No Adultery + Practice Chastity & Fidelity

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Please consider donating to this work in the San Francisco Bay Area online at Christchurcheastbay.org. Good morning. My name is Hannah Sue, and I'm a member of the North Berkeley Community Group and some various moms groups.
This is the Lord's Word. It's a reading from the book of Exodus, Exodus 20, 1-4, 7-8, and 12-14.
And God spoke all these words. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
Honor your father and mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.
You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever.
[1:37] Good morning. So grateful for Chelsea saving the day earlier. We continue today to explore these Ten Commandments, which we've been saying is a blueprint for our freedom.

This is how to live as the free people that the Lord our God has liberated from slavery. And that the Ten Commandments are really how we respond to God's grace with a life of grateful obedience. That living by these commands is really the evidence that we have experienced God's liberating power. And as we come to this command that we just read, do you know what command God gives after do not murder and before do not steal?
Murder and stealing will put you in prison. So it's got to be really serious. And the two words in Hebrew are lo tenaf.
That's it. Lo tenaf. No murder. No sex with people you're not married to. End of sermon.
[2:54] Any questions? Of course we have questions. This is one of the most loaded, contested topics in our culture ever since, especially since the sexual revolution, the birth control pill, widespread desire to live with more permissiveness, less consequences, this decisive move away from the biblical sex ethic.

But the question I want to pose today is, has the sexual revolution delivered on all the freedom and the flourishing that it promised?
Is it possible that the sexual revolution is part of what's causing our culture to experience more anxiety, more depression, more loneliness, more misery than we ever have before?
And why are we now in a sex recession? Did you know we're in a sex recession? That we are actually having less sex than our parents and our grandparents, which is so sad to me.
Why? I mean, think about that. Your grandparents. Why is the sex we're having less intimate, less satisfying, and less meaningful?
[4:06] And how might this little two-word negative in Hebrew, lo-tinaf, how might that actually put us back on a positive trajectory toward sexual health, relational well-being, and spiritual satisfaction?

That's what I want to talk about. And so I want to talk about three things, God's design, our distortions, and the deliverer we need. God's design, our distortions, and the deliverer that we need.
I want to invite you to open your pew Bible if you have one close to you. You can open one up to Proverbs chapter 5. Permission to pull out your phone should you need to do that.
And we want to look at this. This is on page 514 in your pew Bible, Proverbs chapter 5. And we're going to look at that passage in just a moment. But I want to start by talking about God's design.
If you're an iPhone user, on your iPhone it says somewhere, designed by Apple in California. Designed by Apple in California.

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[5:13] Now how would you feel if I took your iPhone and I immersed it in water? And my wife said, well, don't they make iPhones water resistant now? So imagine if I took your iPhone and I smashed it with a hammer.

How would you feel if I did that? I think we know something feels wrong about that. Because the iPhone wasn't designed to be immersed in water.
It wasn't designed to be hammered and pounded. It's not what the designers had in mind. The designers had a purpose and a plan for how to operate the iPhone.
And they made it actually with an instruction manual. With a user guide that if you're not sure how to navigate the intuitive common sense design of the iPhone. You can always just look in the instruction manual for explicit guidance.
On this is what to do with this and this is what to not do with this. And the Bible really is, it tells us the gospel. But the Bible also tells us these gospel driven instructions for how to be a human being.
[6:19] And one of those instructions is lo tinaf. No adultery. And we told you in this series that every time there's a negative. Every time there's a no in the commands.

It assumes a positive. It assumes a yes. And so what is the positive? What is the yes here? The yes is that sex is to be enjoyed according to the purpose of its designer.
That God invented sex for us to enjoy. He meticulously designed it. The reason sex is so fun. The reason it's so powerful. The reason it's so intimate.
Is because God was so smart. And God was so skilled in the making of it. And so let's just back up a minute and think about God's big creation for a moment.
One of the fascinating things about the Bible is that it begins and it ends with the coming together of heaven and earth. That right at the very beginning, the first book of the Bible, Genesis tells us that God made heaven and earth.
[7:26] And heaven and earth are supposed to work together. You've got the heavenly realm of God's sovereignty. You've got the earthly realm of human dominion. And these are not to be radically separate and completely distinct spheres.

That heaven and earth are meant to be these twin interlocking overlapping spheres of God's good creation. And as the story of Genesis 1 unfolds, we discover all sorts of other things in God's creation which mirror heaven and earth.
These things that are supposed to be differentiated complementaries. So, for example, you have the different but complementary dry land and the sea.
And then you find all these diversities yet unities within the plant kingdom and the animal kingdom.
And then the story reaches its climax with the creation of human beings in the image of God as male and female.
And man and woman together are a symbol. They symbolize something profoundly true of creation as a whole. That these two different beings are made to go together and to work together.
[8:43] And then what happens in Genesis 2. The man and the woman, it says they come together. Now more explicitly in marriage where you leave your parents. You cleave to this other person as your companion for life.

And the scriptures say that the two become one flesh. Husband and wife together are a signpost. They're a symbolic pointer toward a deeper reality and a greater mystery of the complementarity of God's whole creation of heaven and earth.
And what do we find at the end of the Bible? When you skip to the end, when you get to the conclusion of the book of Revelation, Revelation 21 and 22, it's basically the same thing that we find in the first two chapters of the Bible.
We find the new Jerusalem that's coming down from heaven like a bride adorned for her husband. And you get the symbolism of marriage.
Male plus female together point us to this church as the bride coming together with Christ as the groom. This is what the God who made heaven and earth had in mind all along.
[9:53] That as men and women, we are designed to live as symbols of God's whole creation that he gave at the beginning that he'll consummate at the end.

And if you're a husband and a wife, the quality of your relationship with one another in marriage is to be a microcosm that embodies God's design, his intentions, his purposes for his whole creation. God designed marriage to be of cosmic significance. God designed sex mirroring his own relationship with his people. And therefore, he designed sex to function within marriage according

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to his cosmic purpose.
So with the whole story of the Bible in mind, when you go back to Genesis 1 and 2, and you see the Bible beginning with a wedding. Beginning with this one man and this one woman coming together. That God brings them together. The two becoming one flesh woven together. Diversity and unity. They form a new family bond. And that covenant relationship is permanent.
[11:01] It's lifelong. It's till death do us part. And that covenant relationship is also exclusive. There's no room for anybody else. There's no third parties.

They're not going to tolerate any rivals. And this married couple in Genesis 1 and 2 are brought together by God covenantally, permanently, exclusively.
They're brought together by God spiritually, relationally, economically, socially. And all of that oneness that God has created ultimately gets expressed in physical oneness.
And what is the fruit of that comprehensive whole life union that God created? Well, sex is so powerful that it not only bonds these two people together, but it also creates new life.
Literal creations of new human beings made in the image of God. The circle of love expanding because of the power of God's design.
[12:01] And Genesis 2 ends this way. Genesis 2.25 says, The man and his wife were both naked and they felt no shame. They were naked and they felt no shame.

And what's amazing, we talked about the beginning of the Bible and the end of the Bible. Right in the middle of the Bible, we have this amazing book called The Song of Songs, which is a running commentary on Genesis 2.25.
If you want to know what it means to be naked and unashamed, read The Song of Songs. The opening line says this, Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for your love is more delightful than wine.
And it just gets steamier and steamier. Now I want you to turn to Proverbs 5. It's very similar to The Song of Songs. And I'm going to read this on page 514.
I'm going to start in verse 15. It says, Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well. Should your springs overflow in the streets, your streams of water in the public squares.
[13:00] Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers. May your fountain be blessed. May you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer, may her breast satisfy you always.

May you ever be intoxicated with her love. Why, my son, be intoxicated with another man's wife? Why embrace the bosom of a wayward woman? For your ways are in full view of the Lord, and he examines all your paths.
The evil deeds of the wicked ensnare them. The cords of their sins hold them fast. For lack of discipline, they will die led astray by their own great folly. This is the book of God's wisdom.
And do you hear what the book of God's wisdom says? It says, Thou shalt have great sex. Great sex in marriage.
It's not just permitted. It's commanded by God. Verse 19 in the King James Version says, Be thou ravished always with her love. It's a divine imperative. This is serious business.
[14:04] To be ravished, to be intoxicated, has to do with sexual satisfaction and fulfillment and delight. And the primary image here is of a cistern, a well, a fountain.

What is that? Well, it's your sexual capacity and desires and joy in marriage. And notice that there's a blessing being invoked from the parent who's talking to their child about sexuality in Proverbs 5. And verse 18, it's a prayer to God which says, May your fountain be blessed and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. In other words, may God's face be turned toward your marriage so that you and your spouse rejoice and so that you experience deep satisfaction and fulfillment.
May God cause your sexual thirst to be quenched quantitatively at all times and qualitatively in the most satisfying ways.
May God cause this married couple to be what one Old Testament scholar says, quote, Deliciously dazed in the ecstasies of lovemaking.
[15:20] Did you know? I mean, seriously, did you know that's a prayer in the Bible? Did you know that's a prayer? I have a feeling a lot of people are going to start praying more this week.

That we are going to have a revival here at Christ Church because we begin to pray the scriptures. What's shocking when you get to the New Testament, you read Romans chapter 7, Ephesians chapter 5, and these other texts, they say married sex is like our union with Christ.

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Great sex is a parable of the gospel. The transcendence of sex, the joy of sex is meant to be a signpost and a foretaste of our future coming joy of total union with Christ.
For example, in Ephesians 5, the Apostle Paul, he's talking about the husband and the wife being one flesh, and then he says, this is a profound mystery, but I'm talking about Christ and the church. What he's saying is that in the future, those of us who've received Jesus as our Lord and our Savior, we will see him face to face, and in that moment, we will experience what we've wanted and have been waiting for our entire lives.
[16:37] We will experience something greater than what Adam and Eve experienced when they were naked and unashamed in paradise because we will rest in the arms of our Lord, and we will have this feeling of absolute safety and yet total vulnerability, which none of us have ever really fully experienced in this life.

We will be seen completely for who we really are by someone we utterly respect, and yet we'll be completely delighted in. We will be absolutely known and utterly accepted in spite of all of our flaws, and we will know the one whose love is truly intoxicating.
You see, great sex between a husband and a wife, it's just a signpost of the beatific vision that coming day when you will see God face to face and he will gaze in your eyes and you'll be safe in his arms.
Can you imagine finding a signpost out in the wilderness that says, this way to glory, and you're like, sweet, awesome, we are gonna camp out for the rest of our lives under the signpost as if we arrived at the destination.
No, when you see the signpost that says, this way to glory, you keep going to glory. You don't live at the signpost. Sex is just a signpost. I mean, it's awesome, but it's a signpost.
[18:06] And that's God's design for sex between a husband and a wife is to point us to the union between Christ and the church. But let me talk about our distortions of that design.

I need to explore with you some specific distortions of God's design that particularly show up in the church and among Christians, and this is just based on my experience over the past 20 years of being a pastor here in Berkeley.
Okay? So I, first of all, have a word to married people and a word about sex inside of marriage. Because in the gospel, Matthew chapter five, the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus begins to expound the seventh commandment.
And he says this, he says, anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Jesus says that's where adultery begins.
It begins in our eyes and how we look at people. It begins in our heart and how we desire people. And Jesus is saying here, you need to protect your eyes.
[19:16] You need to guard your heart. You must not allow yourself to think. I wonder if the water in that fountain over there is better and more satisfying.

And I wonder if this person over here is more perfect like me than they are imperfect like my spouse. And I wonder if they really got to know me, maybe she would really respect me.
Maybe he would really love me. And Jesus is saying, absolutely do not allow yourself to entertain those kind of lustful looks and lustful longings because it'll be poison.
And what's the antidote to counteract that poison? How will we be able to keep our springs from overflowing into the streets and your streams of water in the public squares, as Proverbs says?
Well, if God commands you to rejoice in and be intoxicated by your spouse, you would do well to just invest time in them. We heard this at a retreat last year, 20 minutes a day, one night a week, one day a quarter, one week a year to give attention to this most important relationship and to learn how to strengthen your connection and to listen to each other well and to express your feelings and to resolve your conflicts and to forgive each other and let go of past grievances and find practical ways to love and appreciate and support one another in your daily life.
[20:58] And if we do that, if we cultivate spiritual oneness, if we cultivate relational oneness, all the other oneness that we care about really will fall into place and you will no longer have a need or a desire to look at someone else lustfully in your heart because your heart will be so full of joy in your spouse.

That's a word for married people. But I also want to, as I'm talking about distortions in the church and among Christians of God's design, I need to say a word to single people about sex outside of marriage.

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In 1 Corinthians chapter 6 and chapter 7, the Apostle Paul is writing to a church very much like a church in the Bay Area and they have all kind of questions, all kind of struggles with sex.
They've actually written to Paul and said, hey, can you help us out with some of this stuff? And it's a most wonderful part of the Bible. You should go and read 1 Corinthians 6 and 7.
But Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter 6, verse 16, with the authority that he's been given by the resurrected Lord Jesus, he says this. He says, do you, church, do you not know that he who unites himself with a woman in casual, uncommitted sex is one body with her?
[22:16] For as it is written, the two will become one flesh. He's quoting Moses. He's quoting Jesus. He sees this through line through the scriptures and he says that anybody you have sex with, you become one with.

And that sex is this strong epoxy adhesive that unites you to a person. It's this nonverbal piece of communication that God has designed to carry a message which says, I am completely, permanently, and exclusively yours.
And when people have casual, committed, uncommitted sex, it's like two pieces of cardboard that come and get glued together.
and then they are pulled apart and there's all kind of ripping. There's all sorts of tearing. People will say to themselves after these relationships fall apart, I feel like I'm leaving bits and parts of me behind.
I feel like I'm losing part of myself. And the reason you feel that way is because that's what's happening. Because sex is doing what God designed it to do. And that's why Paul is writing to help these Christians learn God's wisdom, learn God's design.
[23:36] He says to them in that same paragraph, He says, Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ Himself? And do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit?

You are not your own. You were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies. Jesus and His apostles tell us that the only safe place where this epoxy adhesive that can unite you to another person without existential ripping and tearing that makes you miserable is in a permanent exclusive covenant of marriage.
Anything outside of God's design is going to be dangerous to you and it is going to be harmful and hurtful to you. Now let me ask you a question. Can you imagine what life would be like if more people acknowledged the unitive, adhesive power of sex to attach and bond people together and if people began to honor God's design for that?
Community life would be transformed and massive problems would dissolve almost overnight. Cornell?
Not a headline. Me Too movement? Not needed. Consent workshops? Rape crisis centers?
[25:01] Unwanted pregnancies? The porn industry? Women feeling used and feeling degraded? All of that would go away. All those distortions of sex that I just mentioned are what prompted the writing of this book.

It's a feminist author named Louise Perry and she wrote this book in 2022 called The Case Against the Sexual Revolution A New Guide to Sex in the 21st Century. All of your friends in the Bay Area should be talking about this book.
New York Times Wall Street Journal if you need the links send me an email I'll send you all the interviews but basically what is amazing is that she writes this secular post-liberal reactionary feminist critique of our sexual culture over the last 65 years and she says that casual commitment-free sex was designed to benefit a minority of powerful men and that women particularly poor women have paid the price and suffered the consequences and that what we need is a counter-sexual revolution that demands more of men and protects women and what's fascinating to me is that Perry reasons along the lines of secular sociology on the basis of biological realities on the basis of evolutionary psychology on the basis of anthropological history and she arrives extremely close to the Christian sex ethic for example she is encouraging women in her interviews to wait until a guy commits to you with a diamond ring and with a public ceremony because she says that's the way you'll know that this guy who really does want to sleep with you will stay committed to you and he will be fully and lastingly committed to you and he won't just use you and then discard you and that's very very close to 1 Corinthians chapter 6 and the logic of the apostle Paul which says if you engage in physical oneness without legal oneness without financial oneness without social oneness you're using your body to make a radical promise that your life is not actually backing up that if you give someone your naked body but you withhold your bank

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account you withhold your legal status you withhold your public reputation you withhold your long term future you are actually practicing a form of self protection rather than self giving and self protection is the exact opposite of what sex was designed to do by the way
Louise Perry became a Christian in 2025 three years after she wrote that book she said you know if Christianity is sociologically true if it's true about men and women it's true about sex it's true about marriage maybe it's supernaturally true and you should watch her interviews about that but some of you may be saying to me okay if I accept from God a season without sex or a life without sex then won't that bring me harm won't that shrink rather than expand my humanity how can I be complete and fully alive and I just want to remind you that Jesus was the most fulfilled human being who ever lived and he was single and he was celibate and the apostle Paul lived a single and satisfied life throughout his ministry he wrote this in Philippians 4 he said I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation and I can do all of this through Christ who gives me strength what God by his circumstances calls us to he will also enable us for and Christian history if you haven't read history it's full of Jesus' disciples who lived full and free lives according to
God's design with God's strength okay I also have to say a word here about pornography pornography the 10th most visited website in the world is for pornography it's an industry that's dedicated to victimizing both its workers and its users and it's a 97 billion dollar industry and when in 1st Corinthians 6 this passage I'm talking about where Paul writes to these Christians and he says flee from sexual immorality he's thinking about Genesis 39 and Joseph who flees from Potiphar's wife who wants to sleep with him and here's how that reads in Genesis 39 Joseph says how could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God not against you not against me sin against God and though she spoke to Joseph day after day come to bed with me come to bed with me he refused to go to bed with her even or even to be with her and as you know the story
[30:04] Joseph paid dearly he went to prison because of his commitment to live according to God's design now if Joseph had to flee if he had to run the other direction to be faithful to God what do we need to do with porn in the church if I were to release a poisonous rattlesnake right in the middle of the aisle there what would happen everybody would be out on the sidewalk in five seconds and that's what we've got to do and I want to encourage some of you to let today be the day that you come out of the shadows of sexual addiction and I'm so proud of some of you who've been doing that who've been getting help those of you who've been providing support and friendship and accountability that's needed to break that power wouldn't it be amazing if we were a church where the power of porn was broken and I as I talk about distortions among Christians distortions in the church of God's design I have a final word here about two parents as a parent of three teenagers and that is that Proverbs 5 1 says my son pay attention to my wisdom my son pay attention to the wisdom of God through me and what that means parents is that God wants you to protect and to form and direct your child's sexuality according to

God's wisdom and that means that you need to protect your child from having access to harmful content on their devices some of our kids are hooked up to sewers you got to get them off today it means that we need to help our sons learn Jesus way of not looking lustfully at a woman even if they're enticing you to lust you got to look the other way because we are called to honor women and not sexually objectify women it means that we've got to teach our daughters to learn how to adorn themselves in honorable non-sexualized ways that glorify God help their neighbors and protect themselves it means that we need to help our kids learn that part of being a Christian sometimes means being radically different from your friends parents your child desperately needs you to do this what what this godly parent in Proverbs 5 is doing with their child to teach them God's wisdom for their sexuality because where are they going to get that not their school not their friends not their phone it's got to be from you so we've talked about
God's design and our distortions I want to end talking about the deliverer we need the deliverer we need Proverbs 5 21 says for your ways are in full view of the Lord and he examines all your paths the evil deeds of the wicked ensnare them the cords of their sins hold them fast for lack of discipline they will die led astray by their own great folly you know behind all the utilitarian practical common sense arguments for sexual chastity and singleness or sexual fidelity in marriage there's ultimately this reason that the omniscient Lord upholds a moral order wherein we reap what we sow and our actions have consequences we wrongly believe that we can just do what we want unnoticed in the dark because we're actually in the

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Lord's presence all our ways are before his eyes and too many people in the church have allowed ourselves to become sexually ensnared to be led down a path that ends in bondage and death both spiritually and relationally and if that's true that so many people are in bondage what shall we do well that's why Jesus came from heaven to earth that's why Jesus gave up everything and stepped out of eternity and into time in order to deliver us from our bondage he lived the most pure life that's ever been lived he practiced everything he preached he fulfilled the seventh commandment perfectly absolutely faithful to God in his sexuality he was totally righteous and yet in the gospels what we find again and again is that sexually broken people are deeply attracted to
Jesus the people who've been sexually victimized and abused people who've been sexually acting out people who've been hurting others people who've been hurting themselves when they come to Jesus they're attracted to Jesus why is that what why in his presence do they feel safe do they feel healed do they feel forgiven and do they feel loved because Jesus is the lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world he was nailed on his cross to take the condemnation for the sexual sins that we we deserve he took that condemnation upon himself he came to atone for our sins he came to lay upon us his very own righteousness he came to reconcile us to God he came to give us a new life to enable us to begin to live a new life and I want you to just turn as we close to 1st [35:52] Corinthians 6 I've been talking about this passage you should at least look at it on page 927 of your Bible 1st Corinthians 6 page 927 Paul writes to this church and he says to this congregation look some of you have been sexually immoral some of you have been adulterers some of you have worn deep grooves and habits and patterns in your life that are a distortion of God's design and he says because of that you know wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God but listen to what he says in 1st Corinthians 6 verse 11 he says but that is what some of you were you were sexually immoral you were adulterers that is what some of you were that's what some of you used to be but are no longer and here's what he says he says but you were washed you were sanctified you were justified in the name of the

Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of our God God himself has provided the way in which you can leave your past and your present behind and move forward into his future you can be washed clean your sins can be washed away right now whatever you've been and done in the past you can be sanctified he says you can be set apart as holy you can be one of God's special people whatever you are in the present this can happen for you right now and he says you can be justified by God's grace through the act of faith God can declare you to be one of his true people that he's put in a right standing before him and all of that can happen to you this new beginning this new identity this new lifestyle he says it can happen for you in the powerful name of the Lord Jesus
Christ and by the spirit of God and he says at the end of that passage in verse 19 do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit who is in you and whom you have received from God you are not your own you are bought at a price therefore honor God with your bodies he says brothers and sisters you've been bought out of slavery you have a new owner you have a new master you have a new Lord you've been purchased by the high cost of one's blood and one's life and Jesus who's done that for you he can forgive your sins and he can heal your scars and he can restore you to wholeness and he can give you a new start and he can empower you to be different and to show the world
God's good design and his perfect plan for our relationships and friends if that's what you want I invite you come to Jesus in the name of the Father Son and Holy Spirit we pray amen do can do my God's done do fathers fathers from they will see my family as they them can see them for them do they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they they fathers they they they they they they they they they they fathers they fathers they they they they fathers they they they

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