

What The Bible Really Says About Sex

- All right, you ready to have a little fun? This is gonna be a good time, and it's gonna be super awkward and fun, so it's bonus round. I got a brand new T-shirt, "Trophy Husband." I'm locked and loaded, ready for bear, and welcome to Trinity Church and welcome for those who are joining us online. Let me give you a quick introduction of where we're going. Eight week sermon series based on a brand new book, "Real Romance," and it's written by my wife, Grace, and I. It's basically a study of a book of the Bible called the Song of Songs, and we will dig into it in just a moment. There'll be eight sermons. There are 12 chapters in the Song of Songs. There are four sections I will not be talking about in church. They're a little spicy, so, yeah. And so if you're a Baptist right now, like, we have earplugs and defibrillators. You're gonna need them both. And so, as we get into the Song of Songs, there are a few sections that are a little spicy. So for those sections, you can get the book and there's a free copy on your way out published by our friends at XO. It's actually not gonna be released until Valentine's Day at the biggest marriage event in the country and maybe in the world, that Grace and I'll be teaching at. But we got free copies here. You get what you pay for. It's free. Lower your expectations. Do not complain. In addition. In addition, if you want to get the spicy portions, you can subscribe to our marriage podcast, "Real Marriage." It's anywhere and everywhere you find podcasts. Grace and I will do all 12 chapters of the book and the Song of Songs, including the spicy portions. That being said, some of you are here for the first time and you're wondering, should I have my child in this room? Answer: no. You don't want them to know how they got here. It's a little early. So what I would recommend, we do have children's ministry at all of our services and we have student ministry for middle and high school students on Saturday night, and you're welcome to drop them off there. How many of you are single? All right, we got a foyer. Meet in the foyer and fix your problem after our service, okay? 93% of you will marry. How many of you are married? All right, okay. All right, we want this to be a great year for you. I know the government sucks, but your life can be great. Amen. And so we're gonna try and fix that. All right. And number three, how many of you are parents or grandparents? Right, we wanna set up our kids and our grandkids for a great marriage, amen. So that's what we're going to be doing. So you got the book, you got the podcast, and you've got the sermons. So here's what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna pray, because if I don't pray, I will say something that I should not say. And even if I do pray, I probably still will say something that I should not say. So lemme pray and then we're gonna jump right in, amen. Lord, thanks for everybody coming. Thanks for everybody joining online. God, I pray we take you seriously, but not ourselves. And God, this is a subject, it is awkward. But you know what? The whole world's talking about it and doing things they shouldn't be, so Lord, we want to hear from you about what you would have to say to us about the most intimate details of our life. God, pray that this would be a good time, a fun time. Pray I would not cross the line, but dance vigorously on it, we'd all have a good time. In Jesus' name, amen. All right. So if you don't know me, I'm a Bible teacher. I like to teach three books of the Bible. We're gonna be in this book of the Bible called the Song of Songs. And we're calling it "Real Romance," not "Perfect Romance." I'll tell you a little bit about our story, and the reason is if God can heal us and fix us and save us, there's hope for you. Like, if you think you're messed up, let me tell you about my story. So, at the age of 17, I met my now wife, Grace. We were in a public high school and I thought, oh my gosh, that's the cutest girl I've ever seen. And so I wanted to get to know her.

And at that time I was not a virgin. I was not a Christian. I grew up in an environment where there were strip clubs down the street from my house and it was kind of not the best place to be. And so, nonetheless, I met Grace and I asked Grace, I was like, hey, you seem really nice. Can we be friends? And then after while, I was like, hey, could we date? She's like, are you a Christian? I was like, well, does that matter? She's like, yeah, I only, she's a pastor's daughter. I said, oh, oh, yeah, no, this is DEFCON 5 situation here we've got ourselves in. Yeah, and so she said, well, I only date believers. I was like, well, hallelujah, praise the Lord sister. Amen. You know? So we start dating and then she realized I probably wasn't a Christian, maybe because we were sleeping together. And so what happened then, she bought me a Bible. She bought me a Bible. And so, I'm dating the pastor's daughter, sleeping with the pastor's daughter, don't know the Lord, don't know what I'm doing. And I think I'm doing, you know, fine because, you know, we love each other and we're married in God's eyes. I don't know that God's eyes don't blink and they're flaming red and he's about ready to torch me. So nonetheless, and now that I'm a dad, I see this all very differently, by the way. You know, when you're a single guy, you're like, this is how I see it. When you're a dad, you're like, that's not how it is. So then, I went off to college at the state university and God saved me reading the Bible. I got saved reading the Bible, met Jesus, repented of my sin. God changed my heart, transformed my life. So then I find a good church, I'm in a Bible study, pastor gets up, gives a sermon on a brand new topic I've never heard about, something he called fornication. And I was like, hmm, that's a different concept, never studied that. And I thought, you know, I must be hearing this wrong. Seems like I shouldn't be sleeping with Grace. So I called the pastor and I said, that was a really good talk, thank you very much. Brand new subject for me, this fornication. I said, hypothetically, hypothetically, I've got a friend who's fornicating. I tell him it was Grace and she's fornicating with me, I just kinda left the details out. And so I was like, I got a friend that might be fornicating, very concerned. I said, just to confirm, what is fornication? He said, well, let's say it's two single people and they're sleeping together but they're not married. I said, oh boy, that's very specific. And I said, well, what should they do? He said, they should stop. I said, well, isn't this like running an intersection? You know, if you stop and back up, you're gonna get hurt. Probably should just keep going. Isn't that what we, what my friend should do? And he's like, no, they gotta stop. They gotta repent. They gotta back up. They, I was like, oh. So I called Grace. I said, Grace, we've been fornicating. She said, yeah, I know, I'm a pastor's daughter. I said, what the heck? So, she moved out to be with me in college and then we stopped fornicating, we started going to bible studies, praying, going to church. We ended up getting married at the age of 21. So, let me show you, this is where we started. This is our dating photo. That's, I'm on the right, Grace is on the left, and then the fern. And so I don't know why the fern went on the date and the, you notice the, again, I told you it's a public high school, so you know. And the other, I just noticed the other urn is empty. Apparently it was, we're in a recession, budget cuts, times were tight, supply chain issues, okay. Couldn't get the second fern. And then we got married at the age of 21. And so I'm on the right, Grace is on the left. If you can't tell the difference, you need a drug test, okay. Here's what I always say, women age like wine, men age like milk. Amen. So here, so then fast forward, we've been faithfully married 30 years. We got five kids and we pastor Yellowstone. So there we are, okay. So, okay, so there we are, okay. So, now listen, you guys are my crowd. I like you. It's very good. All right. So what we're gonna do now, I want to do

an introduction to the big idea of the Song of Songs, and we're gonna look at the issue of sex according to the Bible. You ready? I don't care. It's gonna be awkward either way. It's gonna be fun. I get to see all your faces. Thank you for coming. Okay. First, there's gonna be three different perspectives on sex. Sex is God, gross or gift, okay. So the first one, sex as God, this is how the world largely views sex. I've got a scripture here, 1 Corinthians 10:7-8. So do not worship false gods. It's talking about demons, false religions, counterfeit spirituality, as some of them did. As scripture said, the people sat down in a feast which turned into an orgy. We shouldn't sin sexually. Some of them did. 23,000 of them died in one day. So, God's just like, . If God did that right now, no traffic. No traffic. I got my own lane, everybody's gone. So what he's talking about here, he's making this connection between sexuality and spirituality, something that our culture doesn't do because our culture tends to think that it's just body, but we're a body that houses and contains a soul. And this issue of sexuality and spirituality is inextricably connected. And I'll give you some brief examples. And there's always been temptation for God's people to behave in ways that God does not permit. In the Old Testament times, there were two prominent demon gods that were worshiped around the people of God, and they were constantly tempted to join. One was Baal, considered a male deity, and also Astra, which is a female deity. And they were believed to have illicit sex in the unseen realm, and then they would open these temples where people would come together to do the same. And it was just absolutely horrific what happened there. It was unspeakable. We're gonna get into that starting in March when I get into a series on Elijah, and we're gonna look at Jezebel, who brought the worship of Baal and also Astra into Israel. We're gonna look at her passive, cowardly husband, Ahab. If you have one, you've got eight weeks to bring him and then we'll deal with him. And what we're gonna deal with is the Jezebel and Ahab spirit that was constantly seducing God's people towards sexual sin. In the New Testament times, things were no better. The whole culture of the New Testament was Greek. The Greeks were very perverted and they also had, as part of their demonic spirituality, sexuality, they had a temple that Paul preaches against in First Corinthians that had a thousand male and female temple prostitutes. Well, today, you and I live on the backside of a historic cultural attempt to redefine sex, gender, marriage, and life as we know it. And the four horsemen of hell that were unleashed in the '60s and '70s were simply free love, which has cost us a lot, birth control, abortion, and pornography. Do whatever you want with whoever you want. You won't have to get a disease or a child, and if you do, we can take its life. That's the world that we were born in. If you're younger, you assume this is normative because this is all you've ever known. But let me tell you, this is an experiment that has failed miserably. And the way we see this biblically in Romans chapter one, the Apostle Paul, in verses 18 through 32, he talks a lot about sex that is out of control, gender and gender roles that are totally confused, and people that are out of control. And what he says is that the days of their Roman Empire is much like our western culture. And what he is saying is simply this. He says that God is the creator and we are the created and that God created us in our bodies and that we are to conduct ourselves as the created in a way that honors the creator. He says that those who don't worship the creator worship the created. He says in particular, we worship the body, its beauty, its passion, and its pleasure, and it leads us into lots of temptation, trouble, and trial. He says a little later in Romans chapter 12, verse one, that you worship, whatever you are offering your body to is a living sacrifice. See, we tend to think of sacrifice as

putting something to death. The other way to sacrifice is to sacrifice your health, to sacrifice your marriage, to sacrifice your conscience, to sacrifice your freedom, to sacrifice your wellbeing for someone or something else. And he says, whatever you offer your body to, that is your spiritual act of worship, and that would include sexuality. Now that being said, today, sex is the biggest religion in the world. It is now a religion. In addition, there are now just as there are denominations within Christianity, and I like to say that everything that God creates, Satan counterfeits. That as Christianity has denominations, and there's different types of Christians, so the religion of sex now has denominations. We call it LGBTQIA. Those are the denominations. Now, they may be different versions, but they're different versions of the same religion. The worship of created sex, body and pleasure, not creator. And what's happening now is this religion has recently gotten into children's ministry. And now instead of Sunday school teachers, we've got drag queens at libraries. Okay, if you're not offended yet, the sermon's half over, there's still hope for you. But the point is this. The world that we live in has absolutely lost its mind because it's lost its soul.

- [Congregant] Amen.

- Now, let me give you an analogy or an illustration. Somebody like, Mark, are you against, you know, pleasure and intimacy and sex? No, actually I agree with God. And let me say this. When my son, we have three boys. When my youngest son was a little boy, we lived out of state at a cold, you know, wet, dark environment, so during the winters, we'd chop a lot of wood, bring it in. We had this big family fireplace. And my little buddy and I loved to make fires, and I taught him, here's how you chop the wood, here's how you stack the wood, here's how you start the fire. And he's like, dad, I love making fires. Me, too. It's my love language, you know, making fires. And so, I remember I looked at him one time as a little boy, and I said, hey, little buddy, let me just tell you something. I said, we only build fires in the fireplace. I said, fire's great in the fireplace. Do not build a fire in your room. Do not build a fire in the living room and do not build a fire in dad's library with all of his books, please, okay. So, and he looked at me and I said, son, it's very important. Fire's great in the fireplace. Everywhere else, it's destructive. The passions of pleasure need to be contained in the fireplace of marriage, okay. We talk about passion as fiery and flaming. Well, that needs to be in the hearth or the fireplace of marriage. God is not against the fire, but he's for the fireplace. And once you take the fire out of the fireplace, you get something called America where everything is burning to the ground. And so that is the view or perspective of sex as God. And don't raise your hand, but my question would be, is that you? Is sex too important for you, too significant? Are you addicted? Are you one who has it in a place that is unhealthy and inappropriate? The counterbalance of the overreaction to that is sex as gross. So if the world, we'll point to the left, if the world sees sex as God, they'll point to the right. Then the church tends to see sex as gross. I'll give you a scripture, Titus, chapter one, verse 15. To the pure, all things are pure. But to the defiled, the unclean, the unbelieving, nothing is pure. Both their minds and their consciousness are defiled. What he's saying is this. Things aren't clean or dirty. That's what the word defiled means. People are. And so sex, if you're obeying God, it's pure. If you're disobeying God, it's dirty. That's what he's saying. And so it's not that your body is bad or that intimacy is bad or that pleasure is bad. The question is, are you obeying

God or disobeying God? Are you doing things in a way that is clean and pure or impure and dirty? And so Christians have historically had a very hard time seeing passion and pleasure as a good thing. That is because the New Testament was written in the context of Greek culture. Greek culture really dominated a lot of early church teaching on this issue. And Greek culture is something called dualistic, okay. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, these would be some of the forefathers of Greek philosophy. And you studied them in college if you went to college. And the basic premise of dualism is that you're one person with two parts. You have a physical body and a spiritual soul, which is true. Now, where they error, they say that the body is bad, but the soul is good. So the whole goal is to leave your body to die. Not to rise from the dead like Jesus in your body, but to leave your body and live as a purely spirit being. So anything that's in the body is bad, any pleasure in the body is bad. Now, this is where we get that false view of heaven and angels. There's a sort of chubby babies, divine beings with wings too far to take them anywhere interesting, sitting on a cloud, plunking a harp forever, no resurrection, no new heaven, no new earth, no new life, just a spiritual state of being that's boring forever. The result was that various early church fathers taught some really crazy things about marriage and the pleasures therein. Tertullian and Ambrose, they preferred extinction of the human race to marital intimacy. Like, well, they can either be together or we could all die. They're like, let's die. Origin, he analogized the Song of Solomon. We'll get into that a moment. And then he castrated himself. Chrysostom said that Adam and Eve had no intimacy before sin under the world, which isn't true. You read the story like, they were naked without shame and then ate some fruit, you know, and that's the way it went. Jerome, he had a really curious form of birth control. When he was feeling amorous, he would throw himself into sticker bushes, which is highly effective and peculiar. Imagine being on date night with that guy. You're like, oh, you look so good. You know. Odd. Gregory of Nyssa, he was an early church theologian. He said that Adam and Eve had no desire and before sin entered the world, Eve would get pregnant, not by being with her husband, but by eating from a special tree that would impregnate her in the garden. Which is weird. I mean, I heard of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was this, the tree of Smokey Robinson and Marvin Gaye. I don't know what tree this is. It's the baby making tree, you know. Hope Adam didn't eat it. I don't know what would happen. And then by the Middle Ages, what happened was the Catholic church was predominant and suddenly, the priests were celibate, forbidden to marry. And the church, and the single guys in the Catholic church decided we need to get a manual to regulate marital frequency and intimacy. A manual. You know when the religious guys start making a manual, they're gonna have terrible rules. We call these legalisms in Christianity. I just, I hate the people who make the legalisms. Make, like, Taco Tuesday. Make it mandatory, right. Not, you know, like, I don't know, naps. We need to, if we're gonna make some rules, let's make some good ones. But what they did, they made some really bad rules. And, but what they determined was by the time they got done with this marital manual, over half of the days of the year were forbidden for a married couple to be together. Can you imagine that. Hey babe, how you doing? You look good. She's like, let me check the manual. Pope says no. See, some think that the Protestant reformation where there was rebellion against the Catholic church, was based upon an issue called justification by faith alone through grace alone and Christ alone. I think it was this issue. I think a bunch of dudes are like, we're gonna be Protestant baby. That's what we're doing right now. It's date night. Tell the pope

we're done. And so. And it's weird too, like, I grew up Catholic. I didn't have a bad experience. I will say something negative and offensive, but what I, but I never understood. I grew up in the Catholic church and I was like, okay, who's in charge? They're like, that guy. Okay, okay, what, well, tell me about that guy. Where does he live, the priest? Lives at the church. Okay. Okay. How much does he make? Doesn't make anything. What's his family like? He's a virgin. He's gonna be a broke virgin his whole life living at the church. Okay, one more question. What's his uniform? He's gonna wear a dress. I was a little boy, I'm like, that's my anti-bucket list. I have two lists. Everything I want to do, everything I don't want to do. That dude's bucket list is my anti-bucket list. But it's just, it's this weird view of, by the Victorian age, extreme modesty, women, you know, covered from neck down to the floor. There's something in the book, I quote this ancient historian, and some would even suggest that they put the, what do they call it when you put it over a table, it goes down the leg. Tablecloth. Never done that, but I've seen it. And what I heard and what some said was, it was to keep men from seeing a table leg and lustng. That's the weirdest handy man I've ever heard of in my whole life, right. Like, you're in the wood shop, you're like, you know what I'm thinking about? Like, you don't have a problem with a table, you got a problem with you. This is bigger than a tablecloth, right. This is a bigger situation. Now, today, you having fun?

- [Congregation] Yeah.

- Me, too. All right. So, and if you wanna send in a complaint, we have a delete ministry standing by to serve you 24 hours a day. So today, the sex has gross kind of view. It, let me get a little more serious. There are two groups that really do struggle to see it as a gift from God. One, those who are sinners. You've done things you shouldn't have done. You've seen things you shouldn't have seen. You're like, I know what the Bible says, I didn't do what God said and I feel bad about that. That's my story. That's our story. You need to know that there is a God, his name is Jesus Christ. You need to know that He lived a perfect life without any sin. And he went to the cross to die in our place for our sin. And he rose to conquer death, and he sent the spirit to give us new life. And I'm telling you that I've been faithfully married to my wife, I love her with all my heart. We don't have a perfect marriage, but by God's grace, we're still together. And if it wasn't for Jesus, we wouldn't be married. But because of Jesus, we're still married because Jesus forgives sin and he allows sinners to forgive each other. If you have some guilt, some shame around this, give it to Jesus, get some forgiveness. In addition, for those of us who have not just sinned but sinned against, you're victims. You've been abused, you've been traumatized, taken advantage of, it could feel gross to you. Not only does Jesus forgive, he cleanses from all unrighteousness. You're not dirty, you're clean in Christ. You're not who you were, you're who he declares you to be.

- [Congregant] Amen.

- Forgiven, loved, adopted, given a fresh new start, new power by the Holy Spirit. And ultimately, at the end of the day, the other reason why some people see sex as gross, is bad Bible teaching, okay. Now, don't raise your hand up here with your grandma, but how many of you

have had some really bad Bible teaching when it comes to intimate issues? Just really bad. Yeah, that wasn't helpful at all. So for example, sometimes all the church ever does is tells you what's forbidden and what God's against, not what he's for. And what happens is, when we're raising our children, for those of us who are parents, sometimes rather than preparing our children, we're scaring our children about marriage. Right. Like, sometimes when you grow up in a highly religious environment, it's like sex is dirty, nasty, violent, wrong, save it for the one you love. Like, that's a very confusing message. And some of you grew up in a religious environment, and even when I come to the Song of Solomon, there's always these people, they're very curious because they're called fundamentalists and they're not fun. They're a little mental, but they're not fun. And what happens is, when I go through the Song of Songs, I'm like, oh, that's not what it means, that's not what it means, that's not what, and they just do a weird interpretation of the Bible. They allegorize it in strange ways. And I'll never forget, it was some years ago, Grace and I wrote another marriage book called "Real Marriage," and I got invited out, we got invited out to go do a marriage conference in another city, you know, cold northern city, right around Valentine's Day. And I got to teach, it was fun, radio station hosted it, it was a great time. And then we were doing Q&A and in the line and in the queue and people could come up, say hi, and ask questions, we'd pray for them. It was a fun time. And two different couples from the same church, I won't name the church, they both came up, young couples, looked like in their 20s, and you could tell they had a question, but neither of them had the courage to ask it. So they come up, I'm like, how can I help you? She's like, ask him. He's like, no, you ask him. No, you ask him. I was like, okay, yay, somebody ask me, all right. So they lean forward, they're like, can we ask you a question? I was like, yeah, that's why I flew across the country. They're like, when should we consummate our marriage? Yeah, I was confused, too. I looked like a beagle to hurt a whistle. I was like, what? Huh? And I looked at, I said, what? Like again, I told you I went to public school, like, we know the answer to this question. We don't have the answer to anything else. Like, this is the only test we could pass, you know. But I said, okay. What's the question? They're like, when should we consummate our marriage? I looked at both, two couples separately, and I was like, are you kids married? They're like, yeah. Oh. This is like a unicorn. You're, I thought you were mythical creatures. I didn't think you were real. Wow. And I asked them a couple, I said, how long you been married? I said, they said, little over a year. Little over a year. I was like, okay. As I looked at, I was like, it's really great to marry a virgin just so you kids know. It's not really great to be married to a virgin, just so you kids know. Right? I'm like, what? And so they had been, and they're like, well, we don't know when to consummate our marriage. I said, you, I said, how much was this event? They're like, \$20 bucks. So you got your \$20 bucks worth. You kids need to leave right now. You guys, you're. Go, go! Best \$20 bucks you ever spent. So, again, how many of us, sex is gross, and how many of us sex is God, and how many of you are married? How many of you are frustrated? All right. How many of you are fighting? Then you gotta come to both agree that sex is gift. So this is where we're gonna go. Genesis 2:18 and 24-25. This is perfection before sinners of the world. The Lord God said it is not good for the man to be alone. Have you ever met a single guy? It's not good. Single guy right now is like, I'm doing good. No, the Bible calls that self-deception. Okay, you're not doing good. I will make a helper fit for him, meaning he needs help just like the Holy Spirit helps. Therefore a man, not a little boy who can shave, right, but a man shall leave

his father and mother, go start his own family, hold fast to his wife. They both shall become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked or if you're from Texas, nekked, and were not ashamed. Okay, so this is God's divine design for marriage. It is, this is gonna blow your mind. God made us male and female. That's it. That's it. That's it. That's it, okay. And if you're anatomically, biologically male or female, you should be masculine or feminine, okay. And then marriage is for one man and one woman in a consummated covenant. I know we're talking crazy. Somebody went to public school, you're like my mind melted. Yeah. Now, in what we see here that the goal of marriage and intimacy is oneness, right, that they'd have one last name, sleep in one bed, worship one God, live one life, that they were naked and not ashamed because this was God's divine desire. It's not like God made a man, God made a woman, they came together, God went out to get a ham sandwich, even though he is Jewish. I don't know why he would do that. Nonetheless, he comes back and then the man and the woman are like, ah! It's like he looked at the angel like, you couldn't get a wing in there? What's going on down there? Right. I thought that was funnier than some of you. Why do you think I gave you the wings? You know, so this was God's intention and God's design. And then let me say this. So there was one man and one woman, so what was their standard of beauty? Their spouse. Adam's standard of beauty, Eve. Eve's standard of beauty, Adam. This is marriage. So if you marry at 25, your standard of beauty is 25. You're married for 60 years, your standard of beauty is not 25, it's 85. You marry a man with bangs, head of hair, six pack, standard of beauty. But later, bangs gone home to be with the Lord. No six pack, cooler. New standard of beauty, we apologize, praying for you. Okay. So what happens is, so when we got married, which one do you think I was? Gross, God or gift? I thought sex was God. I thought it was like, yeah, what do you want for your birthday? Something I want every day. You know. So and then like, so, probably should have said that. And so, and then Grace's view was more sex is gross because she grew up in a religious environment. We had done things before we were married that we shouldn't have, and she was an assault victim and I didn't, we didn't really know that until the 10th year of our marriage. Prior to meeting me, some horrible things happened to her. So early on, this caused a lot of tension. So then we had to come to God's mind, and that is that sex isn't God and it's not gross. It's a gift from God for the children of God. And so this is in the book, I'll just summarize it. So these are the reasons that God gave us marital intimacy. This is God's divine marriage design. Pleasure. Song of Songs, no children are mentioned, just married people having fun. Children, right. Be fruitful, multiply, increase in number, fill of earth, subdue it. Oneness, that the two shall be one. It connects you in a deep and profound way. And now the brain science confirms this intimate connection at the level of even your hard wiring at the biological level. Knowledge, Adam lay with his wife, even he knew her. Protection, don't deprive one another, but by mutual consent and for a time. Then devote yourselves to prayer so that Satan doesn't come and tempt you. And then comfort. There's an occasion where a child dies, you can't fix it and there's nothing to say about it so you just have ministry of presence and you're together in a deep way. That being said, let me give you a brief introduction to the Song of Songs and we'll pick it up again next week. So a couple of things about Song of Songs. It's the only book of the Bible that's solely about marriage. It's the only pure marriage book in the whole Bible. In addition, it was written 3,000 years ago in a very conservative Eastern Jewish environment, right. So, you're looking at ancient poetry and it's poetic. It's a husband and a wife

who are creative and poetic and they're singing a series of songs to one another. It's a series of their love songs. It's incredibly beautiful. They would read it, the Jewish people would at Passover, they would sing it at the pubs, and you are not allowed to read it until you were married or 30. So it's weird, like those 28-year-old guys, failure to launch, still live with their mom. Comes in at night, you know. He's under the blankets with a candle. What are you doing? Bible study. You know, he's in the forbidden book, okay. There is a question as to whether or not God is mentioned in the book. Possibly once, and you could check it for yourself. The husband, the male character is King Solomon. Six times, he's called Solomon. Four times, he's called the king. So it's King Solomon. In addition, there is a debate about the young woman. Her name is never stated, but she's called the Shulamite woman. She comes from the Shulamite region. She is blue collar. She's been working out in the hot sun according to the storyline of the Song of Songs. And so my summation is that she is the same young woman who is brought in as hospice or caretaker for Solomon's father, David, when he was dying on his death bed. David was dying, they brought in a young woman from the Shulamite region, she was blue collar, about the same age as this woman would be. She was the caretaker to dying David. My assumption is that Solomon watched this lovely high-character woman care for his dying father and his heart was inclined toward her. Later on, when Solomon's brother wanted to marry her, Solomon killed his brother. Okay. I don't know why you laughed, but that's what happened, okay. And apparently, you've got a brother who needs some healing. Okay, so. And so what happens is, I believe that then Solomon married her and that girl's name is Abishag. So what I, what we do, Grace and I, we call it Solomon and Abby. We're just gonna call her Abby for the sake of the series. A couple, and then they have their friends. These are their wise counsel, family and friends, either confirming or correcting issues in their relationship. Couple of fun facts as we get near the close. Number one, this book of the Bible was never made into a Veggie Tale. Don't know why. Never made into a Veggie Tale. All right. Number two, it has been very poorly taught with something called allegory by Bernardo Clerval, Saint John of the Cross, Aquinas and others. So as you're reading it, if you're wondering, oh, are the 80 concubines, the 80 heresies that attacked the church before the second coming of Jesus? No. And if you read the book and you're wondering, are the two breaths, the Old and New Testament that give us the pure milk of the word, not making this up, I've got a degree and footnotes, the answer is no. That's not what it's talking about. And if you see the sachet of myrrh between the breaths, you're wondering, is that Jesus between the old and new covenants? No, it's not. Okay. It's about a couple in love. Grace, have I crossed the line or danced vigorously on it? Should I keep going or is this a good time to stop? Okay, Grace says stop. All right, I'll bring my wife Grace up. And so, hi baby, love you. So we're gonna do one Q&A. I had fun. How about you? Was that awkward?

- Not at all.

- Not at all, okay. How many of you are really glad you're not married to a pastor right now? All right. All right, so we're gonna do one extemporaneous question for each service. You pick it. I don't know what we're doing.

- Okay, this one came in. It says, how can you, or can I watch porn if my wife allows it? How do

I, as a husband, build intimacy with my wife? Same guy asking these two questions.

- I probably shouldn't say anything.

- I just, it's a sad question to me because--

- It's an honest question, but it's sad--

- It's an honest question. I'm glad he asked it because I think it's where our culture is. It's very clear that our culture is right here. He's asking, basically his question is, how do I not have intimacy with my wife and how do I have intimacy with my wife? Because porn doesn't build intimacy with your wife.

- It doesn't connect you with your spouse.

- It doesn't build trust, and if you ask her this question, is it okay, you know, for me to watch porn, that's gonna do the opposite of building intimacy with her. It's gonna break down the relationship. So he sees sex as God and she probably, I don't know because we don't know by this question, but she probably sees it as gross, or at least if he asks her this question, she probably will.

- Yeah. So she's telling him, you're kind of gross and leave me out of it.

- A woman can never live up to the porn stars that men watch, and nor would they want to because it's not from a heart of God.

- Well, and it's not--

- It's brokenness.

- It's not the connection of two human beings, you know. And it's not love, it's not covenant, it's not connection, it's not intimacy, and it's not without shame.

- So the question, the second question we'll answer. How do we build intimacy with our spouse? And I think first of all, if you are struggling with porn, you can address that. There needs to be repentance there. That is a sin.

- Well, in the, it's in the book. So the new brain science says you build a pleasure path, neurological pleasure pathways and if you continue down a pleasure pathway, that opioid hit in the brain gets you into an addiction cycle. That could be drugs, alcohol, dangerous activity, you know, all kinds of things. And so lots of people have deep, profound addictions. And so much of what is online and in technology is literally just trying to hijack your brain and get you addicted to something that is unhealthy for you. And as soon as that happens, you can't continue down that

pathway. And so if you are stuck in that, you know, sort of neurological pleasure pathway and you're saying, I need my spouse to get on that pathway, it's like, well, that only goes south toward death. And so what you need is a new neurological pathway that goes toward marriage, that goes toward obedience and holiness, that goes toward your spouse. Job talks about this in Job 31:1. He says, I made a covenant with my eyes not to look upon anyone lustfully. What he's saying is, I'm only gonna have, you know, to quote that old song, eyes for you. And Paul says the same thing of a leader in the church, that they need to be the husband of one wife. In the original Greek text, it's literally a one-woman man. That your desires, your interests, your focus, and even in Genesis where it says that a man will leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, the language is that he pursues her, he's interested in her, his energy and his effort and his time is going toward her. And what this man is asking is what a lot of people in culture are trying, and that's impossible. It's like, can I go two directions at once? Can I go up and down? Can I go into God's will and down toward disobedience and hell? It's like, no, you can't pursue that and her. You've gotta make a choice which way you're going to go.

- Yeah. And the Bible's clear about sexual sin and porneia is kind of the root word of pornography. And that is, it's the junk drawer for any sexual sin that goes against not bonding with your spouse. One man, one woman spouse. And so porneia is a very, it's a sin. Pornography is a sin. And so there needs to be repentance here. There needs to be some honest conversations here. If this is a real struggle, then you need to get some wise counsel with that so that you can stop that addiction and then you and your wife can start to work toward intimacy, which is, from this standpoint, it's building that trust. A wife has to feel safe with her husband to be, to have true intimacy with him. Safe as far as physically, spiritually, emotionally, and porn takes you emotionally away and physically and spiritually away from your spouse. And whether you're a woman or a man, porn is, you know, sin, whether you're with, you're a woman too, so.

- Yeah. And it's a cultural epidemic.

- It is.

- And it's not something that can't be forgiven. It's not something that can't be healed from, it's not something that can't be overcome.

- Absolutely.

- But it has to be acknowledged. And when they ask the question, how do you build, you know, intimacy or connection, that has to be beyond the body. It has to be the whole person. I mean, you marry a human being and you want to connect with the whole person.

- Yeah. And your spiritual life together builds that intimacy first because you have the basis of building that intimacy with the Lord and then you're able to do that with each other because he gives you a freedom that your spouse can't give you. Jesus gives us freedom when we're truly

pursuing him and when we know his love for us, and then we can share that love, we can't love without God's love. We truly don't know how to do that. And so we can share that with our spouse once we have that from the Lord.

- So, how important is it for a woman to feel safe or secure with her husband to have any sort of intimacy, emotional, physical, mental, spiritual. How important is safety and security?

- Yeah, it's number one. It's, in studies, it actually shows that safety and security is the number one thing that women say they have to have to be able to have a flourishing relationship.

- And so for that, what are the things even spiritually that help build that safety and security? Because the point is this. I mean, it's often been said, you know, if you wanna have a good marriage, touch your wife's soul before you touch her body. And so spiritually then, what does it look like to build that deepest level of intimacy?

- Yeah, I mean the Bible talks about washing her with the word, I mean, being in the scripture with her, doing Bible study together, teaching her, but also, you know, having communication, having conversations spiritually together so it's not just awkward sex conversations, but you have deeper relationship than that. And so, you know, whether it's, you know, for us, we don't study together necessarily. We, you study one way, I study another way, and then we come together and have conversations about what we're learning.

- Sure.

- You can study together if that's, if that works for you guys. But that builds that spiritual intimacy. If you're studying the word together, if you're talking about sermons, that you are learning stuff together, anything like that that is--

- How about being prayed for, being prayed with?

- When you, yeah, when you pray for each other, pray over each other, all those things build safety.

- How about worshiping together?

- Yeah, I mean we do that too every Saturday at church.

- My favorite thing is to hold your hand and sing together. And I just feel like it's a spiritual declaration that we are united, worshiping the same God, under the same authority, going the same direction. Why do you think a woman would tell, and we, you know, providing this is accurate information, why do you think that a woman would tell her husband, it doesn't bother me, I'm okay with it.

- Either she doesn't want to deal with her own pain, that maybe she has trauma or something and so she just doesn't wanna deal with those. She's like, fine, do what you need to do, I don't need to be involved. Maybe she had, her identity is really damaged and so she thinks that somehow I'm never gonna measure up, so I'm just gonna let him do that. I mean, there's a lot of usually brokenness that would allow a woman to say that that's okay. Or maybe she just doesn't know. She needs to be trained in that and understand what God's word says about her and about their marriage.

- So what hope is there for a couple like this, because a lot of couples are gonna hear us and go, this sounds like a familiar story. What hope is there for a couple that this is a reality for them or a battle for them.

- There's always hope if we're willing to do it God's way. Our marriage can be healed, our marriage can be loving, it can be exciting and fun if we're wanting to do it God's way, since he created marriage as a covenant. There's a lot of hope. And so, and we, I mean, you told our story. We started out doing it all wrong, basically.

- Completely wrong.

- Yeah. And we weren't in God's will with how we were doing things. And even me giving you a Bible, that's great, but I should have broken up with you. I should--

- You should have hit me with the Bible.

- Yeah. Because that, I was dancing on God's grace. I mean, we don't need to mess with that, you know. And I'm thankful that God saw that through and he got the glory for it, but it could've gone a whole other way and I could have been in a bad relationship again. And so, me messing with that was not a good idea. But anyway, when you got saved and we were, you know, we wanted to then do things God's way. And I believe God has honored that. I mean, 30 years of marriage is no small thing. And it's awesome, you know. And we have fun and we wanna continue to learn and grow in our relationship together and allow God to deepen that and continue to change us and repent and grow closer in every way. And so there's a lot of hope. No matter where you are right now, if you want to pursue God's way of doing marriage and not the world's way, God can absolutely turn everything around.

- Well, and when God tells us not to do something, it's because he wants to keep us from hurting ourselves--

- That's right.

- And hurting the people we love. And if you believe that God is good, if he says no, then he must be keeping you from bad. And it's like a father who loves his kid and says, don't do that. It's not that they're against the child, they're actually for them. And Pastor Jimmy Evans, one of

our pastors, he's gonna be preaching here in March, and he says, you know, the couple that obeys God's word has a 100% success rate in marriage, and we believe that. And so, how crazy is it that where we started doing everything wrong, you give me a Bible and now we're teaching about what the Bible says about what we did wrong. I mean, that should be encouragement, right? Like, if-- You know, I mean, if there's hope for us, there's hope for them.

- Absolutely.

- If we can get some things figured out, God can be gracious and faithful to them as well.

- Absolutely.

- Thanks for 30 years, best friend. Thank you. So, why don't you close our, close this session in prayer. We'll release the Real Faith Live show. We will bring out Ben Fuller and have a little concert and some fun.

- Lord, thank you for the gift of marriage and the gift of intimacy in marriage. Lord, I pray that if there is wrong thinking about intimacy in this room, for these people, I pray that you would remove those lies and those false beliefs, Lord. And I pray that you would replace it with your truth and the beauty of your word about marriage and intimacy. Lord, thank you that you can make things right and you can, love can cover truly a multitude of sins and your love is perfect and amazing. So I just pray, Lord, that you would cover and forgive and bless these people that want to go in the direction that you have for them. In Jesus name, amen.