

Two “Why’s” That Can Make Us Wise

Consider this scenario: There are two rooms in separate areas of a large building that have curtains instead of doors. Both rooms are filled with the finest of jewels. The owner of the jewels is always present in the building but nonetheless wishes to have each of these rooms closely guarded, since there is a lot of foot traffic through the building on a day-to-day basis, and a curtain does little to deter thieves. He posts one guard per room, and tells each of them to remain on the outside of the room to keep watch until he tells them they are relieved of their duty. Before the owner leaves them to their assignment, he promises that each guard will receive the contents of the room he is protecting as payment for his service, if he fulfills his duty. *Only one* of the guards knows what lies behind the curtain.

The owner leaves to attend to other business and does not return to the guarded rooms until two days later. He finds only one guard left standing.

Which guard do you think was still at his post? Why?

What do you think happened to the contents of the unguarded room?

The purpose of the illustration is to explain the starting point for this discussion on sexual purity. It is very important to understand what it looks like to be sexually pure, and how to flee from sexual immorality, but until we understand the value of what we are protecting, we are much more likely to fail in our attempts to remain sexually pure in a God-honouring way. The treasure will be stolen away by those who are not meant to have it. So, here we go with the two “Why’s”....

1. Why do we have sex?

(Watch the *Girls Gone Wise* video and note how Mary Kassian answers this question)

<http://www.girlsgonewise.com/book-blog-10-how-far-is-too-far/>

Ephesians 5:22-32

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body.

31 **“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”** 32 **This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.**

Sex is the act of consummation that seals the marriage covenant; it is binding and beautiful. Within marriage, it is to be enjoyed not just as a means of procreation, but also as a means of achieving deep intimacy (the Hebrew word used when a husband and wife have intercourse is *yada*, which means “to know”) and mutual pleasure. **The “one flesh” union within marriage (which is not just physical, but moral, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual), was designed to mirror the glorious relationship between Christ and His redeemed people, the Church.**

According to Ephesians 5:26, why did Christ give himself up for the church?

The Scriptures refer to Christ as the Bridegroom, and the church as His Bride. How does Paul describe the Bride whom Jesus wishes to present unto Himself? (v.27)

If we are women seeking to do our part to paint this picture, shouldn't we be striving to fit the same description – to be holy and without blemish?

If you find yourself in a place of deep regret for having fallen short of this picture, take heart! Within this very passage we are reminded that Christ is the One who sanctifies, and washes His people clean. And remember, you were not equipped for godly purity when you were born, but you *are* equipped when you're born again.

A look at ancient Jewish wedding customs reveals in an even greater way how closely the earthly marriage relationship parallels the one between Christ and His church. In the Jewish tradition, a man's bride was chosen by his father, and then he and his bride-to-be were betrothed (engaged). The man had to pay a price for his bride – something of great value (like livestock, land, silver, gold, labour). A marriage contract was then written up, and in it the bride was promised that her groom would meet all of her needs. The bride then went through a ritual immersion (washing) in water, which was to symbolize her turning away from former things and starting a new life with her Beloved. The groom had to return to his father's house to build new living quarters for himself and his bride, and while he was gone, the bride was to eagerly prepare herself for his return, not knowing exactly when that would be. She was to keep an oil lamp burning constantly until his return, which would be a sign to him of her readiness. The groom would return as soon as his father was satisfied that the new living quarters were completed, which could have taken quite some time. He would shout out to announce his arrival, and she was expected to be ready to go with him, even if it was the middle of the night. The groom would then take her away to the new living quarters where they would consummate their marriage. The bride's virginity was very important, to the extent that proof of her purity was presented to her family after the consummation act. After seven days of the couple being alone together, the wedding feast began!

Can you pick out all of the ways in which this is a portrait of Christ and His church?

1 Corinthians 6:13-20

The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14 And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! 16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh." 17 But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. 18 Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. 19 **Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, 20 for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.**

2. Why ought we to glorify God in our bodies (read 1 Cor 6:13-20)?

What does it mean when Paul says "you were bought with a price"?

Given all of this – how must we act? Is sex something we should take lightly?

Ask yourself these questions: Does my sexual conduct "tell the story?" Do I treat my body as a temple of the Holy Spirit? Do I conduct myself in a way that exudes gratefulness to the One who bought me with *His own blood*? If not, He is gracious and will grant the power to change to anyone who will humbly come to Him, and trust in Him alone.

With this basic understanding of WHY we have sex, and WHY we must glorify God in our bodies, the WHAT (what is allowed and not allowed) should be much easier to determine and follow with the help of the Holy Spirit. It should also be very clear to us by now that much of what we see and hear about sex in our culture is not in keeping with God's ideal. In our next session we'll look at how this works out practically in our lives, and we'll explore the blessings of sexual purity and the consequences of sexual immorality.

Resources Used:

Girls Gone Wise Video Book Blog: <http://www.girlsgonewise.com/book-blog-10-how-far-is-too-far/>
Girls Gone Wise in a World Gone Wild, Mary Kassian, 2010
And the Bride Wore White: Seven Secrets to Sexual Purity, Dannah Gresh, 1999
What are you waiting for? The One Thing No One Ever Tells You About Sex, Dannah Gresh, 2011
 Hebrew lexicon on www.Bibletools.org

Commentaries:

The Pillar New Testament Commentary – The Letter to the Ephesians, Peter T. O'Brien, 1999
Genesis Vol. 1, John D. Currid, 2004
 ESV Study Bible notes