

Are You Keeping Secrets That Damage Your Sex Life?

The theme of 1 Thessalonians 4 is living to please God. Let me raise the value of what I am about to read. This is God's word for you. What you do with it is up to you. My job is to share it and let His Spirit bring application to you.

This is what God says: "As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus" (vv. 1-2, NIV).

I want to stop there and have you say something with me. Say "In the Lord Jesus." This message is for people who are in the Lord Jesus. If you are in the Lord Jesus, then it is under this authority that Paul says, "For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus." *Of the Lord Jesus for those in the Lord Jesus*—that's important. My authority isn't good enough, but the authority of Jesus in your life really matters.

Paul goes on, "It is God's will that you should be sanctified"—that word means "set apart"—"that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control your own body"—mentally and physically; your brain is a part of your body—"in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before" (vv. 3-6).

There are consequences: "Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very

God who gives you his Holy Spirit" (v. 8).

Isn't that wonderful—that God, because He loves you and He is love, gives us instruction in this area of sexuality? For those in the Lord Jesus, His authority drives our motivation and what He doesn't want, because He wants you set apart because you are His son. He wants you *not* to defraud other people or take advantage of them, to manipulate them and use them. He wants you to know that He has the capacity to hear you and discern what it is to be a healthy, sexual man, through His Holy Spirit.

How cool is that?

That we have a GPS, sexually, from God that shows us what He thinks in this area—"This is how I would like to align you sexually, single man, married man, older man. I want you to get My mind, and I'm going to give you some help." Oh, and by the way, Paul doesn't talk about it here, but then we have the body of Christ to help us too.

In the previous articles in this series, I've teed up this topic and let you know my own story. I wanted you to feel a little normal. I hope a lot of you feel a little normal, hearing my story. I wanted to show you what's going on in culture and what's really happening, and then give you some starter thoughts about God and sex.

They are:

1. God is not against sex. He's against misusing it.
2. God knows where your sexual life really exists. I wanted to show you that God wants your sexual life to please Him. For me, that's what I want you to hear. For me, that's a green light. I'm supposed to express myself sexually.

I have a question for you. Try not to make it too personal, but where does your life produce satisfaction or the greatest

struggle? It's a really simple question—it's kind of surface, but we will get deeper later.

Let's wrap up this sex series—body, mind and spirit. You have a sex life. I don't care what you think about the topic. You have one because God made you and designed you to have one. If you are a man, you have the part—remember the word *zachar* in the Old Testament? It means “the protruding one, the piercer.”

Every day we encounter our sexuality—physically, emotionally or spiritually. What I want to do in wrapping up this series is to demystify it and make it who we are because God says it's such an integral part of our lives, and it makes no sense to keep secrets.

Let me tell you about your secrets, especially about your secret sexual stuff. Your secrets reveal the exact kind of person that you don't want to be. I'm going to say that one more time. The secret things that you can't talk about reveal the exact type of person you don't want to be.

If you have sexual issues you are conflicted about and you don't want to talk about, it's an indicator you don't want to be that person—that's why you don't want to talk about it. You don't want to present yourself out here when in reality you are over there. You don't want to be that guy.

The power of the secret is destroying men in this area of sexuality. I was just like that myself. I've shared it with you. In my story, it wasn't until I started talking about it and discovered other guys who knew God, loved God and wanted to please God with their life that I began to experience freedom and victory and great sex in marriage.

That's the goal. You have a sex life. If you are not having one physically, that doesn't mean that you are not having one cognitively or emotionally, especially you older guys, and I want you to finish strong.

Single guys, there is an epidemic of unhealthy sexuality out there, especially for you young guys, beginning in junior high and high school. Let me tell you something. If you are undisciplined before marriage, the little gold ring around your finger doesn't make you disciplined after marriage.

You are laying the quicksand for the future destruction of your marriage.

Single men, married men, generationally older guys, dads, husbands—can I just say so much is at stake in this area of your life? For you, your spouse, your friends, your sons, your daughters, your peers. Sex is God's design—His gift. He wants us all to understand it, to enjoy it, to embrace it under His design.

I want to close with this thought from the book of Colossians 1, which reveals my heart for you on this subject:

"For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious mind so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light" (vv. 9-12).

Colossians 1:13-14 reads, "For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, forgiveness of sins."

That perfectly expresses my desire for you in this. I pray that you will be enlightened so that you can produce fruit in your life—a picture of productivity, fruitfulness, joy,

satisfaction and fulfillment.

Sex is not about release. Sex is about fulfillment and purpose. When a man gets that, and when he realizes that in the Lord Jesus there is so much more for him in this area—personally, relationally and spiritually—then he begins to redeem the distorted view of sex out in culture and begins to experience the intended view and experience of sex in our real life.

That is what this series is all about. It's about sexual redemption. There is a lot of sexual brokenness out there, in you, in your marriages, in your kids and all that, but God's man is called to redeem these things in Jesus' name.

That's where I want to close in prayer.

Father, this area is so important. It doesn't matter whether we are an older brother, a single brother, a married brother. We are all brothers and men, the ones that protrude and pierce, and, God, you made us that way for a reason. It's a gift, and yet we are chased down and hunted with distorted views of sex and sexuality and sexual expression. The Dark One wants us to misunderstand sex because he knows if we misunderstand it, we will misuse it, and if we misuse it, we will destroy, and if we destroy, we will create death for ourselves, for our spouses and for our kids.

We are going to put a stake in the ground today and say no to destruction and say yes to You.

Some of you right now have shame and regret in your life. You have a secret, but not one from God. God knows and sees that secret, whether it's disinterest in your marriage, a lack of intimacy there, an emotional division. Some of you single guys are surfing material on the web. You would never talk about that, because that's not the guy you would want to be. Some of you are struggling and reconnecting with the wrong women and the issue of your faith. Some of you are my older brothers,

and your mental life is in the gutter and you need to come out of there to be God's man.

Wherever you are, I'm happy to say that Jesus is here and He wants to redeem whatever part of your life that is sexually broken. He wants you to know that you are a loved son. He wants to heal you if you want to receive His Son for the very first time, or the Holy Spirit for healing to those of you who are in the faith right now.

Why don't you do that? Say, "Jesus I want to receive You, and I want to receive Your healing in my life sexually. Lord, I want Your will. I want Your gift. I want to please You. Come into my life. Fill me with Your Spirit. Show me Your Word. Give me other men to come alongside me. Help me to follow You in this area of my life, in a way that loves you back. In Jesus' name we pray."

And all God's men said, Amen!

Part I Part II Part III

Editor's Note: This is the fourth in a four-part series Every Man Ministries is calling "The Sex Series," where God's men receive the best from God's gift of sexual intimacy. Sex is physical, mental and spiritual, and God wants us to use this gift in the way He intended it to be enjoyed. This series will help you understand sex through the lens of Scripture. It will teach you to understand what God expects from His sons when it comes to sex and sexual intimacy.

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