**Script 5**

**Topic: The Body**

**OT Reading: Genesis 1:26-31**

**NT Reading: I Corinthians 6:12-20**

**Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12, 27-30**

On the one hand there is nothing that is more beautiful than sexuality. Sometimes I wonder about how God, in his love, knew that this gift would bring so much joy to human beings. Men and women were created for one another and the marvelous gift of sexuality was not only for procreation, but also as a means for a man and a woman to be “one flesh”. For those who are married and share that intimacy we are grateful for God’s gift of sexuality.

The world’s school of sexuality is not as beautiful as the Lord’s way. We are sold sexuality at every turn in our culture. And the world has two concepts of sexuality that they are trying to sell. The first concept is that we are our own person. Therefore there are no absolutes regarding sexuality. We have heard is said that, “that as long as they are consenting adults, they can do what they want.” Or again, “no one should be the bedroom police.” This thinking that we are own possession and that there is no absolute truth regarding our sexuality, but that everything is relative. This concept has led our culture down a road of sexual destruction. In organizing this study I looked at the Center for Disease Control and drew down some statistics. The data will break your hearts and make you think twice about the world’s concept of sexuality and the fruit that it bears. [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) is worth a look.

 The Apostle Paul speaks of the fruit of sexual sins in I Corinthians 6:18, “all other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.” Those who bear the mark of sexual sins get this every day. I’m reminded of the broken friends I’ve had in my life who bear the physical marks of sexual sins. For some they are reminded of their past with painful memories and marks that they can never forget. So many other sins we keep at an arm’s length, but our sexual sins become a part of us. The brokenness and the shame that comes with sexual sins is almost too much to bear, and certainly too much to bear alone. Certainly the school of thought that the world echoes that sexuality is a function of individual choice has only led to brokenness and despair for millions and millions of people.

 The second lesson in the world’s school of sexuality is that sexuality doesn’t require any commitment. I had a dear friend who struggled with this so much. His family was broken. His father was a fall down drunk. My friend lost his virginity in the back of a car in a parking lot in Santa Ana, just a few blocks from church. All he wanted was intimacy and closeness, but it eluded him. He believed that if he had numerous sexual partners, and his partners did number in the hundreds, he would find intimacy and human connection. It didn’t work and it broke him physically, emotionally and spiritually.

 The lessons from the world can lead to a fascination with pornography. For those who are physically stimulated, pornography is like pixilated heroin. Addictive, exploitive, and a billion dollar industry, pornography sells the lesson sexuality does not require commitment. Addiction to pornography destroys marriages. Addiction to pornography physically destroys. Addiction to pornography supports human trafficking and exploiting women. Sex without commitment is exploitation and damaging to the things that are precious creations of God.

For you men, almost all pornography is targeted at you. It sells you a fantasy that destroys your relationships and your faith. If you need help to work through this I encourage you to reach out. The shame and pain of sexual addiction leads many underground and they struggle quietly as their soul is eroded. Google a Celebrate Recovery group or sexual addicts anonymous and reach out. There are meetings all over. Remember you are a temple of God; your body is His temple. It’s never too late to find healing and wholeness. God will never turn you away; his love and healing are yours.

 I encourage you all to look at Matthew 5:27-28. Jesus speaks in no uncertain terms about sexuality. “You have heard it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” Here’s the depth of Jesus’ words regarding sexual sin, we are called to be so upright and so strong that we don’t even look at another person with lust. That teaching indicts us all.

 I am reminded also of the words of the 10th Commandment when the Lord said, “you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife…” To be lusting after another person and to be figuring out how to lead them into sexual sin is also destructive and hurtful to the Christian and the Christian’s faith and life.

 The world’s school on sexuality has left so many of our people physically broken, emotionally devastated and relationally detached. Were we to give a letter grade to the result of the world’s school it would be a resounding F. F for failure and F for fruitless.

***Expert-Courvoisier-Sex-Week 5***

***I think the loudest message I encounter regularly from the world regarding sex is that sex is devoid of relationship and connection.  The world separates the relating that happens between two people from the physical act of sex.***

***Instead of engaging in sex to experience closeness, sex becomes a commodity and something to obtain in and of itself.  Sex can be about power and ways to control others.  People will have sex to please the other person, avoid rejection, and gain reassurance.  Or, sex becomes about self-enhancement to build up self-esteem.***

***Sex can also become solely about pleasure and experience seeking.  Don’t misunderstand me:  pleasure should be a part of sex, and if it is not, needs to be addressed as this is the way God designed us.  But, sex becomes distorted when pleasure is the only goal.  People start using one another to feel good.  This can even occur in marriages when spouses desire sex solely to feel physical pleasure, rather than connect and be intimate with another person.***

***On the extreme end of the continuum where sex is used for pleasure is sex addiction.  Research shows the same activity that occurs in the brain during heroin, methamphetamine, and other drug use is also activated when someone is addicted to sex.  It actually produces the same physiological high, and unfortunately, many of the same consequences to those who use it in this manner.  Sex is a powerful force used to bond two people together.  At a recent conference I attended, I was amazed to learn from researchers that the sex drive and what psychologists call the attachment drive, or the innate instinct to seek out relationship for survival, are interconnected.  God has literally wired our brains so that when we have sex, we become connected to that person, despite what society and media portrays.***

***Our sexual longings are designed to draw us closer to one another.  The more I learn about sex, the more I understand why God chose to use the metaphor of the bride and groom to describe the relationship between the Church and Jesus Christ.  Quite honestly, I used to feel uncomfortable with this imagery because it is the only relationship that involves sex.  However, I am now realizing that it is not about the act of sex, but what sex represents:  the ultimate intimacy and connection with another person.***

 Our Lord who created us and who has redeemed us has a better plan for our sexuality, our bodies and the intimacy that he has knit into us. Lesson 1 in the school of God’s sexuality is to remember your identity. In Genesis 1 our Lord reminds us that we are created in the image of God and that once created men and women were perfect. Men and women are meant to be together and when sexuality takes the context of a committed marital relationship it brings joy and unity to two people. It’s an amazing gift of God’s love. Men and women who experience this intimacy are glued together as one flesh, united in the Lord Jesus. This exercise of our sexuality doesn’t damage, destroy or debilitate. Rather sexuality in these boundaries provides closeness, security and an almost supernatural unity between husband and wife.

**[Testimony here]**

 The second lesson is that we have been purchased with a price. Paul writes, “You are not your own, you were bought with a price. Therefore honor God with your body.” [I Corinthians 6:20] None other than Christ himself has given his body for yours. Jesus didn’t merely die a spiritual death, he physically died. In his death he reclaimed you and your body. Your body belongs to God as does your entire being. Sometimes I think about that when I look at my middle aged body. Doesn’t look much like a temple anymore, as a matter of fact, its looks a bit lumpy and saggy, but through my baptism into Christ, my body has been set apart for God’s purposes and as a place Christ has decided to dwell. Understanding our identity leads to sexual purity. Why would I willingly destroy the temple that God has made? Lumps and all☺

 Our young people are particularly susceptible to the world’s school. They are sold over and over again visuals that reinforce titillation as intimacy and fantasy as reality. They are then shocked when they realize how this way of thinking and behaving breaks them. How powerful is it when parents begin teaching their children regarding sexuality not from the dangers, but from the blessings. They are special, they are set apart, and they belong to God. Their baptism has set them apart and God himself dwells in them. This does not only apply to our youth but to us adults as well. This high view of humanity and the high view of sexuality lead us to healthy relationships and healthy lives. This lesson from our Lord preserves human dignity. It drives away exploitation and brings men and women together in the way God designed.

 God be with you as learn and grow in God’s School.

**Do not include below in teleprompter**

Here are some questions to help you think through the Scriptures

1. I Corinthians 6:12-20 is kind of gnarly…What does it mean when Paul says, “everything is beneficial for me, but not everything is beneficial.” What things are we free to partake in, that may damage us physically and/or spiritually? How does God’s word help us think about such hazards?
2. How does fleeing from sexual immorality look like in our culture? Do we never watch TV or any popular music? Wouldn’t it be better to be a monk or a nun? How intense is the fleeing? Can’t we kind of negotiate with the world’s school on sexuality?
3. Rehearse in your group what you say to your child regarding sexuality? How do you keep it from being sermonizing? How does your tone make a difference? How does the gospel predominate in any conversation regarding sexuality?
4. Google search sexual addiction or jump on [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). How does this information inform our decisions regarding sexuality?