

# DEVOTIONAL

THE BIBLICAL MEANING OF SEX AND MARRIAGE  
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**Discussion Starter:** What do you think are some keys to a happy marriage?

**Key Passage:** “*Let marriage be held in honor among all...*” (Hebrews 13:4)

The Bible both begins and ends with a marriage (Gen.1-2; Rev.21-22). In fact, marriage is the defining metaphor God uses to illustrate His love for the Church, His “bride.”

Here are four truths about sex and marriage from the Bible:

## 1. God created sex and marriage for a purpose.

Sex is not the result of a blind, evolutionary process that lacks meaning and merely exists for pleasure and to propagate the human species. The first attribute we learn about God in the Bible is that He is the Creator (Gen 1:1), which implies there is a purpose for what He creates, including sex.

**Discuss:** Explain in your own words the difference in the purpose of sex from an evolutionary perspective, which says humans are nothing but brute animals, and the Christian perspective, which says that sex is a beautiful, meaningful gift from God.

## 2. People are created as gendered beings, equal in value.

God intentionally made human beings male and female. Genesis 1:27 says, “*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’*” The creation story emphasizes distinctions between day and night, land and sea, as well as male and female. Gender is foundational to what it means to be human. It is God’s intention that humans—males and females—complete His image and populate the earth. It takes both masculine maleness and feminine femaleness to portray God’s image.

**Discuss:** How does our culture’s promotion of the homosexual and LGBTQ+ agenda blur the image God wants us to have of Him?

Even though there is a contrast between Adam and Eve (male and female), there is no hint that one is more valuable than the other. Both are equal image-bearers of the divine (Gen.1:27). While people may differ over the roles of men and women in the family and church, both agree that men and women have equal value.

**Discuss:** Why is it important to recognize that male and female have equal value in God's sight?

### 3. Sex and marriage are for unity, intimacy, and pleasure between a husband and wife.

Sex is part of God's original good creation (Gen.1:31). Sex is only bad when we abuse God's intended design. But in the marriage relationship of one man and one woman, sex is meant to be experienced without fear, shame, or regret and is both good and beautiful. In Genesis 2:24, God said to the first man and woman: *"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."* Sex is not merely a physical act; it also bonds a man and a woman in the most intimate emotional connection possible. This is why God designed sex to be enjoyed only within the boundary of marriage. It is only safe to reveal the fullness of who we are to our spouse who loves us and has committed to be faithful and supportive "till death do us part." By abstaining from sex until marriage, you are not only protecting yourself emotionally, but you're also protecting the emotional safety that your future spouse will need to feel in marriage. The one-flesh unity of sex is a picture of how two souls are joined together into a shared life – a strong bond that helps keep marriages and families intact.

**Discuss:** Why do you think God designed sex not only to be a physical act but also the most intimate connection possible between a husband and wife?

### 4. Sex symbolizes Christ's intimate relationship with the Church.

While every person reflects the image of God, a husband and wife union is the most important picture in the Bible of how intimate our relationship with God can be! Jesus is pictured as the husband who loves us, and we are the bride who responds back to Him. Ephesians 5:31-32 says, *"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."*<sup>32</sup> *This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.* This spiritual component to sex helps us see more clearly why any and all sex outside of marriage falls far short of God's intention for it to be holy, sacred, and protected.

**Discuss:** Explain in your own words the spiritual component of sex.

#### **For Further Study**

*The Gospel and Marriage* by Russell D. Moore and Andrew T. Walker

[www.focusonthefamily.com](http://www.focusonthefamily.com)

*The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God* by Timothy Keller "Questions about Marriage" articles at [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)