

Sexual Addictions



Understanding the Psychology & Theology of our Sexuality

Dr. Todd Frye & Dr. Mark Hayse

THEOLOGY OF THE BODY AND SEX

- Why is a theology of the body important in understanding God's purpose for sex?
 - Theology that threatens the body
 - Dualism-Matter=evil and spirit=good
 - The body is irrelevant therefore it can be easily harmed or missused sexually
 - Theology that reclaimes the body as being important
 - Creation
 - Incarnation
 - Pauline Theology
 - Ressurrection
 - Trinity

THEOLOGY OF THE BODY AND SEX

- A THEOLOGY OF CREATION

- **Creation is Good** (Gen:1)

- **The body was created without shame** (Gen: 2)

- Christ came to restore the body from guilt and shame. Men and women are created for one another as a gift, taken on from the other, to give back to one another (Gen: 1-2)

- **Giving our body**

- Through giving one's body to another, husband and wife grow closer to each other and to God (St. John of the Cross)

- Our human giving reflects the "profound mystery" of Christ's self giving in the body to all persons (Eph 5)

- In understanding our Creation we are able to move from *treating our bodies as idols* toward *treating our bodies as icons*.

THEOLOGY OF THE BODY AND SEX

- A THEOLOGY OF INCARNATION
 - John's gospel begins with emphasizing the **importance of Christ's body**.
 - Paul understands Christ as the **new or second Adam** who restores humanity to its original possibility and value (Rom 5; 1 Cor 15)
 - In other words, a poor theology calls us "only human" but incarnation calls us "**fully human**".

THEOLOGY OF THE BODY AND SEX

- PAULINE THEOLOGY

- Although Paul critiques “the flesh” he also teaches us to value the body.

- The “flesh” is more properly understood as a sin-principle, selfishness and rebellion, not literally as the body itself.

- Greek for “body” is *soma*-literally referring to our physical bodies

- Greek for “flesh” is *sarx*- a euphemism for untamed, sinful desire within us

- Paul uses the word *sarx* as a euphemism to describe the mysterious, sacred relationship that Christ has with the church (Eph 5).

- The body is not a throw away item but treasure to care for (1 Cor 15).

THEOLOGY OF THE BODY AND SEX

- A THEOLOGY OF THE TRINITY

- Father, Son, and Spirit give of themselves to one another in divine love.
 - This love relationship is at the heart of who God is and who we are created to be.
- Within marriage, sexual intimacy provides for the sharing of divine love--mutual giving and receiving.
 - Sexual intimacy becomes a window into divine love.
- Human beings crave intimacy (both giving and receiving) because they bear the image of God within the Trinity.

THEOLOGY OF THE BODY AND SEX

- What is God's purpose for sex?
- Sex is a window into divine love. In sex we cannot separate the body and the spirit.
- Sex points to elements of divine love.
 - mutual giving, vulnerability, trust, ultimate physical union of two becoming one in mind, body and spirit.
- Body is intended as a gift for another to receive (Trinitarian). Not complete till another receives it.
- Sexual cravings and rewards are ordered by God to point us back to God when experienced as divine love.

THEOLOGY OF THE BODY AND SEX

- What has happened to sex?
 - Sex that separates the body from the spirit values different things.
 - Our cultural value of sex is mostly around achieving a heightened sense of arousal. This separates body from spirit.
 - This separation disconnects the body from the spirit, therefore perverting sex.
 - Sex outside of its divine purpose results in more than just a physical problem but a spiritual one.
 - Sexual deviance is a theological attack on the body itself as it redirects the person away from divine love and toward self gratification (idolatry).
 - When sexual material is used as a substitute for the divine purpose of sex, it desecrates the image of God within both producers and viewers.

THEOLOGY OF THE BODY AND SEX

- Journal or Discussion Questions
- Why do you think a theology of the body is important to treating sexual addictions?
- How has dualism (separating body and spirit) filtered into our culture or is it just a first century problem in the church?
- How does the creation narrative mirror the SA story?
- How do SA treat sex as an idol vs. an icon? What does it mean to treat sex as an icon?

THEOLOGY OF THE BODY AND SEX

- According to a theology of incarnation, why is it important to the SA that Christ became flesh?
- How does understanding body (soma) and flesh (sarx) help you understand what Paul might be saying to the SA?
- What are your thoughts on what Mark said about "the community and not the individual is the medium of being fully human"? Why then do SA pursue behaviors that further isolate themselves?

IMPACT OF SEXUAL ADDICTIONS ON SPOUSES AND FAMILIES

- What are the family symptoms that lead to the SA awareness of their behavior?
- physical symptoms?
- relational symptoms?
- emotional symptoms?
- spiritual symptoms?