

Fidelity Is Forever

✖ In recent years, the body of Christ has been almost overwhelmed with reports of church leaders who have been unfaithful in their marriages. When this happens to our leaders, the result can be that all Christians have deep concerns about who will stay pure.

Thankfully, God offers unlimited grace and forgiveness for wrongdoing. But we must never underestimate the power of sexual sin.

Romans 7:23-25 reminds us of the mind's power as we battle to overcome temptation: "But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me" (NLT).

Throughout the apostle Paul's books, he returns to the message that to overcome sin we must recognize and understand the mind and its power.

Recently my colleague Dr. Joe McIlhaney and I explored new research on human brain activity for our book *Hooked: How Casual Sex Is Affecting Our Children*. In writing *Hooked*, I was struck by the wisdom Paul possessed 2,000 years ago apart from the aid of modern scientific discoveries.

According to science, we are far more complex and intelligently designed than we appear to be on the surface. Understanding this is vital to equipping our response to a sex-crazed culture.

Science reveals a sex-and-brain partnership that fully supports the Bible's guidance to remain faithful in our marriages. As Christians, we need to understand what is going on inside our brains so we can wage war where the largest battlefield exists—our minds.

According to science, the largest sex organ is the brain. Scientific evidence reveals that the brain releases a series of hormones that knit individuals into relationships that complement the biblical vision of two becoming one flesh. For a female, meaningful physical touching produces oxytocin in the brain that bonds her to a mate. Men have the same reaction when vasopressin is released.

These chemicals show us that we *are* created for committed marriage relationships. But another chemical comes into play—one that can support these bonds or break them down.

Dopamine is a brain hormone that rewards us for doing exciting activities. The God-given gift of sex is exciting and when the bonding act of love is rewarded with dopamine, we become “hooked”—even addicted—to this bonding activity with our spouses. The reaction of all three chemicals support the importance of fidelity in marriage.

Sex is more than just an exciting experience; it’s an intimate, cherished act for two individuals to deepen their bond between each other. When we are exposed to the ideas, attitudes and behaviors of this world—the culture of casual sex—the challenge lies in how we respond.

When an individual begins to search for immediate opportunities to fulfill their natural dopamine fix through extramarital relationships, the consequences include a chemical bond that literally addicts that person to sin. God’s desire is to free us from such slavery.

Both God and science are calling us to a higher standard. Pastors, spouses, couples, singles, anyone who calls himself a Christian, needs to recognize that the mind is a battlefield and that our actions have a literal addictive effect.

Scripture is clear about how we Christians should revere our marriages—it is depicted in Christ’s faithful, committed love for His church. Science confirms fidelity is both God’s intent

and a gift that was placed in our own brains the day we were fearfully and wonderfully made in His image.

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