

XXII. Matthew in Biblical Perspective  
A Royal Manifesto of the Kingdom from the King  
“Now What about Marriage and Divorce? Part II”  
Matthew 5:27 – 32  
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June 27, 2010 – Evening Sermon

Look with me if you would in the text that has given rise to this addendum sermon to these few sermons in Matthew 5. We are going back to this text that we have spent two Sunday mornings on and now this Sunday night dealing with this matter of marriage, divorce and sexual immorality. In this study we will look closer at the issue of marriage and most of all, what the Bible has to say about sexuality in general and warnings of sexual immorality in particular. Matthew 5:27-32 says, **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.* **31** “*It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’* **32** *But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.*

Now I’d like to look at a couple of other texts as well. I’m not going to do this exhaustively but there are some key texts. This passage of our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount is His opening salvo to reclaim the sanctity of marriage in Christ and for Christ and sexuality as a gift of Christ within marriage. It’s not all that is going to be said and it’s not all that is said about divorce. He lays the basic ground rule of there is no divorce apart from sexual immorality. The issue of breaking the one flesh will be further developed by Paul in I Corinthians in terms of abandonment and the issue of patterned behavior that abandons the covenant of marriage. There are other issues in which the Holy Spirit leads Paul to build upon concerning what Christ has said so it’s not exhaustive but it is clearly foundational. We don’t want to get ahead of the Lord but understand what He is doing. This isn’t all He has to say about sexuality in general and also sexual immorality in particular that breaks marriage and brings death and despair when practiced outside of marriage.

Let’s take a look at I Thessalonians 4:1 which says “*Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so **more and more.***” What is He saying here? He is saying you are saved by grace but the same grace that saves you changes you and it brings an obligation to your life to live in a manner worthy of your calling. Yet He realizes this is a growing relationship. It’s not a perfect relationship which is why He says the phrase ‘more and more.’

He goes on to say in I Thessalonians 4:2-7, **2** *For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus.* **3** *For this is the will of God, your sanctification (your holiness and notice He doesn’t put the preeminence of your happiness – our joy in the Lord is to lead us to holiness of life – now Paul goes after one particular issue just as*

Jesus did on the Sermon on the Mount): *that you abstain from sexual immorality* (how?); **4** *that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, 5 not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; 6 that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. 7 For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness.* Notice Paul says we are saved by grace so let's live by grace and that means a growing relationship and that the Word of God must instruct us. It means we want to abstain from sexual immorality. Paul singles that out and that you need knowledge to know how to live. The attempting to live without knowledge is nothing but behaviorism. Attempting to just know, without it impacting our behavior is nothing but dry doctrinarism and there is to be truth which brings transformation in life, not life change without truth but truth that brings life change. Then Paul goes on to say that these are matters that in the name of the Lord Jesus you have to know God to have this changed life and your beginning point is that saving relationship with Christ, not getting better in terms of spiritual purity but first coming to Christ. When you know God then you have the power to deal with these issues and the reason to deal with them for the glory of God.

Now I would like to look at I Timothy 6. This is not dealing directly with sexual immorality but note the pattern that Paul gives for the Christian life to Timothy. I Timothy 6:11-12 says **11** *But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.* Notice he doesn't say live so you will be given eternal life. He says to live in light of the eternal life that you have been given and that you profess and take hold of that way of life. He tells us three things here. One is to fight, another is to flee, and thirdly pursue (fill). Flee sin and temptation and fill your life with the truth of the living Christ and the Gospel. And fight the good fight. The war has been won but we still have the battle to fight for the testimony of Jesus Christ in this world.

Now I'd like to look at the book of Ephesians. I'd like to look at a couple of verses here. Ephesians 4:17-24 says **17** *Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds.* (They don't think right so they live wrong because of the heart problem. Christians have a different life of humility and courage and of conviction and compassion. There is something different when God brings us from death unto life. We are different than the Gentiles. How is their life?) **18** *They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.* (The heart of the problem is the problem of the heart that shows up in the wrong way of thinking that is manifested in a wrong way of living.) **19** *They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. 20 But that is not the way you learned Christ!— 21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, 22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*

Now I'd like to look at Ephesians 5:1-2 says **1** *Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a*

fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. In other words, it's the love of Christ that sets you free to know how to love and then you're called to love. It's the Gospel that shows you the love of Christ. He goes on to say (Ephesians 5:3-16) **3** *But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. 4* *Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. 5* *For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.* (In other words their life is manifested and they are not inheritors of God's blessings of grace. It's not that our life earns grace but our life will manifest whether we have inherited the life of grace or not.) **6** *Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.* (Don't go under any false teaching or licentiousness.) **7** *Therefore do not become partners with them; 8* *for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9* *(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), 10* *and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. 11* *Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. 12* *For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. 13* *But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, 14* *for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." 15* *Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16* *making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.*

Notice he says walk carefully in light of what you know. Knowledge without committing it to walking is futility but you can't know how to walk as a Christian without knowledge. I want to use two words – cognitive and volitional. The legalist just tries to volitionally handle it through behavior modification which is empty and temporary. Then there is the arrogant who try to handle it by what they know but it never gets downloaded into life and that knowledge puffs up. God says, "No, My grace that saves you and makes you right with Me will begin to change you first by your mind being enlightened and then what you know being significantly and pointedly growing in your life as a testimony."

With those passages behind us let me just download a couple of things on this matter of the Bible and sexuality. The reason I'm taking the time to do this is for a couple of reasons. Number one is I live in a culture and I pastor a people who live in a culture that is drowning in the cesspool of sexual immorality. Our children are being exposed to it and here is the goal of the culture of darkness. What was once unthinkable might become thinkable because if it becomes thinkable then it becomes acceptable and then it becomes doable. So the very things we would not have talked about, we would not have displayed, much less create whole programs, music, movies and television programs about them are becoming acceptable. If they can just make it thinkable then that makes it doable and once it becomes doable then it becomes acceptable. The best way for people to make ungodliness thinkable is to present it as comedic entertainment so that they can get you to laugh about it – whether it's sexual promiscuity or sexual perversion. We are drowning in a cesspool of sexual immorality.

The reaction of Christians is saying 'no' to the paganism of sexual immorality but yet we think the answer is silence about sexuality where one says, "Let's just put it under the sheets. Let's cut off the light. Let's don't talk about it." There's only one problem.

We keep opening our Bible and God is not silent about this thing. God says, “The answer to the idolatry of sexual immorality is not your silence about sexuality, how I made it and what I put it here for. That’s not the answer.” In fact, the pagan in their immorality and the conservative prude-ism, both have the same problem. They both make too little of God’s gift of sex. One it’s a playground and you can do this for simple momentary pleasures and it has no affects upon others as long as we “consent.” All of the evidence of emotional problems, broken families, and sexually transmitted diseases we close our eyes to that. Then over here we some how think within Christianity that if we don’t talk about it, it will disappear as immorality and the idolatry of sexual immorality in the culture instead of claiming it for its rightful place that God has intended it in the celebration of marriage.

So I believe it has to be spoken to. I cannot avoid the fact that Jesus in His first sermon doesn’t dodge putting it right up front. I cannot get around the fact that the Bible is not silent about it. Who invented sex? God made them male and female. What is that? It is two different sexes and then He told them to be fruitful and multiply. God invented it. Then God said, “This is good.” He put a benediction upon it. God invented sexuality. God put a benediction upon sexuality. God made a whole presentation of it to a man and as soon as Adam sees his wife that God presents to him from his side, Adam waxes eloquently with poetry saying, “This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man.” Then we find the blessing upon that sexuality in the next chapter as God has allowed them to be fruitful and they multiply with two sons. Of course there would have been daughters as well. So it is not something the Bible is silent about at all.

I put out this statement about sexuality and the Bible to try and sum up some things so let me give it to you and then I’ll break it down. God has designed sexual intimacy between a man and a woman to serve as the sign and seal of the covenant of marriage. It is an act of celebrating the intimacy of marriage, an instrument to promote intimacy in marriage and a reminder of the unstoppable love of Christ for His bride, the church.

I don’t want to be misquoted. I do not believe marriage is a sacrament. I believe marriage is a covenantal union but every covenant has a sign and seal, a sacramental statement that is a physical, visible statement of spiritual reality. The sacrament within marriage or of marriage is the intimacy of the marriage bed. That’s why a marriage ceremony ends with this statement – “Upon the consummation of this union we pronounce you man and wife.” In other words, if they leave the ceremony and never consummate the marriage, it’s not a marriage. We even recognize that in our jurisprudence and what do we call that if they decide to part without consummating the marriage? It is called an annulment. It is null and void because the covenant was never consummated. We have recognized the role of sexual intimacy as the sign and seal, more than that it is the celebration of our intimacy.

As you grow together spiritually you are desirous to give yourself to one another ministerially. Remember the passage from Part I in I Corinthians 7? According to I Corinthians 7, Biblical sexuality is marital, monogamous (one man, one woman), heterosexual (one man, one woman), reciprocal (the man’s body belongs to his wife and the wife’s body belongs to her husband), not hierarchical, to be regular, habitual and prioritized part of your married life (don’t deprive yourselves to one another unless

there's a spiritual retreat involved) and it's ministerially where the wife's body belongs to her husband and the husband's body belongs to his wife. In other words, God have given you your sexual desires that are good gifts from God in order to propel you to give pleasure to the one whom you are one with in the Lord. You are not to abuse them and that's why Jesus is very careful in His wording when He says "a man is not to look with lust" which is an idolatrous gaze upon a woman which includes his wife. Marriage wasn't invented to accommodate lust. Marriage is to be the expression of love and out of our oneness and giving ourselves to one another the marriage bed becomes an extension and celebration of it.

Not only that but it also becomes an instrument. What is it that happens in sexual intimacy? We approach one another. We are uncovered. We are vulnerable. We are transparent. What does the pagan say? The pagan says, "I believe in sex but not marriage. In other words, I believe in taking and caressing the most private parts of you and exposing the most private parts of me without giving you what is really private about me, where you are commodity for my pleasure not a person to be loved. I will use you for my gratification. I will take from you what I desire. By the way, for those of use who say we don't want any part of that and over here we have retreated to prude-ism where I can open myself up spiritually but not call myself to give myself to you physically and sexually. Then I am denying the way God made me. We say 'no' to prude-ism and 'no' to paganism, because what God has done in the matter of sexual intimacy and the call to it, it is a reminder to bear your soul and your heart to one another. You give of yourself. You uncover yourself to each other. The very act of sexual intimacy is the call to that and as you progress in that relationship you then become gloriously celebrative in what you have. That's why we say 'no' to sexual lust and 'yes' to sexual expressions of love.

A man said to me, "Are you saying sex is making love?" No, I am saying that sexuality is the capstone of having a loving relationship with each other and a call to having a loving relationship with each other. It is a capstone. It is a foundation stone. God is using this in your life to call you, to celebrate what is happening in your life and in your marriage. Did you know that one of the whole reasons God invented this is to tell you about the Gospel? I have one more verse for you.

Let's look back in Ephesians 5 where it is speaking of the one flesh union. I won't go through all of it. Ephesians 5:32-33 says **32** *This mystery* (This sacrament, this thing you wouldn't understand unless God revealed it to you.) *is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.* **33** *However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.* What is this mystery? It's in Ephesians 5:31 which says "*Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and **hold fast** (spiritually, emotionally, personally and sexually) to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.*" This mystery of the two becoming one flesh is profound but I am saying it refers to Christ. I have always read that passage to think that there's this thing called marriage that's absolutely wonderful and God said "this is so wonderful that I'm going to use that as an example of what Jesus does with His bride, the church."

Then I read it a little bit closer and thought no that's not what it means exactly. God, from the very beginning, when He made us male and female building within us this physical, emotional and sexual ability to be one in Him did that to set the pattern that we could understand the Gospel and the relationship Christ has with His bride. Now I want to go a step further with you. I do not believe that as a woman you will ever be able to

love your husband physically, sexually, emotionally and spiritually until you understand the love of your greater Groom, Christ, for you. I believe that is what will set you free to do that. I do not believe you are free to love your husband and your ability to love your husband and to give yourself to your husband in every arena including sexuality, will be based upon the knowledge of what you now know that your greater Groom, Christ, has for you in His love for you. How I love you and nothing can separate you from My love. It is that security and knowledge that sets us free to love one another and sets a woman free.

What about men? Men, I don't think you will ever know how to love your wives in the way God calls us to love our wives personally, spiritually, emotionally and sexually until you know what it means to be the wife of Christ. Until you and I know what it means to be the wife of Christ we won't know how to treat our wives with the love that Christ has called us to. This whole matter of marriage and sexuality is absolutely crucial not only to sign and seal a marriage as it begins for the marriage bed is holy and sacred but it becomes a statement of praise to God for your oneness in Christ. It becomes a propelling statement to increase your oneness and intimacy in Christ in every arena of your life and then it becomes a reminder of the unstoppable, inseparable love that Christ has for you and me that actually becomes the foundation for the love we can have for each other. That's why this is far, far more than mere behaviorism. This is something much more than just cleaning up the advertising agencies and the television for us. This is something much more of how God has made us.

I want to give you a number of statements and then a few takeaways. Number one Christianity gives us a clear answer as to why our culture is so obsessed with sexual immorality. Why is our culture so obsessed with sexual immorality? It is the issue of lust in the heart which is an inordinate desire for an idolatrous relationship with something. Christianity explains that there is nothing more powerful in your life than sexuality. It beats all the other appetites. One of the proofs I heard one pastor talk about that really helped me see it was that my generation said "free sex, casual sex, everybody have sex" and then we started seeing diseases and every thing broken. Then we are telling the next generation, "You can't have free sex but you can have safe sex. Forget free sex, its safe sex and forget this marriage boundary deal. Don't worry about that but you have to have safe sex. No more casual sex or recreational sex but you need to have meaningful safe sex." What is that generation now telling us? They are now saying, "Are you crazy?" I am very indebted to Jay Adams, Wayne Mack, Tim Keller and C.S. Lewis who wrote the book Four Loves and to the work on Eros by John White. All of them have challenged my own thinking on this matter with their insights. This generation says, "You had all the fun and now you are telling us don't do it." We respond, "It will kill you." This generation says, "So what?"

Now what does that tell you? That tells you sex is much more than an appetite. One of those writers pointed out that if you tell somebody they have diabetes and that they can't eat sugar then they say "Okay I'll get a substitute" but they don't say "Well you had your sugar." "I'll just have my sugar and so what if it kills me." No, we go way beyond that. It is unbelievably powerful as an idol to substitute for a meaningful relationship with the One true and living God. The Bible is attacking this because the Bible explains two things. Number one is we have a heart that is an unstoppable incessant idol factory. The top idols are money, sex and power. We will go after

sexuality whether its promiscuous, perverted, pan sexuality or any kind of sexuality in an effort to be somebody in this world and to make our lives something in this world. Christianity explains that you have taken the gift of sex and made it an idol and Jesus said the problem is not modifying your behavior first but changing the heart. The lust of the heart, the compulsion for idolatry and here is candidate number one or two for idolatry in our life.

The second thing that Christianity explains is that sex has power. God has made it a powerful thing and we are fully realizing that. So they answer is not to shovel it off to the side or try to hide it under the covers. The answer is to understand where it belongs and how it is to be practiced for the glory of God out of a foundation of the sufficiency of Christ in our life so that we don't need it as an idol. We have a Savior and He is our life therefore that which He has designed for our life within our marriage is to minister to one another.

Thirdly, why the careful wording to focus upon the issue of lust and not sexual desire? Jesus did not say that a man is not to have sexual desires. God gave us those. God gave sexual desires to men and to women. He didn't say to get rid of that. He said what you get rid of is the heart of lust that would take that desire and make it the reason for life.

Fourthly, why does the Bible forbid sexual immorality yet so readily, completely and freely speaks of sexuality? I remember when R.C. Sproul called and asked me to write something for TableTalk that I do every once in a while and he said, "I want you to write on the Song of Solomon." I said, "No, I have made it my whole life purpose to avoid preaching on the Song of Solomon." When I do pre-marital counseling it is the last counseling session that I tell them on the night of your marriage and not a minute before read the Song of Solomon because it is unbelievably powerful. When God deals with sex it would even make people from Mountain Brook to Hueytown blush unless you understand what He is saying and doing.

For instance let's look at how a man approaches his wife in the context of marriage from the Song of Solomon. John White brings this out in just an unbelievably powerful way, much better than I can and I don't have much time to spend on this. If your Bible sticks together at the point of Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon I can understand. Also read the book of Proverbs because it is a compendium on Godly sex counseling of a man to his children but the Song of Solomon itself and the glorious statement of blessing and how we approach marital bliss of sexuality that is not idolatry of sex but the celebration of sexuality within the marriage covenant. I want to show you how the man looks at his wife in Song of Solomon 7:6-9; **6** *How beautiful and pleasant you are, O loved one, with all your delights!* **7** *Your stature is like a palm tree, and your breasts are like its clusters.* **8** *I say I will climb the palm tree and lay hold of its fruit. Oh may your breasts be like clusters of the vine, and the scent of your breath like apples,* **9** *and your mouth like the best wine.* Then it goes on and on even more powerfully.

What about the woman to the man? Let's look at Song of Solomon 5. In this text she searches for her husband, the lover of her marriage. Let's look at how she sees him when she finally finds him. Song of Solomon 5:10-14 says **10** *My beloved is radiant and ruddy, distinguished among ten thousand.* **11** *His head is the finest gold; his locks are wavy, black as a raven.* **12** *His eyes are like doves beside streams of water, bathed in milk, sitting beside a full pool.* **13** *His cheeks are like beds of spices, mounds of sweet-*

*smelling herbs. His lips are lilies, dripping liquid myrrh. 14 His arms are rods of gold, set with jewels.* (Then as she sees him come to the bed she says...) *His body is polished ivory, bedecked with sapphires.* Then she goes on further to describe him. In the original Hebrew it is very difficult to translate because it is extremely graphic about what she is saying as he approaches her upon the bed of intimacy. The Bible is very clear about this and while it's denying and decrying and calling us to repentance of sexual immorality, it readily and freely speaks of the blessings of sexuality rooted in the Gospel of grace in our life and carried out in our marital relationship of intimacy.

Fifthly, why would sexual promiscuity and sexual prudishness both be unbiblical? It is because both of them make too little of the blessing of sexuality.

Number six, why does Jesus bring the specter of hell into His sermon? Remember He is telling us to get rid of lust which is the inordinate desire of an idolatrous relationship. He is not speaking of the challenge of dealing with sexual immorality. He is telling us throughout the Scriptures that those who have embraced it have embraced an idol and declared that they don't know the One true and living God and therefore instead of the roadway to heaven of growing in grace and sexual purity and the sexual joys of marriage, they are on the paved road to hell. Their lust and domination in their life has now described the fact that grace has not brought them forgiveness and conviction. When God's grace comes into our life both of those are blessings – the blessing of knowing I'm forgiven of my sins and the blessings of conviction over sin and the sinfulness of sin. Forgiveness and conviction are gifts of grace to us. In other words, the sexual immorality of lust that has dominated the life where people are being used and abused in the name of your own salvation through this lustful act has revealed that the heart does not know the Lord and is headed to a Christ-less eternity.

Here are the takeaways. We have not yet obeyed the precepts of Christ if we have simply refrained from acts of sexual immorality. If it's just simply 'don't commit adultery' you and I have not dealt with the issue. That's commendable. O to live in a culture that wasn't immersed in sexual promiscuity and perversion! I am grateful for the common grace blessings of refraining sexual adultery, promiscuity and perversion in a culture but as a believer I have not yet obeyed the precepts of Christ in this matter simply by refraining from the acts of sexual immorality.

The second takeaway is we have not yet obeyed the precepts of Christ if we have not only refrained from acts of sexual immorality but also sought freedom from sexual lust. In other words, I have been called not simply to refrain from sexual immorality but I have been called to crucify the lust of the flesh, including the lust of taking another person for my sexual gratification and using them as a commodity in my life and using them as an idol in my life. But I'm not yet there. I have gone a step further. No act of adultery – gone to the heart and begun to root out lust but where Jesus is taking us and the Word of God is taking us leads me to takeaway number three.

The third takeaway is we have begun to obey the precepts of Christ if we flee sexual immorality, crucify the lust of the flesh and pursue as well as promote the joyful embrace of sexual intimacy and its attendant blessings of the fullness of Christ and the power of the Gospel. When Jesus Christ has become my sufficient Lord and Savior and in Him is my all, I am now free to employ sexuality in the context of my marriage to celebrate what God has given me and to bring more of what God wants to bring through me to the one in whom He has given to me.

I want to say again what I said in Part I of this sermon. It is something I have thought long and hard over. We must be so aware of this issue of sexual immorality because it is so much in our culture that this church must preach the truth the freeness of God's grace and forgiveness when we falter and also the conviction of the sinfulness of sexual immorality so that we are a safe place for sinners to land but we are not a safe place for sin to flourish. Sometimes in the name of being an unsafe place for sin, sinners are not ministered to. Sometimes in the name of ministering to sinners we don't speak the truth about sin but by God's grace we must be what we have been, a place that proclaims the freeness and fullness of forgiveness of all sins for all who trust in Jesus Christ. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, yet we must be an instrument that points out with conviction the destructiveness of sin so that it is not allowed to flourish.

So I'd like to make a few closing comments. If you have a sex centered life you are doomed to despair and discouragement and it could be revealing that you are headed to a Christ-less eternity. If you have a marriage centered life or a child centered life or a family centered life, your marriage, your family and your children is in trouble because it wasn't made for the centrality of your life, only Jesus is, then you'll be free to be an asset of Christ to your children, your marriage and your family. If we are sex centered then that can reveal what we have within us, an idolatrous heart. May God grant us the opportunity and the privilege in the call to heed Christ to come to Him. When our sexuality is built upon this, can't you see that sexual intimacy within marriage actually gets better when you get older and wrinkled? It is because you have known each other's love.

Ladies, if a man, even a professing believer here at Briarwood and certainly any outside, wants to make you the object of his lust don't think it makes you somebody. It makes you only a commodity that will be thrown away when he is through with you. So don't dress for him and don't allure him because he is simply using you. If a man would make you the object of his lust that doesn't make you somebody and it won't give you a life of joy and happiness but only one of despair and constantly being under the pressure to be someone's messiah and you can't be or to provide him an erotic experience that is of a pathetic nature compared to what Christ has for sexuality.

Men, if a woman would allow you to use her body for sexual idolatry then that reveals that you do not see a woman with dignity. It also should tell you that when she is through with you because you won't make her life meaningful, and you may think you will sexually and personally, but you won't and she'll move on to someone else as well. All the reasons for premarital sex are in play for extra-marital sex, all of them, but instead of being an object or a commodity, men, our Christian sisters in this church and outside of this church, our Christian sisters must know that you see them made in the image of God and you desire them not for your sexual pleasure but for their knowledge of Christ. That's what you desire. So wherever my eye needs to be to see Jesus then I want my eye there that I might see these women made in the image of God and I might see my wife, not someone to lust after but to someone to love, every morning, every hour and in the marriage bed, to love her not use her.

Women, you must see your Christian brothers as those in great need of your tender care and that you would not so conduct yourself as to put them on the road to hell with allurements, nor would you put yourself as an obstacle to their pursuit of purity, but

you would put yourself that when they see you they would be drawn to Christ to know how to love others. This needs to be a safe place for sinners to grow in grace and forgiveness but not a place where sin is accommodated and allowed to flourish. We want to be Christian brothers and sisters who love one another in the Lord, not the object of idolatry and not the failures of sexual immorality but the joys of Christ in you, the hope of glory. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the time we could spend together. Thank You for the privilege to at least look at some of the text so that we do not simply fall into mere behavior modification but our hearts are filled with the love of Christ and we don't simply modify what we do for a temporal moment but You change who we are from the heart in Christ. Thank You in Jesus' Name, Amen.

An outline for the Sermon on the Mount:

*Introduction: (Matthew 5:1-2)*

*I. The Christian, The Gospel and our Character (5:3-12)*

*II. The Christian, The Gospel and our Ministry (5:13-16)*

*III. The Christian, The Gospel and the Law (5:17-48)*

*IV. The Christian, The Gospel and our New Life (6:1-18)*

*V. The Christian, The Gospel and our Perspective (6:19-34)*

*VI. The Christian, The Gospel and our Relationships (7:1-20)*

*VII. The Christian, The Gospel and Commitment (7:21-27)*

*Conclusion: (7:28-29)*