

Let Sex Be God's Gift, Not a Worldly Curse

You see before you a three-year-old toddler in the tub. He's taking a bubble bath. His mom is tenderly watching over him.

In the course of his bath, he moves some bubbles away. There's something there. He discovers his testicles. He looks up at his mom, then looks down and says: "Mom are these my brains?"

Fast forward. I'm in my mid 30s. I'm at the airport, getting on a plane with my favorite magazines in hand for the flight. We go through the whole boarding thing. I sit down and put my bag underneath the seat in front of me. I start flipping through the magazines. I'm scanning some of the articles.

I turn the page. SMACK! I'm hit in the face with a picture. I don't know if it's a real photograph or an airbrushed cartoon. I can't tell if it's real or fake, but it's this vixen right there on the side of the page. Obviously it's an advertisement for men, in a magazine aimed at guys, especially businessmen. It's a woman, a racy portrait.

She is wearing sexy lingerie. She's on the ground and she's got two little horns coming out of her head. She has a pitchfork, and there is only one word on the page. At the top of the page, it says: "Curious?" This picture would have been considered pornography in the 1950s, but not now in the enlightened era of progress we are currently living in.

On the bottom of the page, there's a URL.

When I think about the whole issue of sex, sexual formation and men, I go back to my initial story.

"Mom, are these my brains?"

Advertisers and culture believe that to be true,

wholeheartedly. They have the bottom-line profit reports to prove it. If you buy into their cultural view of women, in so many ways the translation is “sucker.” People are making so much money off of something that was meant as God’s gift to husbands and wives.

Sexuality. Sex. It *is* God’s gift to us. Advertisers know that sex and sexuality are not only a gift, but that it can also be a curse. The reason we are talking about this—and it’s so silly that we don’t talk about this more, especially in churches, men’s groups and in common culture—is because there is so much shame connected to it; and yet there is so much powerful goodness connected to it.

Sex is such a powerful force because is it one of the greatest gifts from God. That is also why it’s attacked by the Dark One. All of God’s gifts are targeted by him for counterfeiting or corruption, and this is one of the most powerful gifts He’s given. It affects us on every level. But when misused or abused, it can become a tool for terrible destruction.

When I think about the kaleidoscope of sex and society, a couple of things stand out. There is the sexual development of our sons and daughters. Our sons are becoming men and husbands and fathers. There’s the sexual expression of our sons and daughters, our wives and ourselves as men in so many sexual contexts: internal sexual expression, the mind, who we are, our attachment to it, external expression, external acting out, sexual practice ... There is a plethora of sexual brokenness. There is no doubt about that. I have never counseled a man who hasn’t been hurt or who doesn’t have some regret somewhere underneath the waterline of his life in connection to this issue.

There is no disputing that sex is a powerful force: economically, technically, externally, spiritually and relationally. There’s sexual addiction, sexual slavery, sexual violence and more. It’s really very silly that as the church,

we are not leading the way in this area.

The biblical word for male is “zachar,” which means piercer. The word for female in the Genesis account means “the pierced one.”

When you think about male, female, sexuality and the sacredness of that created order, of course sin would bring distortion to it for you. Satan wants to distort it for you. The culture wants to distort it for you based on their godless misunderstanding of it.

It doesn't matter whether you are single, recently married, married for a long time, or single again. You are a sexual being. You are created by God and given the gift of sexuality. You have to be able to think about it, act on it and integrate it in a healthy way. If you are NOT thinking about it, acting on it and integrating this aspect of your life in a healthy way, the only alternative is to integrate, think about or act on it in an unhealthy way.

We have to get out in front of this because sexuality is central to masculinity. It is a critical part of our health and life, our very well-being. It is also the source of huge guilt, shame and consequences that blast forward through generations. Small sexual thoughts and actions lead to huge sexual consequences and brokenness of relationships.

Just ask Bill Clinton, Tiger Woods and General David Petraeus. Ask your buddy. It's huge in our lives, and because it combines the physical, mental and spiritual, we're going to talk about it. We're going to go after it pretty aggressively.

I hope in this first part of “The Sex Series,” you can just sit back and relax. I want to tee it up so that we can get some of these issues on the table. I have to say that if you are not talking about sexuality, then it is the 800-pound gorilla in the masculine room. Here's why:

- It's the way God made you anatomically.
- It's the way God intended for you to use it spiritually.
- It's how to restore health in broken relationships that are unhealthy, hurtful, unproductive, self destructive, immature and secretive, all of which is part of the battle.

Talking about it is healthy for you, single man, as you prepare to get married, or if you have the desire to be married again. It's healthy to talk about it, married man—no matter how long you've been married.

Note: This is the first 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.

Kenny Luck is the founder of Every Man Ministries and the men's pastor at Saddleback Church. His 20th book, *Sleeping Giant: No Movement of God Without Men of God*, is the proven blueprint for men's ministries, and was recently released through B&H Publishing. Watch and read more of Kenny's teaching at . Follow Every Man Ministries now on Facebook, Twitter (@everymm,) and YouTube.

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