



## SEPTEMBER 18

# CHRIST, CULTURE & THE CROSS

## SEX & THE CITY (PART 2)



### GETTING STARTED

This week we continued in our series, Christ, Culture, & The Cross, and explored the topic of following Jesus in our sexuality.

*Don't forget to have your journal or extra paper available, if needed, as you answer these questions.*

As you begin the study, take a moment to read and reflect on the following passage:

*Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies. **1 Corinthians 6:19-20***



### GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

If you could engage in only one type of entertainment for the rest of your life—for example, books, music, movies, television, sports, cooking, painting, etc.)



### STUDY QUESTIONS

**Leader Note:** Due to the sensitive nature of this week's topic, we suggest you split into separate discussion groups for men and women if you are a mixed group.

- 1) The last two messages in our *Christ, Culture, & The Cross* series have centered around sexuality. As you think back over the last two messages in this series, what has been one of the most important takeaways for you?
- 2) As Michael has mentioned in these last few sermons, sex is incredibly powerful, and it can completely derail our lives. What are some prevailing ideas about sex in our current culture?
  - a. What are some of the most common or popular ideas about sex in our current culture?
  - b. What beliefs about sex did you have growing up? What influences made the deepest impressions on your beliefs about sex?
  - c. If you are a follower of Jesus, how did becoming a Christ-follower impact your views on sex and sexuality?
- 3) Sex and sexuality were topics that came up in the early church quite often because of the prevalence of immorality. The early Christ-followers were radically different in how they viewed sex than the rest of society. Read the following verses and then answer the questions below.

- Proverbs 5:1-6, 15-23
- Song of Solomon 2:3-8, 7:6-9
- Matthew 5:27-28
- 1 Corinthians 6:12-18
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8
- Hebrews 13:4

a. Which of these verses stuck out the most to you? Why?

4) This weekend, Michael shared that *Sex...Is A God Thing*. Reread the Song of Solomon verses above. These verses show the joy of sexual intimacy within marriage. In his book *Sacred Marriage*, Gary Thomas encourages us to,

*“Redefine sex as it was in Eden, as it was when Adam ‘knew’ Eve and began to populate the world. Think of sex only in these terms, and then think of how God can reveal himself to you within your marriage through the gift of sexual pleasure. It may sound shocking, but it’s true: God doesn’t turn his eyes when a married couple goes to bed. It only stands to reason that we shouldn’t turn our eyes from God when we share intimate moments with our spouse.”*

a. How does it make you feel when you hear that sex is a gift from God; designed to give pleasure and to be enjoyed? Is this surprising, encouraging, exciting or uncomfortable for you—and why?

5) In this weekend’s message, Michael included this quote from Tim Keller’s *The Meaning of Marriage*,

*“Each partner in marriage is to be most concerned not with getting sexual pleasure but with giving it. In short, the greatest sexual pleasure should be the pleasure of seeing your spouse getting pleasure.”*

a. Does this change your perspective on intimacy? If so, how?

6) At the end of the message, Michael asked the question, “*Are You Protecting...Your Purity?*”

a. How did you answer that question? Are there any sins you need to confess to the Lord? Are there any practical steps you need to take to pursue purity? Are there any struggles you sense God calling you to share with your Life Group so they can pray with you and help you seek purity in your life?

b. Spend some time in prayer to process what you are learning from this week’s message and study. Do you want to thank Him for the gift of sex and intimacy? Do you need to ask His help to make sex a priority in your marriage? Are there any sins you need to confess? Do you need healing from past sexual relationships or trauma? Do you need wisdom or courage to take the next steps towards purity? Is there something you need to surrender to His leadership? Do you need more wisdom and His perspective on sex? Take some time to discuss this with Him.



## TOPICAL PRAYER

Prayer is an important part of each Life Group. Often those who are new to a Life Group are intimidated by praying aloud if they have never done it before. Others are so comfortable with prayer that they can take over the prayer time without meaning to. For these reasons we suggest practicing topical prayer to help your group get comfortable praying together. Here are three basic guidelines:

### **1. Focus on a Single Topic/Request at a Time**

Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request. Once a topic is introduced, one or two members pray for that request. Then the Life Group Leader will direct the prayer time by sharing the next topic/request.

### **2. Pray Several Times Together**

By focusing on one topic at a time, each member has an opportunity to pray at different times for the requests they are most passionate about.

### **3. Keep Requests/Prayers Short and Simple**

By keeping both requests and prayers short and simple, everyone has a chance to share and pray. This helps those who are new to prayer feel more comfortable praying. It also helps everyone stay focused during your time of prayer together.