

REVISIONING GODLY SEX

This book may contain the thoughts of:

A JOURNEY GUIDE INITIATED BY ANDREW CHUA

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Revisioning Godly Sex (version 0.14)

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Images credit: p20 Michelangelo (1511). The Creation of Adam (Sistine Chapel ceiling).

Chua, Andrew

Revisioning Godly Sex

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Like my own life, I hope this is a continuous work in progress that is developed through collaboration. Feel free to email any comments, suggestions, improvements or your interest in being more involved in collaborating on future versions of this to jesusyourfriend@gmail.com. I'm also interested in you sharing with me any thoughts, changes in lifestyle, projects, dreams or forms of art inspired by this work.

The pdf of this is freely downloadable from andrewchua.com.

If you can help me turn this more into a collaborative project, please contact me. I haven't done it as a wiki because I think the presentation layout is also important. Layout is currently been done in Adobe InDesign CS6. If you want me to help modify it for your own purposes, I'm open to your ideas too.

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Imagine picking up a book and within the first two chapters there's lots of breathing, unrestrained and shameless nudity and sex, and all of this depicted as euphoric and a picture of how things are meant to be and what humanity should be striving for. And the sexual imagery, ideas and language doesn't stop there, but continues throughout the whole book, and often unapologetically refers back to the first two chapters as to how life should be.

You may be surprised that I'm talking about the Christian Bible. You may be surprised that it contains explicit sexual content (look up Ezekiel 23:20 for a sample of an R-rated standup comedy routine). Despite how uncomfortable modern people can get with the topic, God's interest in sex is unsurprising because he wants to be involved with all aspects of human life... all aspects of your life... to help all of humanity experience sex as he intended it - ecstasy with no shame and regrets ever. So who better to explore this topic with than the creator of sex himself?

We are each the result of our individual biology, experiences, knowledge, and people we've encountered - different to the rest of the seven billion out there currently living, not to mention all the others that have come before and will come after us. It's easy to assume that everyone thinks the same thoughts about these two three-letter words: Sex and God. But when honest interactions occur, so many differences in thoughts, feelings and reactions are found.

How you think about sex affects how you see yourself, value, and relate to others (especially those you want to be close to). This journey guide is about helping you explore and discover more of your own ideas and experiences, to discuss more honestly with others, and offer Christian Biblical ideas on this issue for you to consider. I'll be upfront - there are a lot of questions in here. Take the time to answer them all in some form, as often latter material will refer back to your earlier answers.

It's easy to feel you have to censor yourself here because we may touch on private areas we think will be judged or condemned.

You may want to make sure no one sees your answers but yourself. No one should force you to show your thoughts to others: that can be disrespectful or even abusive. If there's any chance of that, write your answers elsewhere... out of sight from others... kind of fitting for other practices associated with this topic, eh?

Or maybe you've already thought it all through and are cool with letting it all hang out for all to see. Either way, as we grow through life sometimes our views change. At the very least, completing this guide will result in a clear record to look back on or share with others about your thoughts, experiences and hopes for this area at this time in your life.

Personal confession time...

Everyone works out of certain frameworks. Whether I think a mate is doing the right thing chasing after someone quite different in age to him will be based on what I already believe. Even if I want what is best for him, some of my own opinions are going to colour how I relate with him.

You can go through this guide without reading this page — but as someone that encourages others to think, I feel I need to be upfront about some of what I believe that influences the ideas and questions explored in this guide. **You don't have to agree with any or all of these statements.** I hope you find it useful especially if you don't. This guide is not about converting your thinking to be like mine. They say to expand your thinking you should think about big ideas, and the biggest by sheer definition is the idea of God, the creator of everything else that exists!

Confessional statements:

God respects all our personal journeys. He's a big believer (and the inventor) of us making free choices in our lives. You have your reasons for why you believe and live right now.

God wants to improve the lives of everyone, no matter whether they believe in him, another religious system, something else or nothing at all. That's why often you hear the phrase God's "Amazing grace" to all.

God is more interested in relating to us than judging us. There are many reasons for why we've done what we have done in our lives and the person we are now. God is not first about us thinking and feeling the 'right' way, but more about us getting the right idea about him and ourselves first, and then allowing us to make our own decisions. The Bible writers often talk about how awesome a relationship with God is, and like giving up a great relationship, turning God down can haunt and torment you forever.

God is interested and involved in all aspects of all our lives. Nothing is off limits, this obviously includes all aspects of sex and sexuality. For some this might sound creepy, but hopefully you'll see how good this can be.

There's lots of wrong ideas about what Jesus and God are about. Unfortunately some of those wrong ideas are said by people who call themselves his followers. Inaccurate ideas can have serious consequences on how you live and your relationships, and of course how you see God too.

I believe the writings called the Bible are the real thoughts of God, but we have to remember like any form of communication, unless we understand the intent of the speaker and the situation it was said in, we can get the wrong idea about what is being said.

Examining myself


Sea...

USE THIS PAGE TO WRITE, DRAW AND/OR PASTE THOUGHTS, IDEAS, ATTRACTIONS, MEMORIES, OBJECTS, PEOPLE, LYRICS OR OTHER MEDIA THAT COME TO MY MIND OR SENSES RELATED TO SEX FOR ME PERSONALLY. DON'T CENSOR.

Personal timeline



Using the timeline below, mark the different ages or times I see as relevant to my own sexual history - eg first hearing about sex, first thought of myself as a 'sexual being', thought about my body sexually, noticed others bodies, first ejaculation/period and other puberty markers, finding out about masturbation, exposure to nudity and explicit sex, first and other attractions, interactions with others, etc.

 *INDICATE WITH EMOTICONS HOW I FELT ABOUT EACH EXPERIENCE (IT'S OK TO USE MORE THAN ONE EMOTION) AND MAYBE SAY SOMETHING ABOUT MY EXPERIENCE OF EACH EVENT...*

Multi-dimensional sex



As mentioned previously, sex has a whole lot of different meanings that it is worth unpacking the different aspects of it. It's useful to see that these aspects are interrelated, and our experiences and views of one aspect influences that of another: eg a person's experience of their own body will be affected by their own sense of identity and gender, as well as the culture they are in and their spiritual concept of body. All these aspects will be explored further, but feel free to jot some of your own likes/dislikes/thoughts that come to mind with each area for yourself.

ACTIVITIES :

What people do with themselves and others - the actual physical acts.

ATTRACTIONS / FEELINGS :

What evokes sexual feelings or thoughts for that individual.

BODY/BIOLOGY:

How bodies are structured, functions and responds physiologically.

IDENTITY/GENDER:

How people view their sexual self and identity as well as ideas of what that means. How gender differences might influence approaches and behaviours towards sexuality and sex.

SPIRITUALITY/GOD:

How spirituality is involved with sexuality and sexual experience and guidelines related to sex.

SINGLENESSE/RELATIONSHIPS:

How one views, values and approaches singleness and relationships.

SOCIETY/CULTURE:

How different cultures (and subcultures), but particularly the ones I am most involved with impact on sexual expression and experience.

IDEAS:

Other ideologies or philosophies about sexual experience and meanings that one has formed.

Any other areas I think are relevant but not considered here?

Ideal female

Ideal male

USE THESE PAGES TO WRITE, DRAW OR PASTE IDEAS OF THE IDEAL FEMALE AND MALE OF OUR CURRENT SOCIETY – PUT AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE.

Ideal relationship

FROM MY POINT OF VIEW

FROM MY PARTNER'S POINT OF VIEW

*FEELINGS, ATTITUDES, EXPECTATIONS,
EXPERIENCES, ACTIVITIES WANT TO SHARE,
STUFF TO RECEIVE...*

Ideal sex

WHATEVER THIS MEANS FOR ME...

My sources of knowledge

How do you know what you know, particularly about sex? Again considering the multi-dimensions of sex, how we approach sex is more than just the physical knowledge of where you stick one body part into another to make it hopefully feel good for both.

So think about where have you got your ideas of what sex is, how it should or could be done, what the experience of it should be like, how you should or could view yourself or the other, and how it fits in with the rest of a person's life...



Name any significant people, movies, clips, observations, classes, experiences:

Write roughly the age at which I first encountered each of these sources as related to sex.

Draw a cross next to any that gave me a Christian perspective related to sex.



Write down below the percentage I think I got my ideas of sex from an explicit intentional Christian source:

%



God makes the claim through his Bible that he created everything, including the idea of time and space and matter, which some conveniently say sidesteps the issue of what was in existence before God since he is not bound by the same laws that we and the rest of his creation are. So technically the statement above should read "Before the beginning... God".

Anyhoo, the main thing is that we all have our ideas of God, whether we believe in him or not, or known him for a short time or all our lives. The ideas we have of someone will impact on how we interpret the actions and intentions of that person, and that certainly applies to God too.

So the next few pages just gives you a chance to explore your thoughts on the big guy (or gal or whatever else you think of their being), and then we will look at some of what that being tries to tell us about himself or themselves... as well as what he has to say about sex, which the more you read the Bible, the more you will see how much sexual concepts and language God uses throughout almost all the books of the Bible...

Common ideas about existence

You may or may not currently hold these views. As previously said this journey guide isn't about necessarily trying to change any of your views.



Feel free to mark any you believe in or want to discuss further. Be brutally honest.

- God and religion were just primitive humans ways of making sense of their lives.
- God is an illogical concept.
- The existence of God explains so much of why humanity and the world is as it is.
- Science proves religion is wrong.
- There is no proof for God so therefore he is only an imaginary concept.
- There is so much proof of God's existence but people choose to ignore it.
- People's religious beliefs are private things and should largely be kept to themselves.
- God hates the kind of person I am, so it doesn't make sense to believe in Him.
- Religion is about how to live morally right.
- There is nothing that is absolutely 'good' or absolutely 'evil.'
- Religion is good for kids, but eventually we grow out of it.
- Humanity doesn't need religion in order to be good.
- Religion has to evolve or adapt to change like all human-made laws.
- Getting rid of different religions would reduce violence in the world.
- All religions are basically about the same thing.
- There are many paths to God, not one religion has a monopoly on what is true.
- There is only one true God.
- Jesus never existed or if he did he was just an ordinary human being.
- The Christian bible is largely a work of fiction
- The Christian bible is the perfect literal record of the words of God.
- God is all powerful but chooses not to interfere at all with humanity or the world.
- God demands all people live the way he created them to live or suffer punishment.
- God is personal and is intimately involved in all aspects of an individual's life.

- _____
- _____
- _____

What I think god is like



Tick the words I think best describe God. Don't worry too much if you're not sure of some of the meanings - just don't choose those. Feel free to add additional words at the end.

- | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> abrupt | <input type="checkbox"/> defeated | <input type="checkbox"/> guarded | <input type="checkbox"/> out of touch | <input type="checkbox"/> successful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> abusive | <input type="checkbox"/> defiant | <input type="checkbox"/> gullible | <input type="checkbox"/> outrageous | <input type="checkbox"/> sulky |
| <input type="checkbox"/> adaptable | <input type="checkbox"/> deliberate | <input type="checkbox"/> happy | <input type="checkbox"/> passionate | <input type="checkbox"/> suspicious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> afraid | <input type="checkbox"/> depressed | <input type="checkbox"/> healing | <input type="checkbox"/> passive | <input type="checkbox"/> tender |
| <input type="checkbox"/> alert | <input type="checkbox"/> detailed | <input type="checkbox"/> helpful | <input type="checkbox"/> pathetic | <input type="checkbox"/> tense |
| <input type="checkbox"/> almighty | <input type="checkbox"/> determined | <input type="checkbox"/> helpless | <input type="checkbox"/> patient | <input type="checkbox"/> thick-skinned |
| <input type="checkbox"/> aloof | <input type="checkbox"/> diligent | <input type="checkbox"/> hesitant | <input type="checkbox"/> peaceful | <input type="checkbox"/> thoughtful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ambiguous | <input type="checkbox"/> dirty | <input type="checkbox"/> hilarious | <input type="checkbox"/> perfect | <input type="checkbox"/> thoughtless |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ambitious | <input type="checkbox"/> disillusioned | <input type="checkbox"/> homeless | <input type="checkbox"/> persevering | <input type="checkbox"/> threatening |
| <input type="checkbox"/> amused | <input type="checkbox"/> disturbed | <input type="checkbox"/> honest | <input type="checkbox"/> picky | <input type="checkbox"/> tired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> angry | <input type="checkbox"/> domineering | <input type="checkbox"/> honourable | <input type="checkbox"/> pleasant | <input type="checkbox"/> tiresome |
| <input type="checkbox"/> annoyed | <input type="checkbox"/> eager | <input type="checkbox"/> hurt | <input type="checkbox"/> polite | <input type="checkbox"/> tough |
| <input type="checkbox"/> anxious | <input type="checkbox"/> efficient | <input type="checkbox"/> ignorant | <input type="checkbox"/> possessive | <input type="checkbox"/> troubled |
| <input type="checkbox"/> appreciative | <input type="checkbox"/> elusive | <input type="checkbox"/> impressive | <input type="checkbox"/> powerful | <input type="checkbox"/> trustworthy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> argumentative | <input type="checkbox"/> embarrassed | <input type="checkbox"/> impulsive | <input type="checkbox"/> predictable | <input type="checkbox"/> unbiased |
| <input type="checkbox"/> arrogant | <input type="checkbox"/> encouraging | <input type="checkbox"/> insecure | <input type="checkbox"/> productive | <input type="checkbox"/> uncaring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ashamed | <input type="checkbox"/> energetic | <input type="checkbox"/> insightful | <input type="checkbox"/> protective | <input type="checkbox"/> unchanging |
| <input type="checkbox"/> awe-inspiring | <input type="checkbox"/> entertaining | <input type="checkbox"/> intellectual | <input type="checkbox"/> proud | <input type="checkbox"/> unknowable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> benevolent | <input type="checkbox"/> enthusiastic | <input type="checkbox"/> intelligent | <input type="checkbox"/> punctual | <input type="checkbox"/> unpredictable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> biased | <input type="checkbox"/> erratic | <input type="checkbox"/> intimate | <input type="checkbox"/> quick | <input type="checkbox"/> unsure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> blind | <input type="checkbox"/> evil | <input type="checkbox"/> jealous | <input type="checkbox"/> reflective | <input type="checkbox"/> uptight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bored | <input type="checkbox"/> excited | <input type="checkbox"/> jolly | <input type="checkbox"/> relaxed | <input type="checkbox"/> vague |
| <input type="checkbox"/> boring | <input type="checkbox"/> exclusive | <input type="checkbox"/> joyous | <input type="checkbox"/> resolute | <input type="checkbox"/> vengeful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> broken | <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> judgemental | <input type="checkbox"/> resourceful | <input type="checkbox"/> victorious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> business-like | <input type="checkbox"/> faithful | <input type="checkbox"/> kind | <input type="checkbox"/> responsible | <input type="checkbox"/> volatile |
| <input type="checkbox"/> busy | <input type="checkbox"/> fanatical | <input type="checkbox"/> lazy | <input type="checkbox"/> rich | <input type="checkbox"/> voracious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> calm | <input type="checkbox"/> fearless | <input type="checkbox"/> likeable | <input type="checkbox"/> righteous | <input type="checkbox"/> wasteful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> capable | <input type="checkbox"/> fierce | <input type="checkbox"/> lively | <input type="checkbox"/> romantic | <input type="checkbox"/> watchful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> careless | <input type="checkbox"/> flashy | <input type="checkbox"/> lonely | <input type="checkbox"/> ruthless | <input type="checkbox"/> weak |
| <input type="checkbox"/> caring | <input type="checkbox"/> flexible | <input type="checkbox"/> loud | <input type="checkbox"/> sad | <input type="checkbox"/> willing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cheerful | <input type="checkbox"/> foolish | <input type="checkbox"/> loving | <input type="checkbox"/> scary | <input type="checkbox"/> wise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> clear | <input type="checkbox"/> forgetful | <input type="checkbox"/> lucky | <input type="checkbox"/> secretive | <input type="checkbox"/> wonderful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> clumsy | <input type="checkbox"/> forgiving | <input type="checkbox"/> mature | <input type="checkbox"/> selective | <input type="checkbox"/> yearning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> compassionate | <input type="checkbox"/> frantic | <input type="checkbox"/> mean | <input type="checkbox"/> selfish | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> competitive | <input type="checkbox"/> friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> modern | <input type="checkbox"/> sensitive | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> confident | <input type="checkbox"/> frugal | <input type="checkbox"/> mysterious | <input type="checkbox"/> shrewd | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> confused | <input type="checkbox"/> frustrated | <input type="checkbox"/> naive | <input type="checkbox"/> shy | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cooperative | <input type="checkbox"/> funny | <input type="checkbox"/> narrow-minded | <input type="checkbox"/> sick | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cowardly | <input type="checkbox"/> generous | <input type="checkbox"/> naughty | <input type="checkbox"/> silly | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> crazy | <input type="checkbox"/> gentle | <input type="checkbox"/> needy | <input type="checkbox"/> sincere | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> creepy | <input type="checkbox"/> glorious | <input type="checkbox"/> nervous | <input type="checkbox"/> slow | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> crude | <input type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> non-existent | <input type="checkbox"/> sneaky | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cruel | <input type="checkbox"/> gracious | <input type="checkbox"/> obedient | <input type="checkbox"/> squeamish | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cynical | <input type="checkbox"/> greedy | <input type="checkbox"/> obnoxious | <input type="checkbox"/> stable | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dangerous | <input type="checkbox"/> grieving | <input type="checkbox"/> omnipotent | <input type="checkbox"/> stimulating | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> deceitful | <input type="checkbox"/> gruesome | <input type="checkbox"/> omniscient | <input type="checkbox"/> stingy | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> decisive | <input type="checkbox"/> grumpy | <input type="checkbox"/> open-minded | <input type="checkbox"/> stubborn | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

Your top 7 words to describe God	1	2	3
	4	5	6
			7

[Edit My Profile](#)

Jesus Liberator

[Wall](#) [Info](#) [Photos](#) [+](#)

If I were to create a Facebook account for Jesus, what would it say about what he was like as a person?

One of the big theological ideas about God is that he became fully human while being still God within the person of Jesus, being born through a woman's womb and grew up as an adult male. What things about being human do I find it hard to imagine Jesus doing (eating, dancing, going to the toilet, farting, ejaculating, getting frustrated with others, getting angry, getting tired, etc)?

Considering that God has personal experience of being human, how does that impact on how he views our own personal experiences of our own life?

What areas of human life do I think that Jesus could have struggled with also?

What I think god thinks of sex



ACTIVITIES

ATTRACTIONS / FEELINGS

BODIES

IDENTITY

RELATIONSHIPS

OTHER

What aspects of human sex and sexuality do I think God likes and approves of, what he dislikes or condemns, or what areas am I unsure of or he's neutral on:





God thinks...

healthy human sex is

healthy human sexuality is

of me being a sexual being as

of my body as

of my sexual identity as

of my current sexual desires as

of my current sexual activities as

Questions I have for/about God?

Quite a bit of the Bible has God's people just asking questions. Some of them get answered in words, others through experiences, and others are left hanging, almost as if God takes pleasure in us wanting to keep thinking about our questions and wrestle with them and not just get pat simple answers in return. A lot of life will be complicated and God trusts that we can trust him in the midst of it.



Freely write any questions I have for God or about him. Start with stuff related to sex, but it could be practically anything at all.

Examining God's view

Read Genesis 1 & 2, particularly at 2:20-25.



God made us and wants to richly bless us in every aspect of who we are, including all aspects of our body, our identity and how we relate with others. As the creator of sex, he believes in celebrating it.

Like all other life experiences, God wants all our sexual experiences to feel good: before, during and after.

Although we often think sex is just any behaviour that ends in orgasm or ejaculation, it is useful to keep in mind the different dimensions of sex as already mentioned before.

Godly sexuality is more than about self-control or self-denial, but a confident sense of self and body and practical attitudes and experiences on how we respect and enjoy intimate relationships with others.

Like all areas of our lives, unfortunately other people and society and experiences can distort what God intended for us, making us shameful of things we don't need to, encouraging us to think about ourselves and how we relate to others in dishonouring ways, and to seek freedom, pleasure and affirmation inappropriately. Especially with relationships, freedom without some boundaries or commitment to others generally results in hurt and pain.

God doesn't want us to feel guilty about sex but to truly enjoy and celebrate healthy sex. With all aspects of our lives where we are encouraged to be mindful of and being in control, it's because God has something better than the results of just giving into our immediate appetites. This principle applies not just to sexual temptations and desires, but any other temptations and desires we face. Being in control of yourself isn't about pleasing anyone else or just following someone else's rules, but about ensuring you are proud of the choices you make with your own life.

And with all other aspects of your life with God, it is not so much about what you have done, but always more about how you choose to live your life from this point onwards.

God intended our sexuality:

To be comfortable in our identity	God made us in his image and with masculine and feminine identities (Genesis 1:27) that he wants us to be comfortable and proud in our gender.
To remind us to be relational	God made us to have needs to pursue other humans and connect with them (Genesis 2:18) in addition to our need to be relational with him.
To increase community	God wanted humans to be 'fruitful and multiply' (Genesis 1:28) to reflect the community that God enjoyed as 'us' (Genesis 1:26).
To give us physical gratification and pleasure	God created us to want and enjoy sensual and sexual experiences (1 Corinthians 7:3-5; Proverbs 5:19; Song of Songs). Sex is meant to feel good (before, during and after) to help us experience the joy of being truly close to God.
To help lovers to bond deeply	a sexual relationship bonds people closely in a profound way beyond just the physical - 'and the two shall become one flesh.' (Genesis 2:24). Many will talk about the sense of giving away part of oneself in the act.
To remind us that we are physical	we have physical bodies that we can respect and take pride in (Genesis 1:27, 2:25) - we are not to worry about shape and sizes of our body parts, especially since we have no control over those aspects.



My reactions to these ideas:

Cultural filters

Fish don't know they live in water.

As God created humanity in his image, we can see the 'fingerprints' of God's values and ideals in every single human culture. However there is not one culture or subculture that's perfectly aligned to God's original intentions right now (Americans may have a differing opinion!), which means there are less than ideal attitudes, expectations and practices that are continually promoted and practiced without question in all cultures. We all presume we are doing the best we can, otherwise we would be more active about change.

Most modern Western Christian approaches to sex owes more to the separated body/soul Ancient Greek philosophy than the more holistic Jewish roots it grew from. After all for the Jews, the state of their penises was a constant reminder that they belonged and identified with God. The US, UK, Australia, and other countries with Muslim and Buddhist roots tend to equate nudity with sexual arousal and perceive things surrounding sex as taboo or puerile; whereas other European countries are more open and less titillated by the naked body. Even in a culture known for their modesty, Japan still have many public bathing houses where people of the same sex of all ages bathe together communally (naked naturally), with kids aged up to 9 or 10 freely moving between the bathing areas. Culture can also impose differences on genders that are offensive and abusive - such as being suspicious of men wanting to care for kids, or women taking on aggressive dominant roles.

Fortunately God through New Testament writings like Galatians, continually encourage God's people to question our cultural expectations and assumptions and remind how easy it is for humans (even churches) to focus on the wrong aspects of each other and to use the wrong expectations to judge if someone is unworthy of God's attention and love. Passages like Galatians 2:16 reminds us that no matter what a person's current activities and motives are (even in the sexual realm), God's ongoing grace and community extends to them.



What Christian cultural expectations have I personally encountered that has lead me to believe that God is anti-sex?

What cultural expectations (in and out of church) have I personally encountered that make me question whether God will accept my current sexual attitudes and practices?

Receiving God's messages clearly

Ever received a text or message that you thought meant one thing and later discovered it meant something else? Maybe it got your hopes up or maybe it made you angry or sad... Communication between people can be a tricky thing. Sometimes it's more about how it is said than what actually is said. That sometimes you are arguing over little things because you think or know there's actually bigger things going on between you and the other.

That's why it's important to get a sense of who God is before you can start understanding his messages to you. As I said before I'm going to assume a few things about God as listed on page 2. You don't have to believe them yourself but you're just going to have to see that the rest of what I say is based on those beliefs of mine.

One of those beliefs was about the Christian Bible, or God's word to us, being the real thoughts of God to us, with timeless truths in them, like other great pieces of art and philosophy. But also for them to be so true to human existence, they are also anchored in and catered to the time and culture they were released in.

So some tips to consider for understanding anything in the Bible:

- + **What is being said?** This may be the most obvious one... but before jumping to conclusions think first about what genre it is written in. The Bible is actually a collection of different genre writings - poetry and songs, allegories, biographies, philosophical musings, historical accounts, comedy, sarcasm, practical and moral instruction. Is this actually meant to be understood literally... or sarcastically or ironically? Just because something is recorded without immediate judgement, does it mean that the author automatically approves of the people involved or their actions? Also if the material has been translated from a different language, how could that effect what we hear?
- + **Where in the Bible is this?** What is being talked about in the other verses around it? What else is happening around the passage or setting taking place? What is the big theme of the particular chapter or book that this is in?
- + **Who?** Who spoke it and who were they speaking to? What was going on for them? What are the characteristics of the people - interests in life, occupation, standing in society, concerns on their mind, etc? What were the current issues, ideas, attitudes and practices at the time?
- + **How?** How did the people at that time and place understand and react to this idea or teaching? Was it received gratefully, or were the listeners shocked and appalled by it? Was it meant to be provocative and incite action?
- + **Why?** Why was it written in the first place, and what might it mean for us now?

Without this we could get the wrong message, eg do an internet search on "Biblical ways to find a wife." Unfortunately people have and do misuse the Bible to justify their own selfish and insecure desires. But properly understanding the Bible with a connected relationship with God tends to help us live and think more like God intended with positive results.

Openness about sex



In my own life who are the individuals that have been open about sex to me ?

Who has talked openly about their own personal experiences, their own bodies and feelings ?

What were some of the significant things they told me ?

Has it all been positive ? Or have they shared about the range of emotions involved ?

Who have I shared about my own private thoughts, feelings and experiences about sex ?

What was that like for me to share and what were their reactions ?

Who do I think I could trust to share with ?

Who have I found to be untrustworthy or closed off to it ?

Healthy godly identities

In addition to cultural concepts of what individual should be like, humans often use other means like 'science' to judge what is 'normal' and not. People who are physiologically different, whether through birth, illness, injury or even environment (such as malnourished or lack of appropriate activity) are looked down upon, ignored or excluded.

Theologically and practically God has made humans differently, not as a cruel joke but to show his Spirit resides in forms we humans often dismiss. God's only requirement for you to feel comfortable and confident as a male is that God made you that way and judged you as praiseworthy (Genesis 1:26-28, Psalm 139), and likewise if he made you female. In both Old and New Testament there are many individuals that are valued for how God works through them even though they are not always considered normal or acted within the expectations of their gender or identity. Even men without their genitalia are valued in God's eyes (Matt 19:12).



History praises many different people, particularly those that have made a lasting impact on the lives of others. Name some history-changers that don't fit the 'ideal images' of pages 8 & 9:

How comfortable am I in my own gender?

What are critical comments often made to put someone down in my gender identity (eg for males: you're gay or throw like a girl; or for females: you sound like a man) and how can I respond inside myself with God to not feel hurt by it - or help someone else who is affected by it to see themselves more as God values them?

God and Jesus are both comfortable using both masculine and feminine features to describe themselves (Duet. 32:11-12, Isaiah 66:13, Matt 23:37). How can I help the contrasting characteristics of myself and others be valued by others?

Healthy godly relating

When God speaks in Genesis 1:26 of making humans in his image, he uses a plural pronoun to describe the community he already was enjoying as Father, Son and Spirit, and so it is natural that **within humanity is the drive and pleasure that comes from being in community and intimate relationships**. One of the amazing insights we can get from all the different languages of different human cultures is the varied ways in which we can define or describe how we relate to one another and the types of relating we can do.

Throughout the whole Bible is the constant encouragement to love God with your heart, soul, mind and strength (Deuteronomy 6:5; 10-13, 30:6; Joshua 22:5; Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27), which highlights that all relationships have different aspects and dimensions to them: heart (emotional); soul (spiritual and socially); mind (intellect and rational); and strength (physical). This is useful because all our relationships have us engaging with the other in various ways for each of these aspects, which might also change in priority or emphasis at various points. Great relationships usually involves satisfying levels of each of these aspects.



In what ways do I value these aspects in my friendships with others:

> heart - emotional aspects (eg what particular feelings do I want/need from others):

> soul - spiritual or social aspects (eg what compatible or contrasting traits am I drawn to):

> mind - intellect and rational aspects (eg what ideas, attitudes or approaches excite me):

> strength - physical aspects (eg what ways of relating do I want/need):



What love relationship experiences have I had so far? [They may have been unspoken from a distance to actual ongoing ones and may or may not involve sexual attractions]

What were the emotional moments I cherished and enjoyed about them?

What were the physical moments I cherished and enjoyed about them?

What ways of showing love do I most appreciate receiving (affirming words, touch, physical presence, time, gifts, actions, etc)'?

Healthy godly intimate bonds



How appealing is it to me to have a committed long-term intimate relationship?

How important is it to me to have a committed long-term intimate relationship?

What do I think will build that trust and commitment?

What are my thoughts and emotional reactions to the idea of marriage?

What is different about marriages that work versus those that don't work well or break up?

Genesis 2:24-25 describes sex within marriage as two people becoming 'one flesh' and 'having no shame' suggesting an intimacy where the boundaries and insecurities that separate two individuals physically and emotionally are overcome and the two enjoy a beautiful unity and oneness.

For a long time in popular culture (and occasionally still) having sex with another was described as 'to know them in a biblical way.' The phrase 'to know' ('yada' in Hebrew and 'ginosko' in Greek) is not only used to describe intimate sex between humans in the Bible, but is the same phrase God often applies to his own relationship with humanity. In fact he frequently refers to himself as the groom and his chosen people (whether it is the Jews or all that identify as Christians) as his bride (Jeremiah 2, Revelation 19). Additionally, God often describes people turning away from him as 'adultery', alluding to the betrayal of the sexual intimacy they once had with him.

We can easily imagine God giving us the gift of marriage as a living experience and reminder of the ideal ongoing binding and intimate relationship he wants to have with each individual sentient being he created and cherishes, a relationship that brings joy and fulfilment to all our hearts, souls, minds, and strengths. By law, marriage is primarily a legal contract where two people commit to lifelong responsibilities to each other and their offspring with repercussions if either party breaks the contract.

People's reasons for marriage aren't always clear, but generally there is a hope that both parties enter into it to show to the other that their commitment to the other can be trusted to last long term, and that no matter whatever insecurities, unappreciations, frustrations, disappointments and rough patches each has or faces, the other will stay with and work through with them. By declaring that commitment in front of others and God, they are not only asking for the community to hold them accountable but often to assist them in maintaining that commitment to each other.

In a relationship where the partners know confidently that each other is totally committed, trusting and wanting the best for the other, sex can truly be at its best, as that commitment ensures the freedom to explore and discover joys and pleasures, insecurities and discomfort, knowing there will always be respect and acceptance.

Human marriages are fragile and difficult — reflecting our own fragile human selves. However, marriage is a model of the true love that Christ has for us - a long-lasting love so patient and giving that He will never leave or forsake us and is prepared to do all for us. A love where there is not just a promise, but a public covenant with legal and other responsibilities that still need to be continued after it is broken. It is a commitment of lifelong consequences to hopefully always remind the other about what it means to give to each other, when so much in the world tries to convince them that committed love isn't worth it. It is about love that lasts no matter what.

Healthy godly bodily pride

As already mentioned when God created humans he was proud and satisfied, and before human sin entered creation, male and female were naked and felt no shame. God was happy to spend a lot of time and relate to Adam and Eve while they were naked. In Luke 2:52, Jesus is described as growing in statute, referring to his physical state. Interestingly enough there are some that read Isaiah 53:2 and suggest that Jesus was never likely to be judged as handsome by his society's standards. We are encouraged to not be anxious about our bodies (Matthew 6:25) but to look after it (1 Corinthians 6:20, Ephesians 5:29) and even value the parts we dislike (1 Cor 12:22-26). Certainly there are benefits to your ongoing health if you are very familiar with the look and feel of your body through regular self-examinations to detect differences that may be due to skin, testicular or breast cancer.

Corporations have a vested interest in you feeling dissatisfied with your body, appearance and sense of self. The advertising industry is proud that they created in 1919 our anxiety about how we smell (B.O.) in order to sell a product that humanity didn't see a need for before then. Imagine all the products we wouldn't need to buy if everyone was happy with themselves and how others saw them.



Thinking about my own body, what do I like and enjoy about it?

What do I enjoy doing that makes me conscious of and enjoy my own body (eg running, hot showers, rubbing your stomach)?

What do I dislike or worry about my body?

How much can I change about the aspects of my body I dislike or worry about?

What can I think or do to help me feel good and proud about my body?

Healthy godly pleasure

Physical sensual pleasure is something we are built for, with sex only being part of that. Sexual sensations can feel amazingly good. After all, that's how God designed your body to work. It can, but doesn't always, have to involve other people. Whether alone, or with others, **sex can and should feel good before, during and after.**

God particularly values married people enjoying sex that in amongst the laws to his people in Deuteronomy, he specifies that newly married men should have a year off from civil duties to focus on 'bringing happiness' to his wife (24:5). 1 Corinthians 7 encourages husbands and wives to look after each others sexual needs, even if they aren't always in the mood to begin with themselves. In Psalm 19, the lyricist describes the glory of God to that of a bridegroom emerging from his pavilion (after his first night of sex with his wife). And then of course there is the whole book of Song of Songs where both the male and female characters are talking about each other body parts and what they want to do with them in amongst all their talk about their emotional love and desires. [Don't worry adults, it's kind of written in code so the young 'uns don't know it's talking about having sex. They'll never work it out - yeah, right.].



What do I think of the idea that "God wants you to enjoy sex"?

Some say you should leave exploring the parts of your body that give you sensual or sexual pleasure until you are with your marriage partner. There are others that say there is no harm in individuals experimenting with different kinds of touch and pressures of different parts so they are able to tell their future partners what they like or don't. My thoughts?

Examining sexual reality



What would I want (or had wanted) my first sexual experience to be like?

What would I want (or had wanted) my first sexual partner's experience to be like?

Thinking back to my past relationships recorded on page 24. What were the emotional moments I disliked or regret about them?

What were the physical moments I disliked or regret about them?

Have I ever had any uncomfortable sexual experiences? If so, what were they and how did they make I feel and think about myself?

Sex of the 'world'

As said previously, whether alone, or with others, sex can and should feel good before, during and after. You might have already experienced that it isn't always like that though. It is possible for you to only enjoy part of it or not at all — that is for you to not always feel good before, during and after a sex act.

And even though there is so much information available about sex, the reality is that there continues to be lots of wrong ideas due to a high level of dishonesty, especially among males, about their sexual experiences² - whether it is about if and how much they have 'done it' with another person, what they actually felt about it before, during and after, and how it continues to affect them from here on. Even though it is something out of their control, men continually exaggerate their penis sizes³ and express dissatisfaction with its size. Understandingly the younger one is, the less confident one is about sex, with those in their 20s saying they feel about 67% sexually confident. Even at the age where men are most confident (50 years old) their confidence about sex is still below 80% on average⁴. Additionally a 2003 study found women are more likely to lie about their sexual lives than men as they are more concerned about how people might judge them⁵. We therefore should have some healthy scepticism to any personal opinions offered by others in this area.



Where would I look or go for information about sex and sexual experiences?

How does it benefit those that I look or go to for them to be the source of my information (eg do they get more internet traffic, money, or feel good about being helpful)?

How much information and articles in magazines, internet and other media sources is published constantly on how to have great or better sex? (Circle my answer)

So much Lots Fair amount Only a few None at all

From the answer I circled, considering that publishers tend to only release information they think people want or need, how many people are having unsatisfactory sexual experiences?

So much Lots Fair amount Only a few None at all



My reaction to these questions:

It's been common knowledge for a while that women fake orgasms, but men are also doing it too. A 2012 survey of over 50,000 men by AskMen.com found that 16% of men admitted to faking orgasm only once for their partner, with an additional 18% said they faked it on several occasions.⁶ In many autobiographies, blogs and now increasing in movies we can find more confessions or accounts of unsatisfactory sexual experiences.

Sexual encounters are often described as something that 'just happened' as if it was something that happened unexpectedly and completely out of their intentional control

So often many report going a lot further sexually than they ever intended before the encounter. Research found among male university students that they were unable to predict how being in a sexual aroused state strongly impacted their judgment and decision making regarding: (1) how appealing they find a wide range of sexual stimuli and activities, (2) their willingness to engage in morally questionable behaviour in order to obtain sexual gratification, and (3) their willingness to engage in unsafe sex when sexually aroused.⁷ This was a follow on from an earlier study where the men in a sexually aroused state predicted they would behave more sexually aggressive than when they were in a neutral state, regardless of their own judgment of the cost/benefit of such behaviour on their partner.⁸ Keep in mind, this is for people unaffected by other factors that impairs further their judgment such as alcohol or other drugs, social or other situational pressures.

Over a third of Australian year 10-12 females and one fifth of males reported having unwanted sexual experiences⁹, and with almost 50% of the males feeling slightly 'worried' or more worried after their sexual encounters. There was also an increase in males feeling 'used' (now over 6 in a hundred) after the sexual encounter. And this is all to do with consensual sexual relationships.

This doesn't take into account other sexual experiences that fall into the category of rape or sexual assault, which of course is highly distressing with often significant long term impacts. For both sexes, its prevalence is under-reported, but significantly more so for male victims as they often misinterpret their involuntary erections in stressful situations to mean they wanted the experience.

Any early sexual experience that involved any amount of discomfort should be a topic of conversation with someone credible and approachable in the professional health area, to ensure any unhealthy aspect of that relationship or encounter isn't still colouring how you approach sex or your sexuality — even if you feel like you've put it behind you. This is just to ensure you will approach and enjoy sex positively in your present and future. All our early sexual experiences have some impact on our later lives, shaping what sexually arouses us and our expectations.

People say everything's ok if no one gets hurt, but everyone hurts when relationships end.

On top of all this is the additional emotional fallout from relationship breakups. Any relationship break up can be accompanied by a fair amount of grief due to loss of hopes and dreams as well as a hit to one's own self-worth of the people involved. Relationships with sexual experiences that break up result in greater levels of depression than those that don't¹⁰, with their long-term impact only admitted in private, if at all. Even with an increasing 'hooking-up' culture among youth of sex without a relationship context, researchers are finding among participants significant potential for misunderstanding, sexual regret, and coercion as the majority of these encounters self-report as unplanned, inebriated sex, influenced largely by perceived peer approval and an overestimation of the prevalence of their peers engaged in like behaviour¹¹. This is also not even taking into account the potential consequences of the physical health risks involved.



What is often said or done to lead people into unplanned or unpleasant sexual experiences ?

What would I never do sexually ?



What do I know about safe sexual practices ?

How aware am I of different sexual infections possibly requiring different sexual protection practices ?

How aware am I of the common mistakes/failure rates of different sexual protection practices ?

Imagine if my sexual partner and I got pregnant sometime soon in my life now. What is my first emotional reaction ?

What would I want to do regarding it ?

When I think of a male who is sexually active earlier than his peers, what are some of the characteristics or descriptions that come to mind ?

When I think of a female who is sexually active earlier than her peers, what are some of the characteristics or descriptions that come to mind ?

Potentially indicating that the safe sex message or practice isn't still getting through Australia has some of the world's highest teenage pregnancy and abortion rates¹².

Contrary to the stereotype that it is the confident early-developed high achiever that engages early sexually, research indicates that children who are sexually active earlier are more likely to be unhappy with their school and home lives¹³. They are also more likely to start earlier and consume alcohol to excess, potentially as a coping mechanism for insecurities and frustrations. Students who continue with further education at least 6 months after finishing high school tend to have less sexual encounters, less different sexual partners and practice more safer sex methods¹⁴ than those that don't complete high school. And among university students, individuals with lower self-esteem and poorer approaches to intimacy tend to participate more in hook-up relationships than their nonhookup peers¹⁵.

Anecdotally most teen sex comedies focus on a teen male (or males) who already has a huge range of insecurities initially wanting sexual intercourse with little regard for the feelings or emotional state of any potential partners. Somehow putting one body part into an object that happens to be another human being is supposed to gain him respect. This quest has more to do with how they actually see themselves and want others to see them, rather than wanting to engage in something mutually desirable and satisfying with a partner.

This is in contrast to what both sexually active Australian teen girls and boys are wanting to make their sex lives better, that is, an emotional connection with their partner: 91% of girls and 72% of boys say this is somewhat to very important in sex.¹⁶ This indicates that the emotional maturity of both partners and the strength of the relationship is important for their overall satisfaction not just for the sex act itself but how each partner is before, during and after. A 2009 qualitative study of university males found most rejected no-strings-attached nonrelational sex scripts wanting greater relational connection, and reported not all their hookup experiences were positive or devoid of emotional connection¹⁷.

Even taking all these factors into consideration, there is a prevailing attitude that we can only learn from our mistakes, that we need to get over the bad experiences in order to find the good, and that nothing has a lasting impact. However there's enough personal stories, and examples in all forms of media, that early sexual experiences does have lasting emotional and relational impacts (and sometimes even physical impacts) to dismiss this perspective as naive, and an excuse for poor decision making.

Better educated people make better choices about their sexual attitudes, actions and situations they allow themselves to be in, and tend to delay it for a time they are more emotionally equipped well to handle relationships and sex, not rush in like someone taking over the controls of a passenger plane who's only prior flying experience is watching action films. Like so many actions in your life that can have significant consequences, it's worthwhile to consider your motives for sex before putting yourself in situations that are likely to lead to it (see Appendix 3: Your motives for sex on page 70).

Sexual attractions



What aspects of a person, experiences or other material usually sexually excites me ?

What times in the day or situations am I more likely to be sexually charged ?

What thoughts or memories tend to accompany my private sexual moments ?

Have I ever worried or been concerned about the content of any of my thoughts or triggers of sexual arousal ?

We are sexual beings, but our identities are not defined by our sexual desires, just like other desires and cravings we have do not define our identities. What we find sexually attractive are often shaped by our needs (especially unmet needs) as we develop leading up to and through puberty.

Biologically in adolescence we will find many things that stimulate us to think and feel sexual thoughts. Many get embarrassed by some of these triggers (as some might seem highly inappropriate or unusual) and wonder how normal they are or even question their 'sexual identity.' The dreams that accompany nocturnal ejaculations of semen ('wet dreams'), and other triggers of sexual feelings need to be seen as your body's way of adjusting to new mechanisms that are just starting to be functional in you and should not be the focus of too much alarm. And yes, because of biology sometimes your urges are just going to be more stronger (like the pattern of tides, sometimes the waves are stronger).

We can also influence what sexually excites and attracts us by what we choose to think about or expose ourselves to through the sexual experience leading to ejaculation, whatever way our genitals are stimulated. Psychology says the more we expose ourselves to the same stimuli or trigger while we are experiencing pleasure such as masturbation, the more we will associate that stimuli with pleasure. Like all areas of your life, don't encourage certain desires to grow by thinking too much about it or acting on them if that's not what you want.

But don't freak out too much about your sexual fantasies as they are not always a great indicator of what you will enjoy in real life, especially in adolescence when all sorts of ideas and potential partners can be involved. Although there's a big difference between the amount of detail and nature of activity in general between girls and boys, a common fantasy for both sexes involve multiple partners. However most girls commonly reported jealousy, loss of control and regret with any real-life multiple partner sexual activities.¹⁸ If you are concerned about whether particular recurring themes are problematic, seek professional health advice, otherwise just try not to feed those thoughts. Some of what turns you on during adolescence is fluid and does change.

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? ...Therefore honour God with your body. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20



In what ways have I ever felt not 'normal' in my sexual responses, feelings or identity?

What is my emotional reaction to the idea of alternative sexuality and where do I think that has come from?

How would it feel for someone to realise they are sexually 'different'?

How would it feel for them to have to let others know that?

Different churches have different approaches to handling the issue of alternative sexualities such as homosexuality, bisexuality, transgendered or other. Some will argue about the timelessness of Leviticus 18, 22 & 20:13 whereas others will refute with the selective disregard by modern Christianity of other instructions in the two chapters surrounding it. Others quote God's destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah for their sexual practices (Genesis 18 & 19, Jude 7), which is then challenged with Jesus' condemnation of those cities for their inhospitality (Matt 10-11, Luke 10 as well as Ezekiel 16). Then there are the passages in Romans 1 and 1 Corinthians 6:9 that are argued about whether they apply to contemporary forms of alternate sexualities due to the lack of clear definitions of what those Greek terms actually meant at the time of writing to when they were translated later. And although many of active alternative sexualities have faced condemnation by some churches, countless others have found and continue to still find abundant comfort and identification in the Bible of a God that recognises their difference and even their practices but still embraces and uses them for his Kingdom work (eg Rahab in Joshua 6, Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8 or the possible transgendered man doing female duties in Mark 14:13).

The vital thing is to remember no matter what someone has done or thinks about, God cares for them and that always has to be the overwhelming clear message that needs to be experienced and celebrated. The 'church' as a whole has not had a great track record in supporting, comforting and empowering anyone that wasn't a married heterosexual man, whereas the Bible and Jesus challenged that, bringing wholeness and grace to all. Reflecting Jesus is about accepting people where they are at, not judging who people are interested in but supporting each other to make appropriate choices in the quality of our relationships.



My reactions to the ideas above:

What are my personal experiences and thoughts about intersex and transgendered people?

Read John 4. Does Jesus publicly condemn this active sexually incorrect person? Does there seem to be an expectation for her to 'sin no more'?

Counter-culturally comfortably single



At what age do peers and wider social circles start putting pressure on individuals to be in a relationship?

Where does the strongest pressure seem to come from?

When do I think is the most appropriate age to start contemplating and doing something about a relationship?

What positive role models of singleness can I think of historically?

What positive role models of singleness do I know of now? Any that I interact personally with?

What emotional, practical and theological thoughts, experiences and practices have these people shared with me?

What picture could I form of myself comfortably single and effective in all areas of my life?

What freedoms would I have if I were single for a long time?

We will all be single for some time in our lives, even when we are married. The state of being single is something that we need to celebrate and enjoy, being held important by both Jesus and the Apostle Paul, both of which were extremely counter-culture by being religious leaders that were not in an exclusive committed relationship. However there is a lot of pressure from society and even our churches for us to be in a relationship, often leaving us with the impression that if we are not, there 's something wrong with us.²⁰

“Whether you are married or single, let us not make the mistake of thinking that our present state is permanent... Marriage can be a task for a limited time and then it suddenly ends with the death of one partner. Being single can also be but a passing task.” Walter Trobisch

The myth of the 'gift' of singleness

Many believe that when the Apostle Paul talked about being single or married and then mentioning gifts (1 Corinthians 7:7), that he was referring to singleness as a spiritual gift on par with the others talked about elsewhere in the Bible, and that many assume this gift endows on someone a supernatural ability to be celibate. If this is correct, why don 't people talk about being given the supernatural gift or ability to stay married? Ask any married person whether it always feels easy to be at peace and want to stay with their partner. Divorce rates (including among Christians) demonstrate that marriage isn 't easy.

Many falsely believe that marriage will:

- **solve my loneliness** - Being single itself doesn 't cause loneliness. There are many married people that are lonely, and many singles that are not.
- **get my sexual urges under control** - Porn use among married men and extramarital affairs show it doesn 't address this. If you 're a sexually obsessed single, you will be a sexually obsessed married person.
- **allow me to be more committed** and involved with church - Being committed to anything requires practice.

“It needs to be taught as normative Christian truth that singleness is the first normal state for every Christian.” John Yoder

The lists of spiritual gifts are Spirit empowered for a particular function in the context of the church. Celibacy isn 't ever mentioned in that context related to spiritual gifts in the Bible. Being single is a blessing, just like being married is a blessing. Make use of the blessing while you have either. Spend too much time wanting the other blessing leads to dissatisfaction and robs you of the joy of the blessing you currently have. Develop skills of being-in-control-of-yourself, enjoy and be faithful while being single. After all there are a lot of freedoms in being single (1 Corinthians 7:7).

“The task we have to face is the same, whether we are married or single: To live a fulfilled life in spite of many unfulfilled desires.” Paul Tournier

Sexual sin



How do I define what God sees as sin ?

Why are these classified as sin (ie why are they judged as bad) ?

What do I think are sexual sins ?

How many times can I be forgiven for the same sin ?

What sins are never forgivable ?

How does sexually sinning stop me from being valued and used by God ?

How can I restore my identity and standing with God after sinning ?

The biography of Jesus written by Matthew starts off with a genealogy (a list of Jesus' ancestors). But most Jewish genealogies didn't include women, however Matthew does. Most genealogies include certain known individuals to impress others about the quality of the people in that person's family line. But if you read the biographies of all the women listed there: Tamar (Genesis 38), Rahab (Joshua 2), Ruth (particularly Ruth 3), Uriah's wife (2 Samuel 11), and Mary (Matthew 1:18-24); you'll soon discover there's some sort of sexual scandal involved with all of them (some of them they wilfully initiated in) and they are all upheld as 'righteous' or 'blessed' individuals by God. There are also similar stories among the men listed to, though not all are recorded publicly as being 'right' in their actions.

Before talking about sin, including continually active sin, in a Christian context, it is always vital to emphasise that God assumes that for us all, and doesn't write us off for it. He sometimes not only uses a person who sins to bring about blessing to others, but sometimes even uses the sexual sin itself as a blessing. Additionally, the 'good' guys that avoid sexual sin in the Bible don't get guaranteed easy lives either (Joseph of the technical dream coat fame and everyone's favourite masochist Job).

"Everything is permissible for me" – but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me" – but I will not be mastered by anything. (1 Corinthians 6:12)

The Bible talks about sin not to restrict us, but to help us have greater freedom and joy with each other. It's about feeling great before, during and after every interaction with another person. Sin more about the attitude we have about others or ourselves than the actual behaviour in itself.

Sin is more about shortcuts to getting what we want and taking advantage of the other without respecting and honouring them in the long term. Sure some of the laws in the Old Testament were more about good cleanliness and hygiene practices, such as handling semen, period blood, vaginal fluids and faecal matter that often got some people thinking God must think practices involving these were intrinsically evil. But reading the Bible as a whole shows clearly the absurdity of those ideas.

Again and again, the sins God are most passionate about is about thinking and actions that disrespect and dishonour others. Often God is more focussed on what we don't do than actually what we do (sins of omission versus commission).

This is vital as learning self-control not to sin against others is on par with learning self-control not to pee in your pants. It's about helping you enjoy life better with others.

"We have to learn to control our temper, our tongue, our greed, our jealousy, our pride: why should it be thought impossible to control our libido? To say we cannot is to deny your dignity as human beings and to descent to the level of animals (Romans 8:13), which are creatures of uncontrollable instinct."

John Stott.

During adolescence, our sexual urges are the strongest so that we can learn better lifelong being-in-control-of-self skills before getting involved with others sexually. For example for males to not develop habits of quick ejaculation during times of sexual arousal and activity would certainly be an appreciated skill for his future sexual partner. Developing comfort and pride in your own body earlier on will aid you in helping your partner feeling more confident and secure in their own body and what could happen between the two of you.

"It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honourable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God..." | Thessalonians 4:3-5



How do I judge when it is the right time for sex stuff to happen in a relationship? Age or other criteria?

How far is too far with sex (what are acceptable or not serious sexual behaviours)?

What do I think helps make sex good? What do I think helps make it bad?

How important do I think an emotional connection is for sex to be good? Does it matter?

For long term relationships, would I like someone inexperienced or very experienced sexually?

Do I think people should be married before having sex? Why or why not?

If I want to be married, would I like to marry a virgin or someone very experienced sexually?

Sexual sin 1: Pressured sex and relationships

God wants us all to have freedom and choice in our lives, which means he is totally against anyone being forced against their will to engage in activity they don't want to. He even doesn't exempt himself from this, which is why he allows us to choose how we want to live our lives - with or without him. So anyone pressuring another through suggestion, words or actions, whatever their motives, is wrong as the fundamental issue at stake is about power. Another term for pressuring or forcing others is bullying or abuse.

Anyone who pressures another is not being respectful of them to decide for themselves what they want and are comfortable with. God wants you and everyone else to always be engaged in things that feels great: before, during and after.

It is important to remember that no matter how you or your body responded, if you felt like you were uncomfortable, pressured or forced into anything, it is not your fault... and you should not feel guilty or ashamed about it. It was the other person who is wrong. Because of our desire to be loved, sometimes we do things for others that we dislike because we think it is the only way we can hold onto the other person or our relationship with them. Again this isn't the type of love that God intended for us to have, as there is little freedom here. If you or they feel there needs to be secrecy about what you are doing, again, that might be a warning sign of something not right here. Not only what has happened to you could be abuse, and also considered against the law, but it may also be better that the other person has to be stopped from doing similar things to others as well.

God wants sex to feel free and great: before, during and after. If you've been involved in anything that doesn't feel like that, God wants you to know that healing is possible. Talk to someone you trust about your experiences.



How healthy is a relationship where the other person seems to have a lot of control over me and I don't feel free to be myself?

How healthy is it for a partner to always want to know what the other is doing, checking up on them, upset when they are with others, and upset when the other doesn't want what they want?

If someone says they wants sex, then says no while it's happening, how wrong is that?

Sexual sin 2: Sex outside marriage - fornication / adultery

The Bible is clear that any sex outside the marriage relationship at any age is not healthy (1 Corinthians 7) - encouraging and fuelling a desire for sexual gratification at the expense of a person's future or current marriage relationship. You do not need to practice to be a 'sex god' outside your marriage, what works sexually for the two of you is part of the adventure and magic of marriage.

By pursuing sex of any kind outside marriage is to seek the 'benefits' without being committed to giving the best you can to your future partner. It is to say "I just want to use you now. I don't care what impact this has on yours or my future marriage relationship. I don't trust God wants me to have the best, so I've got to get what I can myself." God wants us to have freedom in our sexuality and our sexual thoughts, feelings and behaviour, but all freedoms have their consequences. God's guidance in this area grants us the most amount of lasting freedom, free from regrets and disappointments that accompany pursuing sex outside a lifelong committed relationship. The more practice we have of resisting temptation, the easier it is to be committed in the long run with our future life partner.



My reactions to these ideas:

How would I react if someone attractive offered me sex? Or someone unattractive?

If I am in a sexual relationship right now out of marriage, how seriously long-term am I committed to the other? Or is it more for me?

If I am in a sexual relationship right now out of marriage, what are the perceptions and expectations of the other of my relationship? Do their perceptions matter?

If I am committed long-term to the other, how do they know or how can I show that?



Does marriage solve people's sexual issues and need for sex? Why or why not?

In marriage should sex be 'anything goes'? What is needed for this to be the case?

Sexual sin 3: Selfish sex and humiliation

Sexual sin can and does occur in marriage as well. Marriage does not remove impure thoughts or behaviour, sexual temptation, sexual sin or even unsatisfying sex. You can sexually sin with your marriage partner - whether by the actions you engage in or withhold from, and in your attitudes towards your partner or the relationship. Although the majority of rape and other forms of abuse in marriage is done by the males, females can also be responsible for that too. As previously said, any abuse can be charged as illegal too.



My reactions to these ideas:



How can sexual fantasies not be a sin, and when are they sins?

What is my definition of pornography?

What was my first experience of pornography like?

Some say that pornography can be just harmless fun. Thoughts?

What sort of pornography have I looked at or do I look at?

When have I or do I look at porn, how often, and what leads up to it?

Have I ever received a sexual image or video of someone I know? If so, what happened?

Have I ever sent a sexual image or video of myself or someone else onto others? If so, what happened?

Sexual sin 3: Fantasizing about others

Appreciating the beauty of other people is not a sin, but thinking and dwelling on inappropriate sexual thoughts about others can be as it turns them into objects for your selfish use and manipulation. Jesus teaches that thinking about adultery (any sex outside of a healthy marriage) can be like committing it (Matthew 5:28) as often the focus of the fantasy is on what you get out of it and not honouring the other in the relationship.

Sexual sin 4: Pornography

There are differing standards of what is pornography these days. Pornography is basically **any material that sexually arouses you**. It can range from tv ads, billboards, music videos, content in tv and movies to the more sexually explicit professionally produced videos or even self-taken provocative photos sent through a mobile. Almost seen as a 'natural' part of a male teen's life these days²⁰ and with boys self-reporting they view as early as the age of 6²¹, it not only turns on most teens (58% of girls and 87% of boys) but is reported as a source of ideas of how to have sex and be sexual (70% of girls and 90% of boys). As porn is rarely realistic of how people relate, look, perform or respond sexually it often creates and reinforces unhealthy unrealistic expectations.²² Additionally it provides such concentrated emotional and physical intensity that is near impossible in normal human relationships.²³

"...the earlier men use porn, the more likely they are to have trouble developing close, intimate relationships with real women. Some of these men prefer porn to sex with an actual human being. They are bewildered, even angry, when real women don't want or enjoy porn sex."²⁴

Increasing porn is seen as the fantasy of intimacy without the effort of maintaining relationships.²⁵ Porn encourages you to focus on the wrong aspects of other people and yourself, and often makes it hard to respect yourself or others, sabotaging one's self-worth. It can and often will colour how you view others around you and your expectations of them and distort what is involved in a healthy committed and satisfying relationships, potentially leading to a string of broken relationships and poor relationships habits. It can even negatively effect men's sexual performance.²⁶ Repeated exposure can desensitise and encourage the seeking of more extreme forms of sexual stimulation. Even pornographers say they need to continually offer more degrading and extreme sex to provide customers more novel and exciting stimulation as traditional porn accommodates and builds on their previous efforts.^{27,28} Additionally youth seeking atypical sexual interests are more likely to encounter later negative issues in relationships.²⁹



My reactions to these ideas:

Sexual sin 5: Sexting and sexual videos

Sending, receiving and passing on sexual material, particularly from your peers, or even creating your own material can all seem a bit of fun and private. The only issue is that you can't always trust anyone who receives it to not pass it on. If you make your own stuff for yourself, make sure it's safe and can't be accessed by others (eg don't leave it on your phone). There are lots of stories of partners who become ex's who then, as a way of getting revenge or dealing with the hurt of a breakup, text or email or post stuff online to others. Once something is on the internet or on someone else's phone, it is pretty hard to get back, even if the original sender regrets it later. Once on the 'net, it can stay there forever, and anyone can then see it years later. If you get someone's else stuff, be respectful with it. Not to mention you could be convicted with distributing child porn if you pass it on.

Sexual sin 7: Masturbation

Masturbation, that is touching your own genitals for sexual pleasure is a normal, healthy expression of sexuality and practised by practically all, including Christians. Even though about half the people who masturbate feel ashamed or embarrassed about it, there are a range of health benefits from engaging in it, such as it reduces stress, helps you fall asleep and gives you a mental pick-up.³⁰

The Bible is very explicit on many sexual practices but does not identify it as a sin (challenge to anyone to find a verse about the physical act of it). Due to our biology, our sexual drive will appear to require a physical release (apart from 'wet dreams') at times. Many will also masturbate for emotional reasons - to relieve stress or for a physical 'pick-up' because of frustration, loneliness or boredom.

However masturbation seems out of line with God when you:

- use it to feed disrespectful or selfish thoughts - see above on fantasising and pornography (Matt 5:30 refers to bigger sins than masturbation though)
- have difficulty stopping it when you want - compulsive behaviours are never healthy (become a 'slave to this sin', Romans 6:20-21), we should always feel like we have freedom of choice in everything we do.
- use it to avoid seeking healthier outlets or opportunities - as an escape or not deal with issues or painful or empty feelings you should be dealing with (James 4:17).



My reactions to these ideas:



There's a lot of pressure from inside a person and outside to have or continually want sex. For people my age, what are reasons or attitudes that are still pretty convincing as to why I should be having sex outside marriage ?

What difficult situations are people my age facing dealing with sex ?

What is the hardest area or behaviour for me to deal with regarding sex ?

What would be useful for me to feel freer and more confident in this area of my life ?

Enjoying freedom & integrity



Read Ephesians 1:3-8. How easy is it to picture myself as this now or in the near future?

How can I live this promise out now? What will I do more in my life as a result?

How will relationships be easier and better with others of the same and opposite sex without the pressure and guilt of sexual performance or 'sin'?

How will my life otherwise be easier and better without the pressure of thinking of how I compare to others and what they might be up to?

Knowing I am wonderfully made by God, how does that make me feel about my body, self, and what I am capable of?

How would it feel to know that even if I wasn't always sexually right or appropriate that God is more interested in how I can be part of building up others and helping achieve wholesome relationships between all of creation with each other (and God too)?

There's a sense in practically all people that they know having God more in their lives is something enjoyable and desirable. Living a virtuous life is something appealing, even though reality as mentioned before doesn't guarantee a perfect life in return. But many people worry if they get too serious about trying to live as God intended, they are limiting their choices and what they can do.

The Bible tells us that the virtuous life or 'holiness' isn't a mystical thing nor completely out of reach of God's people. It's a series of right choices accompanied by the right people. The Bible always reminds us that we live in community even when we are physically by ourselves. God is with you always - even when you think you are alone with your sexual thoughts or with a potential sexual partner. Jewish males couldn't help but be reminded of God being in their lives whenever they handled their own circumcised penises. God wants us to recognise the value of our choices, and the benefits that come with choosing wisely. That the choices that God is more keen for us to make are the ones that grow love and trust and result in every aspect of relationships (including sex and especially all the things beyond sex as well) feeling great before, during and after.

Being free in God means you can always choose - wisely or not; without the fear of constant condemnation or permanent exclusion. God does not want us to be sexless - he created us to be sexual. Being right with God doesn't mean having no sexual feelings or desires. All followers of God know what it is like to want sexual gratification - feeling so doesn't make you less of a person or a Christian. The main issue is how much time and energy you allow those to be in your life inappropriately.

Integrity is about standing upright in a dirty world and involves:

- + having a **positive rightful and godly attitude towards sexuality** and sex — eg "I don't need to be sexually attractive nor a sex expert to impress God or my lifelong partner"; "sex is something holy and worthy, not something I deserve now"; "sex does not equal emotional wholeness or instant connection with another person" (eg Job 31:1);
- + **knowing we will feel more sexual** periodically and offering the Holy Spirit the control over this area and not hold on to it as a point of security;
- + being able to **control our minds** and not think too long or too much on thoughts that will lead us to sin but instead think of other better things (2 Corinthians 10:5);
- + knowing that we **always have a way out** no matter how strongly we are tempted (there is no 'point-of-no-return' - we can turn from it);
- + **having accountability** or further help or guidance about the issue;
- + waiting and **trusting Him to provide us with His best**, knowing He will reward us incredibly as He wants us to enjoy true freedom (John 8:36);
- + remembering **we are and are becoming the person we practice to be**. The more we practice living as that person, the more comfortable and natural we are that person.

When feeling sexual...

Be comfortable in my identity

My masculinity or femininity is more than just my sexual side — it's about appropriate dealings with others. Look at ways of affirming other people's gender identity beyond their body and how they perform in sexual activities.

Thoughts on how to do this:

be relational

When I'm feeling lonely, or bored, or stressed out alone, rather than engaging in unhealthy strategies like drinking alcohol to excess³¹, connect with God or other people. Know I have much to offer others.

Thoughts on how to do this:

increase community

Think about or actually take action to give others a call, write encouraging notes to others, and plot how I can bring more joy to others and reflect Jesus more. Developing healthy deeper friendships with both sexes without the intention of gaining potential sexual partners will give me the freedom to be more myself around them.

Thoughts on how to do this:

Find physical gratification and pleasure

Masturbate without inappropriate stimulation, take a warm shower, go for a walk, bike ride or any other physical exercise to increase my endorphins.

Thoughts on how to do this:

Honour how sex does bond deeply

Decide for myself what my standard is and my response will be to offers of sexual temptation, that is, how will I react if someone offers me porn or to service me sexually. It might just be a response like: "Thanks but no thanks. I respect myself and others too much to do that." God sees us as lights to shine in dark places. As previously mentioned when sexually aroused we are likely to make less moral choices than not aroused, think about situations you might personally have to avoid or not allow yourself to be in.

Thoughts on how to do this:

Take pride in my physical body

Smile, laugh and work out new ways to enjoy my body.

Thoughts on how to do this:

As with any sin, it is unrealistic to expect we will be completely immune to it (usually far from it). However one of the reasons our sex drive seems so huge and hard to control is because we feed it and grow it by allowing it to take up a lot of space in our mind. Trying not to think of something usually results in thinking more about it.

Think instead about how God sees you, a worthy co-worker to save the world. Rather than wanting more people that avoid the dirt of the world to keep themselves 'pure and clean', God is more interested in recruiting more people to accompany Him into dirty and dark places and bringing more light and joy always.

Remember that no matter how much you've been involved with sexual sin, like any other sin, God wants to restore you to him and to others. God constantly reaches out to you and others, always seeking to help you shine as lights once more. As said before, God is more focussed on things we don't do than often what we do. God wants us to spend less time worrying about sin and more about reflecting Him in saving the world. He is more about encouraging us to be proactive about improving lives around us. After all, if we spend all our time doing that and enjoying that and feeling alive in that, we won't even have time to even think about sinning!

Do not focus too much on the sin or how much we are tempted, but look to ways to further reflect Jesus with others and enjoy our relationship with Jesus and others. We are and continue to become more what we repeat as habits. Keep practicing being the person you want to be and see it become reality.

Remember that God is always about wanting the very best in life for you. He wants to be involved in all of your life to bless you and enjoy it with you. He wants to find every experience you have with yourself, others and him to always feel great: before, during and after.

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable -if anything is excellent or praiseworthy -think about such things." Philipians 4:8



Final thoughts ?

See ya but not goodbye

As said before, what you think of sex and all its different dimensions will impact on how you approach and experience yourself, your relationships to others, and the type of communities you shape and surround yourself with.

This journey guide is not to be seen as the final comprehensive summary of all that you need to know about God's perspective on sex. It's unlikely any human is going to achieve that, and certainly it is beyond my own capabilities, but I thought it was worth attempting. God's big on relationships, and he hopes that as you continue to live and grow closer to him and others in community, that you will each and all keep discovering so much more about what helps you in all your interactions to feel great before, during and after. That you will continually revise and form a clearer vision of what God intended when he first placed two naked people in a idyllic garden setting and told them to "be fruitful and multiply". That you regain as the old saying goes the real joy that comes from getting "to know another in the biblical sense."

God is interested in involved in all aspects of our lives, and of course, sex is part of that. However there is more to our lives than just sex, and **so God is more than focussed on sex too**. Sure it may be more of a priority at certain times than others, but despite the myth of males thinking about sex every 7 seconds³², humans, both males and females, live their lives with a broader focus than that.

And although purity and cleanliness has its advantages and values, Jesus reminds us that a too narrow focus on these issues misses the point of the great news God has for our lives. In fact **you can remain pure in these areas and still be missing what God intends** (Matt 23:25-28). If we want the best sex, but more important the best life possible, we need to look beyond ourselves and see the bigger issues beyond just what we don't do, but **to the things of what we could do to make life better for all**. The amazing thing is God continually invites us to get involved in his grand plans for all creation.

With that, take note of what I said in the inside cover about how this work is a collaborative one. Like all things to do with God, feel free to get involved and contact me about it.

Feel free to ask any questions as well through my site: askchua.com

I wish you the very best life, and may everything feel good: before, during and after.

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Appendix 1: Note for Christian leaders

It's obvious that God is intimately interested and involved in all areas of human life, and isn't afraid to talk about sex or use sexual concepts. The audience of the different books of the Bible were primarily adults, though even the children of those times were cognizant of sexual matters as not only were they surrounded by lots of free roaming animals, the sexual restraints of the surrounding cultures were more liberal than anything good modern Christian company wants to imagine.

Someway down in history, Christian communities became a G-rated family-friendly environment where everything became as sanitised as a Disney kids movie. Sure we can hint about more adult concepts and darker themes of life, but we can't talk too much in depth about it because it might scare or scar the kids. The end result is that often no real adult conversations and dialogue occurs without a sense of engaging in something taboo.

But the world isn't G-rated and even the life of many kids aren't G-rated. I'm not advocating destroying the innocence of children, but like with all other big issues in life we can help educate them about every aspect of life that is important in age-appropriate ways. Even six year olds can be taught to celebrate their bodies without fearing they will become sex fiends. Helping teenagers, particularly girls, to value and celebrate their bodies, is more likely to protect them from early sexual encounters, rather than feeding their insecurities that any sweet talking boy knows how to exploit. Helping any child or teen understand how much God emphasises them feeling good before, during and after any interactions they have with others, will protect and empower change to those vulnerable to sexual abuse.

Sure, not everything in this guide is age-appropriate for all ages, but hopefully this guide inspires more thought and action for all ages. Sex when spoken about honestly in adult terms is beautiful and confusing, inviting greater exploration and discovery. Developing healthy mature perspectives on important issues in life always takes time, observation and experience, and can't be study crammed like for an ill-prepared exam. However we often expect young people to develop a healthy mature perspective on sex, after only one or two brief conversations of 'the talk'.

Be age-appropriate, talk maturely, but start early and keep at it. Keep giving more over time with more depth each time. Be honest about the complexities of it. Invite their questions and their reflections. Don't feel you need to always achieve 'putting an old head on young shoulders'. Trust them like God trusts humans - to learn, to make mistakes, and to learn better. I know it's scary to think of young people making mistakes in this area. I'm sure it's very scary for God. But like God, the more involved we are in their thinking and reflecting of this area of their lives (like all areas of their lives), the more they are likely to reflect us if we are on about the right things. And let them surprise you. That's the part I think God loves best.

Appendix 2: Sex Bible passages

Although sexual ideas and concepts permeate the whole Bible the following are (or could be) used when talking about sex in Christian settings. Try to look at context of these before just quoting them.

Genesis 1-3	Creation of humans, God's original intent and sin's entry.
Genesis 9:20-26	Drunken-induced sexual shame.
Genesis 19:30-36	Drunken-induced forced sex.
Genesis 38:8-10	The sin of Onan (often used to justify why masturbation is a sin, but really about God disapproving of him not finishing what he started).
Genesis 39:6-23	Joseph, an example of a young man of sexual integrity.
Exodus 20, Deut. 5	Adultery and coveting listed as don'ts in the 10 Commandments.
Leviticus 15, 18, 20	Sexual don'ts over semen, family ties, periods, animals and social networks.
Job 31:1	Job's commitment to not view women with lust.
Psalms 139	The beauty and adoration God has for human life and bodies.
Proverbs 5	Comparing healthy sexual relationships to adultery.
Proverbs 31	Qualities of an ideal woman.
Ecclesiastes 2	After having indulged in all luxuries and pleasure, no meaning is found.
Song of Songs	In traditional Jewish culture this was 18+ only reading material about the physical and emotional love between a couple. Some try to say it's all about the spiritual relationship between God and humanity, just with lots of intimate body parts mentioned.
Matthew 1	God can make use of anyone - Jesus' ancestors include people known for their sexual sin.
Matthew 5:27-32	Take extreme measures not to think adulterous thoughts or plans.
Matt 15:1-19, Mark 7:21	Out of the heart comes all sorts of sin, including sexual ones.
John 4	Jesus can use anyone - eg a woman in a de facto relationship and 5 ex's.
John 8	Jesus saves a woman from being publicly executed by reminding all present that they sin too.
Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25	Avoiding immorality is a worthy requirement for Gentile believers.
Romans 6-8	Grace is not a licence to sin, the conflicting desires within to do good and sin, and how God and his Spirit helps us achieve what we can't on our own.
1 Corinthians 5-6	Warnings about approving certain sexual immoral relationships and that our physical bodies should be respected as the container of the Holy Spirit.
1 Corinthians 7	Guidelines for marriage, singleness, virgins, husbands and wives.
1 Corinthians 13	What real love should be in all relationships.
Galatians 5	With love as the dominant attitude, immorality will be left behind.
Ephesians 5	Avoid sexual immorality, obscenity and crude jokes; then practical instruction for husbands and wives.
Colossians 3:5	Lose your past sins and focus more on what you are becoming in God.
1 Thessalonians 4:3-8	Encouragement for self-control in resisting sexual immorality.
1 Timothy 5:1-3	Treat all possible sex attractions as family members with purity.
Hebrews 13:4	Marriage should be honoured by all and sex left until it can be pure.
Revelation 21-22	No place for sexual immorality in the new city and community of God.

Appendix 3: Your motives for sex

Physical sexual intimacy isn't often just about the act, but also involves a mixture of motives and needs.³³

What do you think are the **main reasons for you** wanting it (tick whatever number you like):

- To feel mature and adult
- To feel like a real 'man' or 'woman'
- To be seen by others as being a real 'man' or 'woman'
- To feel physically appealing or ok to another
- To not miss out or catch up with my peers
- To get ahead of my peers
- To add to my tally of how sexually skilled or capable I am
- To add to my tally of experiences
- To improve my sexual skills
- To feel I can affect someone else's life
- To feel power over another
- To have something that will keep the other person with me
- To have some control in my life
- To get back at someone else
- To feel something else than the unpleasant feelings of life
- To feel a moment of happiness
- To lose control
- To forget about worries in my life
- To have fun
- To do something different than my normal routine
- To feel alive
- To feel less lonely
- To feel I matter to someone else
- To feel spiritually connected to another
- To know or be reminded how it feels
- To enjoy my body physically
- To get physical sexual satisfaction and release
- To express my sexuality
- To make the other feel special
- To make the other feel physically attractive
- To help the other forget about their worries
- To give pleasure to another
- To express my love to the other
- To create life
- To honour God or our spiritual purpose
- Because I can
- Other (please specify):