away on your wedding night as a sacred gift to a guy who deserves it who gives all of himself to you, **not some thug in college simply trying to satisfy an urge.**
 - **A guy who has sex with a girl without marrying her is like a bulimic with food.** A bulimic loves the taste of food but doesn’t want to keep the nutrients or calories in her body, so she tastes, swallows it, and then vomits it back up. That’s what a guy is doing to you... he is tasting oneness with you, but then throwing you back up because he doesn’t want to become one with you.
 - **That’s why I always told girls in my youth group, “Never believe anything a guy says after 8:00.”**
 - **“Oh, but he loves me. He really does, I know it.” If he really loves you, he’ll guard your purity and be willing to wait for marriage.** Let me make this perfectly clear: the problem with that guy that you’re sitting next to right now who is sleeping with you before marrying you **does not love you even enough to put your purity and your good above his sexual desires**, and you need to look at him as soon as this message is over and say, “Get out of my life, you selfish jerk.” (Was that harsh?—listen, some guys are like that because they didn’t know. They didn’t understand what was stake. I

⁴ As told by Tim Keller in sermon on Joseph, “Lust.”

understand, have a little grace with that guy. But dude, now you know, and now you are responsible.)

- Listen, there are so many of you who resist this commandment because they are afraid of missing out on something. The Bible tells you to keep sex in marriage precisely because it *doesn't* want you miss out on something.

So, that's why sex outside of marriage is considered bad. Before we are done with this commandment, though, I need to go 1 step farther with this. I've got to show you what is happening in your heart. Jesus said this thing, sex, is so sacred, and holy... and it so closely relates to our relationship with God that we should not even entertain thoughts about sex outside of marriage:

Matthew 5:27–30 (ESV) ²⁷ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ ²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

As a college kid, these verses almost drove to despair...

- Saying “don't lust after women” would be like saying to me, “Don't breathe.” What, OK.
- Then you mix in the part about going to hell...
- And *then* Jesus drops the stuff about cutting stuff off: seriously?
 - If we applied this verse just as it's written, every guy in here would be blind within a matter of minutes. Right?) A girl walks into church this morning wearing one of these tight little outfits that she looks like she melted onto herself an hour ago... or, wearing a pair of

skinny jeans, which I otherwise refer to as, “ankle-length panties,” and as she walks down the aisle of church you got guys applying this verse and so there's a little trail of male eyeballs popping out and rolling around on the floor...

- So, I was always like, “How do I apply that?” Plus, I thought, you know, blind people are fully capable of lusting, too, so how popping our eyeballs out this fix that?

- First, not saying “don't desire,” don't look with great anticipation, do not mentally go through the sex act with someone who is not your spouse.
- Second, this very serious. Jesus didn't do exaggeration for theatric effect. He's very serious. But here's what He's getting at...

Sex has a way of taking over our lives. Sex, very quickly, becomes a god to us. An idol.

Remember, we defined an **idol = whatever you delight in most, need most** (whatever you could not be happy without), **and obey most** (whatever commands your obedience).

For many, sex is that thing...

- For many, romantic love, and sex, is what they feel like they could not be without... so they're willing to do anything to get it... a girl is willing to give her body away to get the attention of a guy; or she's willing to leave her marriage or her kids to get romance elsewhere.
- For many, sex is the best beauty. So a guy takes it to himself, even if it means breaking the laws of God.
 - For many girls, it's not that they desire beauty, but they want to be beautiful... and they become obsessed with it. Work out all the time, go to extreme measures to try to stop aging, get jealous of others who are more beautiful, or depressed... or you can't resist a guy who

flatters your beauty... nothing wrong with wanting to be beautiful or sexy, but when it becomes the one thing you can't live without... it's displaced God!

- For many, sex is the thing that commands their obedience... so a guy can't quit looking at internet porn. Sex calls, and he answers.

Sex has become a god. And, as Jesus says, it starts in the desires of the heart. That's why the stuff about hell... **Sexual desire left unchecked gradually consumes your heart and commands your obedience, to the point that it becomes more of a god to you than God is.**

Some of you are there now.

- You say you are committed to God, you're a Christian, even in seminary, but guys, be honest, when sex calls, you answer. You give some surface level regret, but never a real repentance that says, 'I obey this more than God.'
- Some of you are in the midst of an immoral relationship you know you should not be in but you won't get out, or you can't get out... Why? It is your God; you can't live without it.
- Or, some of you are thinking about leaving your marriage... You know the Bible teaches that divorce is wrong (unless a very specific set of criteria is met), but you feel like you have to have real, sexual love and intimacy... You can't live without it. It is your God.
- Some of you maybe won't leave your relationship... but you love romance novels and romance movies because vicariously you get to experience love and sexual intimacy through them and secretly you long to leave your story and go be a part of one like that one.

Sex is your god. That's why Jesus says the things He does about hell here. God doesn't send you to hell for struggling with sin; He sends you to hell for deliberately submitting yourself to another God besides Him.

So, ask yourself honestly, **what is your God?** What commands your obedience?

If you realize sex and romantic love have displaced God, what does Jesus tell you to do? Radically go to war against it!

- Practically speaking, that means, metaphorically speaking, cutting off your hand; cutting out the things that provoke you to it...
 - Removing the internet. Getting in one of our groups here called "Freedom groups." Breaking up with the guy.
- But, listen, those external changes will only go so far... b/c blind, armless people lust too

What you really need to do is... return to the 1st commandment.

- It's because your soul is not right with God that you crave all these things in sex. Remember, sex is a picture; a shadow... it is wonderful, but it points beyond itself to the love of God given to us in Jesus.
 - In Jesus we see total fusion as He took upon Himself our flesh and became sin for us; He gives us His righteousness and comes to live inside of us; there we see unconditional, never-stopping, never-giving up love that loves us in all our faults and nakedness.
 - **What we crave in sex, we find in Jesus**
 - There is only one kiss, one set of arms, that can fulfill your heart-needs.⁵ He is ultimate beauty; He is the intimacy our soul craves.
- **And here's the thing... when you find Him, you** then have the power to say "no" to the other... Not that you don't still desire those things anymore, it's just that they don't control you and dominate you like they used to.

⁵ Tim Keller, Matthew 5:27-30

- Girls: you quit being so dependent on and dominated by guys... you'll be able to make wise choices
 - Not ready to date until ready not to date
- Guys: When you are filled with the largeness and majesty of God's presence, you'll be able to control your desires.
 - "Off like a lightswitch"
- Famous Puritan named Thomas Chalmers called all this, "the expulsive power of a new affection." Which means the only way we can control the strong temptations of sex is to replace them, or overshadow them, with a stronger affection. Being enraptured with the glory of Jesus is the only thing that give us control of our sexual desires.

Last thing:

- Finally... Some of you say, "But I've messed up." so let me close by taking you to the scene of a woman who was very messed up sexually. John 8:11.
 - Notice the order.
 - He speaks words of tender love and acceptance to her... and that changes her. He forgives her and makes her a new creation, and that gives her a whole new approach to sex.
 - I don't want you to walk out of here beat up about sexual mistakes. I want you to walk out of here realizing that Christ has made you new... and for you to start seeing yourself like that.
 - **Driscoll illus:** There was a man and woman who had been married for many years. Their marriage was average, not great... intimacy was not great. Partially it was because this woman had a deep and dark secret. She'd had a sustained affair. She had since repented of it and cut it off. It had been several years before, but she had never told her husband about it. So one day she decided she couldn't hide it anymore. She confessed it to him, scared that

he would leave her. He was devastated as she told him, and got up quietly and left, walked out... she thought she might never see him again, wondering how to explain to their kids what happened to their daddy. He came back several hours later... didn't say a word. He was carrying a bag. He took her back to their bedroom, and completely undressed her. Then he took out a beautiful satin nightgown, pure white, that he had just purchased, put it on her and said, "I choose to see you as Jesus sees you."⁶

- Jesus has died to make you a new creation, to forgive and cleanse you. Embrace it, and begin to live that way.

So, that's the command: Thou *shalt* have great sex. Sex that grows out of the love of God and mirrors and reflects that to others.

⁶ From Mark Driscoll, *Vintage Jesus*.

Bullpen:

- ~~Exercise: my body rarely feels like doing the extra set... in fact, some of you pay someone to yell at you!~~
- ~~Getting out of bed in the morning. My body often says, "Stay here." If I obey that, well, that's not the path to real freedom. It's the path to joblessness and homelessness. If one of you school teachers show up about work and said, "My heart was telling me to stay in bed, and I just wanted to be true to myself; follow my heart."~~
- Indonesian "berzin" story
- **In John 14:1–6, when Jesus was giving His farewell address to His disciples,**⁷
 - Jesus makes a series of kind of odd statements. He says things like, "In my Father's house are many rooms... I am going to prepare a place for you. I will come again and will take you to myself that where I am there you may be also." We think, "That's nice." But you see, when a Jewish couple would get engaged, those are the statement he made to her at their engagement party. (What would happen is the guy would pop the question to the girl at an engagement party. The young man would hold out a cup of wine to the girl he wanted to be his bride and ask her to marry him. If she said yes, he would go home and start to work on their house. In Israel in that day, they lived in these sprawling compounds called "insulas," and what that son was doing was literally adding a wing, a set of rooms, onto that house, for them. So the son would go and get to work... here's the thing... he couldn't decide himself when it was done. The father of the family got to decide that... so he would inspect it every week and when he felt the room was done well enough, he'd say, "Now,

son, the room is all ready... go get your bride." And he would get several of his friends and go to her house. She had no idea exactly when he would come, so she would light a lamp and put it in her window so he'd know which one was hers.

- Well, back at the engagement party, he would tell her all this. Right after she had said, "Yes," to his marriage proposal, he would make this little speech about their future life together, and then he'd say, "I'm going away to prepare our future home. And when I'm done, I'll come back for you." Which is exactly what Jesus did in John 14. He's speaking of His relationship with us in marriage terms.

nobody watching my marriage ceremony that day I wasn't getting the better end of the deal... but one thing I did have was I had a really nice car. (Single guy, had no-one to spend money on but myself...new Nissan Maxima, tinted windows, all leather interior) she had this little tiny rebuilt, Honda, rice-burning car... no a/c; well, all of you becomes 1, my pimp daddy car became hers; her hoopydy became mine. That's marriage.

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- Most people are unmarried or unhappily married. That's because only the relationship to which marriage points to can bring you real happiness.
- **When you have sex outside of marriage, you are taking physical oneness from them without giving them the rest of yourself.** It's tearing their soul apart. Like a Horcrux in Harry Potter... and yes, as far as I know, I am the 1st one to make that comparison.
- That kind of sex, while it may be temporarily enjoyable, is both selfish and destructive. Your body is telling the person you're having sex with one thing... "I'm yours completely, forever," but that's not true... because you are not really joining the rest of you to them.

⁷ Rob Bell, *Sex God*, 170–71.

- “But we love each other.” You could walk away at any moment and you know that.
- So, in the right context it is a wonderful, love blessing, but out of that context, it is selfish and destructive. Thus, the commandment: “Don’t have sex outside of marriage, because it destroys the person you’re having sex with rather than building them up.
- End of Sex: one of the senior editors of Look magazine, which celebrated the sexual liberation of the 60’s, came out with a book in the mid 80’s called *The End of Sex*, in which he says “I know, I see now that every game has its rules. I was a proponent of sexual liberation but now I see that sex has rules, and unless you play by the rules, sex can create a depth of loneliness like nothing else can.”⁸

(see MILLER book; 1 Corinthians sermon)

III. Why it is wrong

(people get that about the other commandments... why this one)?

- Many people (including many Christians) think this is an arbitrary rule.
 - At worst, it’s God wanting to ruin our fun; at best, maybe it’s a test, like, “*Don’t eat the marshmallow*” just to see if we can handle it... but, in reality, sex outside of marriage is not really harmful...
- But that’s actually not true. Based on what I know, what I’ve seen, and what I’ve experienced, I could pretty confidently say now that even if there was no God, I’d still say sex outside of marriage is a very bad idea—which is why basically every religion in the world teaches you not to do it.
 - (BTW: **some of you say, “We should find the best in every religion...”** Every religion consistently teaches you this... this is the collective wisdom of mankind, so why not start here...)

⁸ As told by Tim Keller in sermon on Joseph, “Lust.”

- Why do I say is sex outside of marriage is destructive? Because sex is supposed to be a oneness of your bodies that is accompanied by oneness in every other area. **Don’t mean to be graphic, but you are very vulnerable, your bodies interlock... ONE PERSON physically. That is to be matched by oneness in every other area:** emotional, spiritual, financial... you become a complete part of that other person for life.
- At the original creation, God designed the human being such that sex was to be a picture of His relationship with us
 - Exclusivity (Jealous—all 10 commandments start with God is a jealous God). Sin is spiritual adultery... no rivals to God!
 - Complete fusion
 - Unconditional love
- **When you have sex outside of marriage, you are taking physical oneness from them without giving them the rest of yourself.** It’s tearing their soul apart. Like a Horcrux in Harry Potter... and yes, as far as I know, I am the 1st one to make that comparison.
- That kind of sex, while it may be temporarily enjoyable, is both selfish and destructive. Your body is telling the person you’re having sex with one thing... “I’m yours completely, forever,” but that’s not true... because you are not really joining the rest of you to them.
- “But we love each other.” You could walk away at any moment and you know that.
- So, in the right context it is a wonderful, love blessing, but out of that context, it is selfish and destructive. Thus, the commandment: “Don’t have sex outside of marriage, because it destroys the person you’re having sex with rather than building them up.
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⁹ As told by Tim Keller in sermon on Joseph, “Lust.”

How to overcome it:

- Obey the 1st commandment
 - Find real intimacy in Jesus
 - Find real beauty in Jesus
 - Examples:
 - Joseph vs. David: even in the midst of being mistreated, he didn't escape into this
 - David: David was disconnected from God's plan
- Be smart

Idolatry: feeling like you need something so bad you have to have it...

- Love more than God:
- Obey God: Understand the largeness of God (off like a light switch)
- Trust God:
 - Find real love in Jesus: known and loved...
- Spiritual "fruit" and the 1000 things that are going on in conception... I thought of none of them
- Don't go near the door of her house

See [Proverbs 5 notes](#) from 7 deadly sins

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 - (BTW: **some of you say, "We should find the best in every religion..."** Every religion consistently teaches you this... this is the collective wisdom of mankind, so why not start here...)
- Why do I say sex outside of marriage is destructive? Because sex is supposed to be a oneness of your bodies that is accompanied

by oneness in every other area. **Don't mean to be graphic, but you are very vulnerable, your bodies interlock... ONE PERSON physically. That is to be matched by oneness in every other area:** emotional, spiritual, financial... you become a complete part of that other person for life.

Don't get her pregnant; I'm going to have pay for that
Masturbation: "oh, that's what you call it"

Trevor: tucked it in

"go to the dentist every Thursday". It felt as painful

Outline:

- A general discussion challenging the assumption that laws are restrictive and bad
- *What* is included in this commandment (adultery; fornication; homosexuality; lust in the heart, etc)
- *Why* it is wrong (why sex outside of marriage is destructive and dishonoring to the image of God)
- Explaining how to overcome sexual addictions

Prov 5?

John 8:11

- The movie, ***I Robot***... There's a scene in there that captures how our culture feels about freedom. The basic gist of the movie is there's this robot, Sonny, whose purpose is to stave off a plot to destroy the human race by the other robots. After Sonny succeeds he tells Will Smith that he's depressed because now he doesn't know what to do with himself now that his purpose in being created has been fulfilled. Will Smith, ever the insightful philosopher, tells him, "Well, I guess now you're like the rest of us, free to make your own way." See, that's the current view of freedom—real freedom is freedom from any design; you're free when you can chart your own course and decide what is right for you.
- But that's not true.

In one of the places Paul planted a church, Corinth, they had this saying, "Food for stomach and the stomach for food." What that meant was that bodily urges exist to be satisfied. They applied it to sex. A guy would go to a prostitute and on his way he'd say to himself, "Well, food for the stomach and the stomach for food." But Paul, in 1 Corinthians 6, repeats this quote and says, "No, there is so much more... You are not made as a pile of primal urges, you are made in God's image to know God, be filled with God, and love like God. And w

offensive commandment to us than this one. Especially in the RDU area and specifically at this church. The percentage of unmarried adults in our country climbed from about 36% in 1970 to 44% by 2000, and in 2006 for the first time exceeded 50% of all the adult population.

Part of that is because both men and women are waiting longer to marry; the median age for men went from 23 in 1950 to 27 in 2003, and the median age for women jumped from 20 to 25 in that same period. Services like eharmony.com are a phenomenon, having something like over 15 million members.

A 2006 report on NPR said that 80% of Americans are sexually active by age 20, and only 20% of women marry as virgins. Furthermore, cohabitation increased 72% between 1990 and 2000.

- (A lot of people still have the idea that they've got to clean themselves up and get themselves presentable... that's not how God loves you... He loves you in your nakedness. He loves and accepts you as you are because of what Christ has done for you, and then begins to work on remaking you into something beautiful. But that change starts with the promise that "I see you in all your nakedness in all your faults and I'll never leave you or forsake you.")