

## 12. Sexuality



From the very first of the Fathering in 15<sup>TM</sup> lessons you have been challenged to re-evaluate your thinking in many areas of your life. This is especially true for this lesson on Sexuality, along with the next one on Intimacy. Many men today tend to think that sexuality and intimacy are the same thing, but that kind of thinking short-changes both areas. We'll look at what the Bible has to teach us about healthy intimacy in the next lesson, but let's first look at what it has to teach us about sexuality and sexual self-worth. Our sexuality is an important part of who we are as human beings so it shouldn't surprise us that God has much to tell us, and we have much to learn, about this important topic.

First, sexuality is God's idea, he invented it, and everything God does is good for us as long as we use it properly. God created us as men and women, and he created both with their own unique kind of sexual desire. God created men and women to complement each other. We can read about all of this in Genesis 1:27 and 2:24-25.

Second, our self-worth is not based on our sexuality but instead our sexuality is a gift that God has given us that we should use as God intended. As in so many other areas of our lives what is best for us is not always easy, but we can believe and trust that God's way is best. Why not seek the best for your sexual life, you're worth it!

Third, God gave us a sexual nature for our pleasure to be enjoyed through the bond and commitment of marriage, that is why Genesis speaks of a man and his wife "becoming one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). This "oneness" should be based on more than just the physical act, but should include emotional bonding as well. The Bible actually celebrates the beauty of the sexual relationship in marriage. In fact, the book called Song of Solomon in the Bible is all about the beauty and wonder of this relationship. As we'll explore in more detail in the next lesson on intimacy, a healthy understanding of our sexual self-worth on the part of both the man and the woman is key to physical intimacy. And this then complements and overflows into the other areas of intimacy.

However, as in so many other things, when we stray from God's plan bad things happen. When we have sexual relations outside of the bonds of marriage, particularly if we have multiple sexual partners, we break the emotional intimacy and trust that are important parts of a healthy relationship. We also open ourselves up to possibly contracting a sexually transmitted disease (STD) or having an unplanned pregnancy. But most importantly, we are hurting our relationship with God. In effect we are telling God that we know better than he does how to handle our sexual health and sexual relationships.

And when we stray from God's plan not only do we hurt ourselves but we also harm any children that may be involved. Children benefit the most when they are raised by a mother and father that are in a committed and loving marriage. And when we follow God's plan for our sexual lives we show our children what that looks like. As a husband and a father we each have this responsibility to our wife and children.

So consider what the apostle Paul wrote in the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of 1 Corinthians:

*Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body.*

Paul is telling us to "flee", that is, to actively run away from wrong sexual behavior. And he makes a point to tell us that sexual sin hurts our own body. Why would we want to do that? But instead we can remember that God loves us and wants only the best for us. Now we just have to decide if that is what we want for ourselves and those that are close to us. If so then God will help us to do it.

Questions for thought and discussion:

- a. Do you have a good grasp of the difference between “sexuality” and “intimacy”? If not, then go through this lesson and the next again, and then consider discussing these topics with others.
- b. Do you find it awkward or difficult to talk about your sexuality and your sexual self-worth with others? How can you get past that?
- c. Just as you read that healthy sexuality for a man is about more than just the physical act, the same can be said about women. How can you encourage and build up your wife/partner's sexual self-worth?
- d. Are there times when you have used your sexual nature in a way that was not in line with God's plan for you? Can you work on changing that? Do you believe that God can help you do that?