

Serm. Series: “Christian Life-skills for Every Age”—Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield—6/10/2001

Title: “Sexuality, and Marriage, and Divorce”

Text: Matthew 5: 27-32

Introduction: *Illus.: Keep your head so that you don't lose your mind*

Theme: When Christ is in control of my body and mind, then the God-given gift of my sexuality will be used in a God-pleasing way.

### ***Our Sexuality and Our Daily Lives***

- **Is “sex” a gift of God?**
  1. Christian families need to remove the word “sex” from the dirty word list
  2. Christian families need to educate openly within the home about God’s purpose and proper use of sexuality is
- **Our sexual emotions and desires put into the context of God’s intent**
  1. **The lie of Satan** is to make me think that it is for my own satisfaction
    - a. **Safe-sex/abortion** as a way of wiping away responsibility with the justification, “*It’s my own body . . .*”
    - b. **Selfish sex** of our society (pornography, sexuality explicit mags, movies)
    - c. **ILLUS.: IS PORNOGRAPHY A VICTIMLESS SIN?**
    - d. **Homosexuality/lesbianism** is a perversion of God’s intended use of human sexuality “*Men have given up natural sexual relations with women and burn with lust for each other. Men commit indecent acts with men, so they experience among themselves the punishment they deserve for their perversion. Romans 1:27*”
  2. **God’s purpose for intimacy was other-centered centered in commitment**
    - a. Unites the **married** couple in a special “**oneness of flesh**” (security, intimacy, companionship, love)
    - b. **Procreation of children** –being given the privilege of participating with God in the miracle of creation
- **Sexuality--EXPLOSIVE—handle with care!**
  1. **In our fallen nature a natural attraction can quickly become a sinful lust (Print/read Verse 28)**
    - a. There is no room for self-righteousness!
      - **ILLUS.: THE TRUEST MEANING OF LUST**
    - b. Have a healthy fear of the slippery slope of sexual sins and becoming numb/unrepentant (**Print/read vss. 29-30**)
      - **ILLUS.;TOUGH CHOICES**
  2. **Our emotional drives are powerful and hard to stop, unless controlled by the Spirit**
    - a. Our sexuality is the second strongest drive behind survival
    - b. Practicing self-control by the Spirit’s power to avoid (“*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*” Gal5:22-23)

### ***Our Sexuality and Marriage and Divorce***

- **Save it for your marriage**
  1. **Outside of marriage sex is adultery or fornication**
    - a. “to sell one-self over into slavery” our word “prostitute” comes from it
    - b. **ILLUS.: THE GREAT “IS” DEBATE (President Clinton’s comments)**
  2. **One special gift from God, given to you to give to your spouse—only you can save it/only you can give it away**
  3. **For those who have fallen to sexual sin, there is a way out**
    - a. **ILLUS.: WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY** “*Your sins are forgiven, go and sin no more.*” John 8: 11
- **Keep it in your marriage**
  1. **Because to divorce puts you and your ex-spouse in a spiritual “rock-and-a-hard”**
    - a. God only allowed divorce on a “limited basis”
      - *Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard.” Matthew 19:8*
      - *“Everyone who divorces his wife, except for the cause of sexual unfaithfulness, makes her to be an adulterer; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.” (vs. 32)*
      - *“But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.” 1 Cor. 7:15*
    - b. Divorce wrongly gotten is a sin of adultery and makes innocent partner appear to be an adulterer (vs. 32)
    - c. Divorce wrongly gotten can be repented of, confessed, and forgiven
  2. **Viewing fidelity in your marriage and an unconditional commitment to it as your highest priority**
    - a. **ILLUS.: TAKING MARRIAGE VOWS SERIOUSLY**
    - b. Encouraging my acquaintances/relatives to be faith in the marriage vows as a safety net of protection for all

### **Keep your head so that you don't lose your mind**

Our church has a singles ministry called SALT (Single Adults Learning Together). During a recent service, our minister mentioned SALT in the announcements. "If any of you are single," he told the congregation, "be sure to check out SALT. Those initials stand for ..." The minister paused a moment before continuing. At last he seemed to remember their meaning. "They stand for Single Adults Living Together."

### **Pornography: Is it a 'victimless' sin**

According to *U. S. News & World Report*, Americans spent no more than \$10 million on pornography in 1973. By 1999, however, they were spending \$10 billion a year—a thousandfold increase. As *U. S. News* put it, it's an amount much larger than Hollywood's domestic box office receipts and larger than all the revenues generated by rock and country music recordings. A recent survey conducted by the National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families provides us with a clue as to how big the problem of Christians and pornography may be. The Coalition surveyed students at five Christian colleges. Sixty-eight percent of the male students said they had intentionally looked for pornography on the Internet. Ten percent of those surveyed admitted to frequent use of pornography, and five percent acknowledged having a problem with pornography. Another Christian college, Seattle Pacific University, examined all the web sites accessed by its students during a three-week period. Officials were dismayed to learn that nearly 7 percent of all sites visited were pornographic. And, one in five of all campus computers had been used to view pornography,

### **Tough Choices**

On July 20, 1993, while cutting down oaks in a Pennsylvania forest, Don Wyman got his leg pinned beneath a fallen tree. No one could hear his yells for help. After digging for more than an hour to try to free his bleeding, shattered leg, he hit stone. He would bleed to death unless he did something drastic. Wyman made his decision. Using a wrench and the starter cord from his chain saw as a tourniquet, he cut off the flow of blood to his shin. Somehow he had the fortitude to amputate his own leg below the knee with his pocket knife. He crawled to his vehicle and drove to a farmer's home. The farmer got him the help that saved his life. Like Don Wyman, men who want to follow Christ face tough choices. We have sinful habits we want to keep as badly as our leg. We also have a Lord and Savior who calls us to repent. It takes strength to cut off our wickedness.

### **The Truest Meaning of Lust**

There is a story of two Buddhist monks walking in a drenching thunderstorm. They came to a stream, and it was swollen out of its banks. A beautiful young Japanese woman in a kimono stood there wanting to get to the other side but was afraid of the currents. In characteristic Buddhist compassion, one of the monks said, "Can I help you?" The woman said, "I need to cross this stream." The monk picked her up, put her on his shoulder, carried her through the water, and put her down on the other side. He and his companion went on to the monastery. That night his companion said to him, "I have a bone to pick with you. As Buddhist monks, we have taken vows not to look on a woman, much less touch her body. Back there by the river you did both." The first monk said, "My brother, I put that woman down on the other side of the river. You're still carrying her in your mind."

### **Taking Marriage Vows Seriously**

Author and business leader Fred Smith writes: One of my treasured memories comes from a doughnut shop in Grand Saline, Texas. There was a young farm couple sitting at the table next to mine. He was wearing overalls and she a gingham dress. After finishing their doughnuts, he got up to pay the bill, and I noticed she didn't get up to follow him. But then he came back and stood in front of her. She put her arms around his neck, and he lifted her up, revealing that she was wearing a full-body brace. He lifted her out of her chair and backed out the front door to the pickup truck, with her hanging from his neck. As he gently put her into the truck, everyone in the shop watched. No one said anything until a waitress remarked, almost reverently, "He took his vows seriously."

### **Matthew 5:27-32**

**"You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY';<sup>28</sup> but I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.<sup>29</sup> And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.<sup>30</sup> And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to go into hell.<sup>31</sup> And it was said, 'WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE';<sup>32</sup> but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for *the* cause of sexual unfaithfulness, makes her to be an adulterer; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. [NASB]**