

**PASSING THE BATON NUMBER 10
SEX, SEXUALITY AND MORALITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY CHURCH**

6THOctober 2007

“The Bride has made herself ready”

I want to ask you to do a rethink today, perhaps rewrite yourself and what you think being a Christian is all about. If this teaching doesn't challenge you, bless you if it does challenge you, bless you. Either way, be open to what is being said, be blessed.

My charge:

I have a charge to speak about morality today. But unless we come at this subject and, indeed the whole of the Sermon on the Mount, God's 'rules' for a righteous life, from the point of view of much loved children, Christ's childlike Bride, obeying the Father because we love and are loved, we will chafe against these commandments and compromise ourselves, our old nature will rebel against what it sees as constraints upon its 'freedom', in the 21st Century, and we will do a trade with the devil. We will walk as close to the line as we can.

When we looked at homosexuality, we saw that God created male and female and His intention was that they would become one flesh. Husband and wife. Sexual contact outside of the confines of marriage brings you straight into Satan's territory. The sexual act is an act of worship either to God, inside marriage, or to Satan outside marriage.

I am going to use the now out of fashion word 'sin' to describe anything outside of God's created order. A definition of the word biblically is to miss the mark, it is an archery term. Sin is missing the mark of God's standards. There are two other words which are used - transgression which is rebellion, deliberately stepping over God's stated commandments, and iniquity, lawlessness, wickedness, and contempt of the Divine law.

But for today, the word 'sin' is the one I want. If the use of this word offends you, I apologise, but I am going to use it anyway, because God does. One of the dangers today is that we can be lulled into thinking that because God loves us so much, we can do as we like because grace will cover us. This is true, but there is something more at stake.

Paul says in **Romans 7:7** *“I would not have known sin without the law”*. He is saying because God said, *“do not covet, do not commit adultery, I suddenly saw that both these things were 'sin.' in God's sight”*. Without the prohibition of the commandments, he would have been ignorant that what he was doing was sinful in God's sight. So, because adultery, fornication and sexual perversions are seen as sin by God, we must have a look, because we too may be ignorant that what we are doing is actually sin in God's eyes.

Personal history:

Just so that you do not think that I have no experience of this subject. When I was saved, the words God spoke audibly to me were 'Go woman and sin no more'. I later discovered these words were spoken to the woman caught in adultery.

As I have prepared this talk, I have become even more aware of what He was saying to me that day 20 years ago. I know that about which I speak. I was an adulteress and I now understand exactly what that means. You also need to know that from that moment, I was an adulteress no more. When God speaks, something happens.

So,

Matthew 5:17,18: Jesus speaking

"Do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets, I did not come to destroy but to fulfil. For assuredly I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle, the smallest letters of the Hebrew alphabet, will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled."

Matthew 5:27

*"You shall not commit adultery, but I say to you, that anyone who **looks** on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart".*

The eyes are involved here and the heart, and later on He involves the hands. The uncompromising words of Jesus give no room for manoeuvre.

He is saying, I did not come to destroy, meaning to do away with, or more properly, incorrectly interpret, the commandments of God, He is saying, I came to fulfil them - to correctly interpret them for you.

Never for one moment think that Jesus came to misinterpret, destroy, or do away with, God's commandments, which are for our good incidentally. His intent was not to weaken the Word, but to establish it. He is saying, My aim is to establish the word, to cement it **in your hearts**. He has no intention of abolishing or suspending the 'law' or commandments or instructions of God.

For many Christians this comes as a shock.

After all, Paul in **Romans 10:4** said *"Jesus is the end of the law."* Jesus' statement seems such a contradiction that many Christian commentators have tried to explain it away by suggesting that his words do not mean what they seem to mean. But His words are very clear, He says *"as long as the world lasts"* not a jot or tittle. Not the smallest letter of the alphabet, the jot or even its decorative spur, the tittle, will disappear.

Matthew 5:27

"You have heard that it was said 'You shall not commit adultery, but I say to you that anyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery already with her in his heart."

'You' includes rich and poor, educated and uneducated, king and slave, male and female, young and old, married and unmarried, no exceptions!

There are two words used throughout scripture to deal with sexual sins. Adultery and fornication. Adultery is defined as voluntary sexual relations between a married person and someone other than their spouse. Fornication on the other hand refers to sexual relations between a man and a woman who are *not* married. These two terms are also used as inclusive expressions of wrong and perverted sexual relationships and activities.

Something is at stake:

The reason for teaching today on this subject is that something is at stake.

Not your salvation, you cannot lose that, but as we go on in our Christian walk we find that there is something for us here and now, as well as rewards later. It is called **inheritance**. Our inheritance unfolds as we walk in the statutes and commandments that God has laid down for us, as we grow in Christ-likeness.

The goal of the Christian walk is to become like Jesus and do the things He did. The 'greater works' ministry. Along the way, however, one of the things we will experience in our walk, is what are called 'test commands'. God says '*Don't do that*' then waits to see what we will do.

The first example was Adam in the garden.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

*"Do you not know that the wicked will not **inherit** the kingdom of God? (They will not reign and rule in life, they will not come into everything Jesus died to give them.) Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters nor adulterers, nor male prostitutes, nor homosexual offenders, nor thieves, nor the greedy nor drunkards, nor slanderers, or swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."*

I need to emphasise at this point -

God will not love you any the less if you completely ignore this message. What you stand to lose is your inheritance, part of which is your usefulness to the Kingdom of God here and now, the rewards hereafter.

One of the things which determine gain or loss of our inheritance in this life, is sexual immorality.

I stress, not loss of salvation, you cannot lose that.

This is about rewards, reigning in this life walking in your inheritance and rewards in the life to come. This is about spiritual strength, victory over the enemy, maturity, trusting God,

material sufficiency, health, walking free of the pollution in the world and enjoying righteousness peace and joy and so much more, in this life. The psalmist said *"No good thing will He withhold from him whose walk is upright"*. **Psalm 84:11**.

However, the **principle** here is that if we have ungoverned desires over which we cannot exercise control, God cannot trust us with spiritual treasures.

If we cannot possess our own vessel, delay gratification, we are showing ourselves unfit for Kingdom service. This is basic stuff. Paul says, *"lest I be cast away as reprobate"* he means, found not to have passed the test. Same as with money, Jesus says, *"if you cannot be trusted with earthly things, who will entrust you with heavenly things?"* **Luke 16:11**.

God does not change His way of doing things, He is immutable.

Sexual sin is defiling.

This word defile - we see it many, many times in the Old Testament -

To defile - definition:

1. To corrupt or ruin something 'The dust is his original sin and inward corruptions, that have defiled the whole man'. John Bunyan Pilgrims Progress 1678.
2. To damage somebody's reputation or good name
3. Religious - to destroy the sanctity of something: to make a holy or sacred thing or place no longer fit for ceremonial use
4. To make something dirty or polluted.
5. To deprive a woman of her virginity: to be the first man to have sexual intercourse with a woman, usually outside marriage. An alteration, influenced by an obsolete word meaning 'to be foul', of French defouler 'to trample', from fouler 'to trample under foot'.

Interestingly, Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Greek says - defile. (moluno) properly denotes to besmear as with mud or filth, *to befoul*.

So, when we are speaking about sexual immorality, we are speaking about defiling besmearing ourselves with mud or filth. Puts a different complexion on the whole thing doesn't it?

Not half so romantic having a dirty weekend when you put it like that!

Having a mud bath!

We are living in a day when the whole of society says *"There is nothing wrong with sex as long as there are two consenting adults."* Beloved, we are called to be different. There is another old-fashioned word - **holiness** - perhaps we will do something on that one day. Holiness means separation. We are meant to be separated from something to something.

Separated from the world and its ways to God and His ways.

God has set laws in this universe of His, gravity is one. If I drop my pen or jump out of a window, I and the pen will go downwards and eventually hit the earth. He has also set spiritual laws in place *“As a man sows, so shall he reap”* this is as immovable as God Himself.

What you sow, you will reap.

If we sow sexual promiscuity and lust, we will reap infection and eventually death in our bodies and the bodies of those with whom we have sexual contact.

Venereal disease and epidemic AIDS is one example. If we haven't got it yet, it is only a matter of time. There is a law in place. You cannot play with fire and not get burned. **Proverbs 6:27** *“Can a man take fire to his bosom and his clothes not be burned? Can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be seared?”*

What you sow, you will reap.

Captive to our culture:

We have all but lost our wonder and awe of this Great God that we serve. Because we have little or no idea of Who He really, really is and His great plan for our lives, we live our lives in mostly the same way as everyone around us. We have become captive to our culture. Our morals are – largely - the same as the unbeliever and we seek – largely - the same things, we do not live as the beloved of God, obeying Him out of His love for us and ours for Him.

We are not so concerned with being conformed to the image of Christ as being conformed to the image of our next-door neighbours. God forbid we should stand out by being different!

We have just enough religion to get us to heaven!

When mankind gives away God given authority in any area, the demonic will move in and rule. The result of this is that we will come under the influence of the principality or power that has been given the ground. A simple example is that if we give into lust and watch pornography on the internet, the demonic will move in, and we will find ourselves unable to stop even though now we want to. We are enslaved; compelled, and driven to continue deeper into degrading and corrupting behaviour. We have given away our authority, as surely as Adam gave away his in the garden.

If you do have a problem in this area and it is enslaving, compelling and driving. If you have tried to stop, prayed, fasted and sought the Lord and still there is no improvement, you can be sure you are looking at the demonic. There will be ministry time this afternoon, so please come for prayer if this should apply to you. There is no condemnation.

Sexual sin is particularly damaging to us because it is the only sin in which your body and that of another are joined.

1 Corinthians 6:12,13

“Everything is permissible for me, but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me, but I will not be mastered by anything. Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, but God will destroy them both. The body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body.”

1 Corinthians 6:18

“Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.”

As soon as this joining is **other than** that which God ordained, the one flesh relationship of a husband and wife, you have moved out from under God’s authority, to under demonic authority, and he has every right to harass you.

In **Psalms 120:5** David laments that he is dwelling on the edge of the Christian walk, he is *‘between the devil and the deep blue sea’* as we would say. He has found himself in between two cultures the one a warlike people, the other, lustful and self indulgent -

*“Why am I doomed to live as an alien,
scattered among these cruel savages?
Am I destined to dwell in the darkened tents of desert nomads?”*

Meshech and Kedar. One south of Jerusalem and the other north. And that is exactly where we find ourselves today, captive to our culture. The world says, *“if it feels good, do it”* and the Word says, *“beloved, don’t do it.”*

We are pulled both ways and I would venture to say we most often end up doing things the same way as the world around us does.

Of all mankind’s sin, sexual sin is the one which affects him most, it penetrates his body and brings death and disease with it. *“Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.”* **1 Corinthians 6:18** again.

Sexual relationships make two one, they become, one flesh, what one has is passed across to the other, we saw this when we looked at soul ties you remember. All sorts of things are passed down that soul tie as the sexual act takes place. When we talked about soul ties, I explained that you are not just having intercourse with one person if that person has had one, two or multiple experiences, every person and whoever they went with, affects you at the moment of penetration and it doesn’t go away. Those ties need to be cut. This goes for the man as well as the woman. It is serious stuff and is the quickest way to defilement that I know.

Not only will your body be defiled, but your spirit is defiled also.

If you or yours are caught in the pornography trap, God leans over you and breathes, *“purity”*, have Mine. Beloved He does not condemn us; He gives us what we need to live as a much loved child. It is all ours for the taking. His grace is sufficient. His love is not sloppy agape, it is not rules and regulations, it is love which seeks the very best for us. That is what His

commandments are all about, our safety and health. There may be a need for confession and deliverance from what you have got yourself into, but the door is open to walk through and get out of the devil's clutches. Dust is his food, how long are you going to be lunch for him?

God cannot forgive what we have not confessed.

During the time I was preparing this message, I had a conversation with two young Christians out of which arose the fact that they had not realised that unconfessed sin was sin unforgiven. ***God cannot forgive what we have not confessed.***

They came to the realisation that things they had done ***before*** becoming Christians could be having an effect on them in the here and now. It was a sobering moment as I watched this revelation sink in.

They had been taught **2 Corinthians 5:17** *"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation, (absolutely true) behold old things have passed away, all things have become new"*. Also, absolutely true.

But one of the reasons the church is so luke-warm is that there has been no confession and repentance of the stuff we were in before.

No **experience** of being defiled and being washed clean.

Beloved, it is **brilliant** to get rid of all that stuff.

This scripture is absolutely true, but repentance and confession of the things we did before we became a Christian is still necessary in order that we can walk up the aisle with Jesus without an array of tin cans and fish heads tied to our ankles by bits of string - if I can use the analogy.

I spent the first two years of my Christian walk weeping in the back row as God revealed my sins ***one at a time*** and I confessed them and repented of them, one at a time. Beloved the Anglican general confession just won't cut it!

If you had sexual relationships before you became a Christian outside the confines of marriage, even with the man you eventually married, this needs to be confessed and repented of and the ungodly soul tie needs to be cut.

As I go on, just do business with God and you will have the opportunity later to have ministry for anything He brings to the surface for you. This is nothing to be ashamed of, it is **1 John 1:9** in action. You will be much better off without it.

Quote regarding the church:

"Even in the Charismatic church, Christians who really do know God, often live by the same standards as the world, seeking exactly the same things the world does. Unconsciously we go about intimate relationships 'Hollywood style', and about money matters, Wall Street style."

We approach parenting with whatever techniques we think will work or happen to be the current childrearing fad. We have so segmented and compartmentalised our lives that our behaviour reflects that we listen more to the world than to God's word. We have exchanged God's prescription for life with the world's, with disastrous and painful results. Even the divorce rate among Christians is about the same as among unbelievers."

That is a paraphrase from a book by Chip Ingram, entitled 'Love, sex and lasting relationships'.

Relationships - Hollywood Style:

The Hollywood version of love and marriage goes like this:

- *Step 1, find the right person - so you are always on the look out for someone.*
- *Step 2, fall in love - you find yourself strongly attracted to people who are practically strangers, and stop your ears to warning bells.*
- *Step 3, fix your hopes and dreams now on that person, spend hours in fantasies, imagining the perfect life with someone you hardly know, but are sure would be everything you need in a partner. Of course, if they aren't you'll change them, then they will be!*
- *Step 4, fail - and start all over again!*

Relationships in the 21st century are rather like Kleenex tissues - blow and throw. Commitment is an almost unused word. In our culture physical appearance and sex appeal are paramount. Regrettably, it is little different in the church.

Sexuality - a God given gift:

Our sexuality is a God-given gift. It is meant to be one of the most joyful and satisfying elements of a marriage relationship. That's how God intended it - marriage is His idea. It is not only His provision for procreation of the human race, but the basis of the family relationship, which itself is God ordained.

Marriage and the home is the basic structure of society, that is why it is such a target for destruction from Satan. He delights to destroy that which God has ordained, to demolish the order which God placed within His universe. The destruction of marriage and sexuality is a Satanic strategy beloved. He undermines marriage relationships, causes havoc with emotional responses from childhood, through youth and into adulthood. He carries on the relentless attack to destroy God's created order in any way he can. Hence things like, homosexuality and unisex. Everyone looking the same so that we cannot distinguish male from female.

We are living in a day when the morality of our whole society says *"There is nothing wrong with sex as long as there are two consenting adults"*. Children today are being declared adults long before they have any understanding of judging cause and effect. They are captive to the culture.

Psalm 119:9 starts *"How can a young man keep his way? How can he keep himself pure?"* The psalmist goes on to show exactly how that can be done. But first, as Paul would say, there

must be a willing mind. The pressures on us and our young people are enormous, to conform in every way to the culture around them. To be a virgin - boy or girl - is old fashioned.

‘Come out from among them and be separate:’ the holiness code:

God never asks us to do something without giving us the ability to do it. “Be holy as I am holy” is a benediction, not an impossible command.

Be separate, He says. *“Come out from among them and be separate - be holy”*. **2 Corinthians 6:17** *“Come out from among them and be separate, do not touch the unclean thing”*. He leans over us, breathes His Spirit on us and says *“Be like Me, and here’s how you can do it”*.

In this context in the second book of Corinthians, He was speaking to people who had just come out from idolatry and temple prostitution, and He is saying, now don’t go back, come out, stay out, don’t mix your body with that of a prostitute, be holy (separated unto Me) because I am holy. Remember holiness is separation from something and to something. From the world’s way of doing things, to God’s way of doing things.

Beloved, we are citizens of a different kingdom.

We are meant to be different; we are meant to be a light on a hill, illuminating the safe path. We will fail in our mission to reach people with the gospel if we do not have God’s heart for them and know His great heart for us. If we do not know what Good News the gospel actually is we cannot give it to them, we can take them no further than we have gone ourselves. If we do not fully understand that we have been lifted out from one kingdom and placed in another, our lifestyle will remain exactly the same as the unbeliever, except that we go to church once a week.

The exchange at the cross:

Some insurance policies these days have a ‘new for old’ clause, which means if you lose your old one they will replace it with new.

That is the exchange which was made for us at the cross - new for old. Paul says in Corinthians *“and such **were** some of you”* **1Corinthians 6:11**. The only thing is, we get to choose whether we live in the new or the old. Choice is ours. Not difficult - will you have abundance or poverty? Living in the flesh or the Spirit? Know which one I choose. The cross is central, that is where the exchange took place. We need to come into a greater understanding of what happened there, and the choice with which we are presented, moment by moment, day by day.

If all we have ourselves, and give unbelievers, is an intellectual knowledge of God, a set of rules and regulations and fear which brings them into the Kingdom, they will miss His great heart for them.

The reason we have so many cerebral Christians sitting in the pews is that the love of God has never touched their hearts - the fullness of our salvation hasn't been understood because we can't give what we don't have.

So though I'm actually needing to speak on morality this day, it is mixed with the great heart of the love of God for His people. Sin has been dealt with. Jesus has taken the wrath of God which was rightly upon us. We can walk free. But Paul says, "*Don't use your liberty as an occasion to sin*". **Galatians 5:13**. We must teach the whole counsel of God.

Father pleasers:

We want to obey because of Who's we are. We want to be Father pleasers because of *His* great love for us. Keeping the commandments should not be difficult, after all, He said He would write them on our hearts. Again Jesus said "*I only do what the Father wants me to do*". That is a Father pleaser speaking. So, as I speak this morning, open up your heart and receive your Father's instruction as a much loved child. One whom He desires to keep safe and protect.

If you gain from this teaching, take it back with you and bless someone else and set them free.

If you need to do some confession or repentance at the end of the session then do that too.

If you need ungodly soul ties cut, well, we can do that for you also.

Repentance is ongoing you know, we should be daily repenting, changing our minds, having another thought, about the things we thought we understood about Him as He reveals to us what He is really, really like and how He likes to do things.

God is a matchmaker:

Genesis 2 from the beginning, God has been making matches.

He declared "*it is not good for man to be alone*". He presented Adam with Eve, one man one woman, and He will present His Son with the Bride of Christ. Notice He did not present man to man or woman to woman. God made man and from him, woman, both in His own image, in the image of God created He them.

This gives mankind a dignity and honour that has almost totally been lost. Satan seeks to degrade mankind by feeding lies and distortion, by offering gratification of his flesh life. His whole strategy is to subvert God's plan for your life and cause you to compromise what God has said. "*Did God really say?*". Trading. Trading your inheritance for a mess of pottage.

Adam traded dominion and the Garden of Eden for a lie. The very Presence of God for separation from God. We never realise the extent of the cost until after we have made the trade. Ask Adam, ask Esau. Both traded their inheritance for fleshly desires which turned to dust in their hands.

So, God is a matchmaker, He's been making matches since the Garden. If you are married, it is God's match. You are one flesh, bone of your husband's bone, flesh of his flesh. If you are single and looking for God's match for your life, well, wait on. Marriage is God's pattern for what He is about to do at the end of the age - present a Bride to His Son. **Revelation 19**...bright pure linen. *And the Bride, Revelation tells us, has made herself ready.*

There is something at stake here.

The Bride is called upon to do something.

At the end of the age there is going to be a clash of kingdoms, the kingdom of darkness and the Kingdom of light. Pressure to trade your inheritance in Christ Jesus grows daily as the enemy bombards us with the seductions of his allurements. So, morality in the 21st century. What I am opening up may save you, your family and others from a lot of grief if you will take it away and prayerfully consider it.

Legitimate needs met in an illegitimate way:

Whenever we talk about immorality, we are usually looking at it in a sexual context and that is the way I am addressing it today. With sexual immorality we are speaking of a legitimate need being met in an illegitimate way. We are talking about going to some other source of comfort than God to get our needs met. But, you will say, He made us sexual beings, yes, He did, but within the confines of the marriage relationship, not outside it and not with the same sex. Sex and sexuality are an important part of who we are, but don't major on minors. Life is more than meeting our physical and emotional needs.

What we are looking at when we see lust, promiscuity, loveless marriages, extramarital sex, and divorce, is love bent towards the creature. It is Eros - self love, love with a hook, trying to fulfil itself through someone else. 'Eros' depicted as a serpent seeking to possess, control and acquire something or someone. It doesn't need the approval of what it has its sights on, just wants to possess it, to get what it wants. There's ugly. When I drew this at home people wanted it turned the other way it was so horrible! Eating itself. Consumed with self and self-gratification. *"What about me?"* as Joyce Meyer would say!

Girls, your husband, your boyfriend, will never meet your need for unconditional love, he isn't meant to. *"If you really loved me you would..."* fill in your own blanks there. If your love for your nearest has got a hook in it, you need to repent. God is the only One who can make up the love deficit in every one of us. Our job is to let Him.

To learn to become the beloved of God.

To gaze upon Him as He gazes upon you.

This is where you see again, the cross over between the healing ministry and these Passing the Baton Meetings. It is only as we are *healed* of our rejections and hurts, we begin to **believe** that we are the objects of God's overwhelmingly passionate love for us. We begin to **receive** that love in ourselves and allow Him to fill the hole in our heart and **become** the object of His

adoration as He intended. We ***become the right person - we cease looking for the right person, our focus changes from ourselves to Him.***

If you attempt to build intimacy with someone before you have done the hard work of becoming whole and healthy yourself, the relationship will be an attempt to fill your own love need - love with a hook. God calls it digging your own cisterns, that don't hold any water and it is doomed to failure. **Jeremiah 2:13.**

God's prescription for lasting relationships is exactly the opposite of Hollywood's.

The key is to be complete BEFORE you enter into a relationship.

When I was first born again, I had to tell the man with whom I was currently involved, that I had to end the relationship because I had become a Christian - the only words that came out of my mouth were *"I am complete"* - at which point he flipped!

I did not realise at the time the significance of what I was saying. **I am complete.** *"I no longer need you to complete me"*. God's love had done that. I am complete. What a statement!

Any time you want to build intimacy with a person before your identity is fully in Christ and you know and feel secure and strong in him, you will be expecting that person to do something for you that he or she cannot do.

You will be loving them with a hook - Eros.

In other words, when your identity is in Christ, you don't need others the same way, you don't have to perform and they don't have to come through in order for your ultimate needs to be met.

The world says *"Set your hope on this person to come through for you. Make this person the centre of your existence"*. God says *"I am the centre of your existence, make Me central and your love will change from Eros to Agape."*

Definitions necessary here I think.

Eros love is self-referential. It seeks to possess, acquire and control. It looks for its own satisfaction in the object upon which it sets its gaze. *"If you really love me you would..."* fill in your own blanks.

Agape is the self-giving love of God. It seeks only the best for the object of its desire. So if you find someone telling you they would be better off without you, your response would be to let them go because it would be best for them - you would not try to hold on to them because it would be best for you!

Eros can raise its ugly head even in our relationship with God, from receiving from Him we can find ourselves demanding of Him. This can happen particularly when a move of God suddenly seems to cease and we work things up to try to get the 'feeling' back again. Bob

Mumford calls this raping God. Trying to get something out of Him, even in our worship it gets louder and louder trying to make something happen. If I do this, God is bound to do that. We have gone from being the object of His desire, to desiring something from Him and trying to get it by any means, so that **we** are satisfied. This can include fasting. When Bob Mumford learned this lesson he said *"I fasted and all I got was thin"*. He was trying to get something out of God. Ever done that?

It's a repentance issue.

There was a popular book a few years ago *"Men are from Mars, women are from Venus"* subtitled: *"How to get your needs met through other people"*. Eros in action.

Look around you at the marriages you know. That person is weak, imperfect, and needy just like you and just like me. They are going to blow it and let you down. Then we retaliate, manipulate, get overly attached and dependent and finally we blame them because they didn't fulfil our expectations. Love with a hook. Eros.

We have been taught to expect from others what God alone can give us and in so doing we are unable to appreciate the wonders of human love when we are walking in love as God intends us to.

What is the reverse of the Hollywood model - Gods model –

- *Step 1 instead of looking for the right person, **become** the right person*
- *Step 2 instead of falling in love, **walk in love***
- *Step 3 instead of fixing your hopes and dreams on another person, fix your hope on God and seek to please Him through the relationship*
- *Step 4 if failure occurs, repeat steps one through three.*

Interestingly the fourth step is the same in both models but for radically different reasons. Both recognise human failure. It won't all be smooth sailing, but the question is, Lord, am I walking in love? Or am I expecting something from my spouse or boyfriend what they can't possibly give me? Am I moving in Eros or continuing in Agape?

Conscience:

We actually don't need teaching on what is right and wrong. You don't need me to tell you that watching pornography is wrong, adultery is wrong and sex outside of marriage is wrong - you know that.

We do know, even the heathen know, because we were all born with something called a conscience - a God awareness of right and wrong.

Think back to childhood for a moment - you **knew** when you had done something wrong. And equally, you knew when something **was** wrong. This applies particularly to a child who has been abused and told it was all right - they know it is not right. That is what causes them so much confusion. The adult is saying this is all right and the child knows it isn't.

The word conscience comes from two words - con meaning with and science, meaning knowledge. Our conscience provides us with basic knowledge about God - the bible says, *"every man is without excuse"*. Fact is though, we can sear our consciences by frequently ignoring the warnings. Dangerous place to be.

When we are born again, our conscience is reawakened to right and wrong and most of us will agree that a lot of stuff went soon after conversion. The remarkable thing is though, it sneaks back. We get sloppy - just this once, no-one will know. Ever done that? Some people have a weak conscience, the believers at Corinth were an example. They got in a tizzy about meat which had been sacrificed to idols. Their conscience was weak, and it was still functioning in the old thinking.

Discipline delayed is not discipline overlooked. God's delay is not denial. **Ecclesiastes 8:11,12** *"Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly"* sometimes God's kids think they've got away with it and then, they are encouraged to do it again, and do it more. *"Although a sinner does evil a hundred times in his life, still I know that it will be well for those who fear God, who fear Him openly"*.

Sometimes we do something that violates God and His word, we may do it ignorantly or intentionally, by mistake, but for whatever reason, we violate something in Him. The thing is about God that He doesn't judge it on the spot. Touch the electric socket, nothing happens, do it five more times then the fifth time ooooo!! Shock! That's the principle that's behind it. *God doesn't judge straight away.*

When the Lord starts dealing with you, you want to look back three days. Get serious with God and look back three years, five years...these things are cumulative, He just lets us run. My dog, long lead, but when it ran out, stopped him short!

The Pastor in adultery, he thinks he's getting away with it, no-one seems to be aware, congregation still there, hanging on his every word. Probably thinks he's such a great man of God that God overlooks what he is doing. No, no, no. Because a sentence is not speedily executed, we think, a) God didn't see it b) He didn't care c) we got away with it. *"I was out with a girl, I still have the anointing..."* Young man, you just got yourself in trouble. Sooner or later, God will judge and discipline the action. **Hebrews 12:5,6,11.**

Please don't think I am being fanciful about these things; immorality is rife in the body of Christ. I am not judging; I am making a plea for the Bride to make herself ready for her Bridegroom.

Trading:

Trading is when you allow the devil to make an exchange - when you do a deal with darkness.

Trading is not a complicated thing. The devil approaches you *"I'll make you a deal - you lay off that spiritual stuff and I will show you a good time"*. It isn't always as clear as that, it can come

“why don’t you just live a little, only one life you know, poor you, you’re missing out. You’re lonely, God said it wasn’t good for man to be alone.”

What are you about to do?

Trade.

You are about to trade something. You are about to trade what you have for what’s being offered. There’s going to be an exchange.

You are trading what you have, for what’s being offered

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The devil made a trade in the garden, he traded Satan’s lie for God’s truth. God said to Adam *“If you eat that, you will die”* - Satan said, *“You will not die.”* Clear. So, Adam traded, and when he traded, what happened? Adam lost something, he couldn’t get it back and he started to die.

The list of things which the devil can offer trade: fornication - sexual activity outside of marriage, adultery - sexual activity with someone other than your marriage partner, idolatry (house, car, holidays, money, fill in your own blanks, four walls and knickknacks on a shelf. Adultery, effeminacy, stealing, impurity, sensuality, outbursts of anger, factions, envying.

There is more to sexual sin than forgiveness.

There is more to an idolatrous situation than forgiveness.

There is something more in dispute than just being forgiven.

You stand in danger of losing something.

Forgiveness is always available - but you forfeit something - that something is your inheritance in Christ Jesus.

Like snakes and ladders, up a ladder, down a snake, never fails. You lose something. I’m not talking about salvation, you cannot lose that, what you lose first off is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

No Christian can be happy wilfully going against God’s stated word.

The whole reason for teaching today on this subject is that something is at stake. Not your salvation, as I said, you cannot lose that. This is about the **inheritance** for us here and now, and rewards later.

Five things to gain, preserve and experience our inheritance:

1 Peter 4:12

“Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;”

1)Suffering and denial:

Denying yourself the things which are forbidden.

Suffering - there are times if God loves you, He will give you opportunity to suffer for what you believe. When Esau came in and he was hungry, he was suffering, he parted with his inheritance. He did not have the ability to control his own appetite.

That’s the reason men trade their inheritance for a fleeting sexual affair - that they do not know how to deny themselves.

They don’t have enough hold on God or themselves, to deny themselves something that is clearly forbidden in God.

You learn how to suffer, and He will teach you how to reign. You learn how to deny yourself in any given situation. We need to learn to control and discipline these appetites because that is where the danger ground is.

2) Constant effort:

Most people think come into the Christian life, learn a few bible verses, pray in the Spirit and it will all come right.

Sometimes it is hard. Really hard. There are hard patches. You aren’t backslidden, it’s hard, it requires endurance and faith. After you have done all - stand. Moral behaviour, doctrinal soundness, proper response to spiritual authority, even when you don’t agree.

3) Repeated choices:

“Lord, I choose You against everything else” - you can’t do that once for all. The choice is repeated moment by moment. Tomorrow is not yours yet. I repeatedly choose God against myself until it becomes a habit pattern. Takes time and effort.

4) Integrity:

Proverbs 11:3

“The integrity of the upright will guide them, but the falseness of the treacherous will destroy them.”

By integrity I mean wholeness, that answer of a good conscience.

Example when I was born again I could no longer tell lies for my boss. This made him absolutely furious. I was in danger of losing my job, but I couldn't violate my conscience which was suddenly awake.

If anything is violating your conscience, you cannot do it. Don't do it. Integrity means there are just going to be times when you are going to be faced with truth and it will cost you - maybe even your job. If you do violate your conscience, it's easier the next time. Learning to be true to yourself and true to God.

Suffering, constant effort, repeated choices, and integrity.

If you get these things lined up in your thinking you will find that God will lead into your inheritance. He doesn't bring you all at once because an inheritance hastily gained is a disappointment at the end. He'll bring it to you, line by line. He is faithful.

A word to marrieds:

The wife's body is for the husband and the husband's body is for the wife.

1 Corinthians 7:4

"The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does."

The Lord commands married partners to **fulfil** their sexual duties to their spouse.

"Let the husband fulfil his duty to his wife". This is not about *"I don't fancy him/her any more."* This is about fulfilling the obligation you have towards the other partner before God.

What happens if the husband won't respond to his wife's sexual advance? Her sexual drive becomes frustrated and she is tempted toward sexual immorality. What happens if she won't respond to him, the same thing. She finds him engaging the internet site on pornography or, having an affair, and wonders why.

The bible teaches that sexuality in marriage is both a delight as well as a duty. A 'duty' is a moral or legal responsibility of obligation that arises from one's position.

It is the duty of each marital partner to meet the sex drive of their partner.

Note the bible reveals that the 'duty' is toward the spouse, the husband has a duty towards the wife and the wife has a duty toward the husband.

The thought behind these words isn't that the husband's duty is to have intercourse with his wife if he wants it, but it is his duty to *respond* to his wife if she wants to have intercourse, and vice versa.

God sovereignly takes something away from you at the point of marriage and gives it as a heavenly wedding present to your spouse.

He doesn't ask if He can take it, and He doesn't ask if you want it. Sovereignly the Lord takes the authority you have had over your own body and removes it from you as long as you live. He gives the right over your body to your spouse. He has made total provision for your sexual needs to be fulfilled right there in the context of the marriage bed. Your spouse does not have to beg for his/her conjugal rights, they are, their **rights**, by the sovereign act of God.

In the light of the understanding of this scripture, there should never come a time when either party within the marriage relationship is sexually frustrated.

Depriving one another should only come as a result of the agreement of both parties in order that *"you may devote yourselves to prayer"* **1 Corinthians 7:5**. The word deprive literally translated means *'rob or defraud'*. See to it then, that you are not guilty of robbing or defrauding your husband or wife of your body, which is rightfully theirs.

Sexual intimacy, in marriage, is to be the norm, not the exception.

God's prescription for sex and sexuality may feel as though it is killing you at first. It is. It is changing your Eros love into Agape. For fuller understanding on the difference between Eros and Agape, we recommend that you request the CD's produced at this Baton meeting. The Lord changed the agenda, and these notes were only used in the afternoon session, they therefore do not reflect the full content of the day.

ADDENDUM:

Following the meeting it was possible to have ministry. If you were not present and find that on reading these notes/listening to the CD's you have need to confess and repent of past or present behaviour, you may find the following of assistance to you.

1. Come clean – tell God exactly what you have done. This is confession, agreeing with God that you have a problem or have done something wrong.
2. Accept responsibility for your sin. Don't rationalise it or blame shift. Face it.
3. Accept His forgiveness on His terms, not yours. Don't try to bargain with him.
4. Ask Him to forgive you and cleanse you. **1 John 1:9**. He is faithful and just for forgive us and cleanse us.
5. Ask Him to set you free from the consequences of your sin, including the demonic. (Self deliverance).
6. Forgive yourself and walk free.

Recommended reading:

'Personal Holiness in times of temptation', Bruce H Wilkinson

'Love, sex and lasting relationships' Chip Ingram

'The Agape Road', Bob Mumford.