

“BLEEP” in the City: The lies we tell ourselves by Jill A. Williams

We live in a world where packaging is everything. Our senses overtake ‘sense’ and in the end, we don’t have a cent (get it?). The right kind of logo could sell a brand; the right form and finishes could popularise a product or structure, and a particular style of clothing can allow people to feel professional, cultured or casual. Humanity is constantly in search of what looks, feels and sounds “better,” and is never fully satisfied. Even sex is packaged - most commonly - in lust, scandal, lies, jealousy and pride.

It's about time that we look at what is usually a "bleep" in religious circles, in the light of Christ and with His mind-set. Can what is ‘sensuous’ ever be sanctified in this consumerist society? How can sex be seen as ‘holy’ again?

Idols International

“In every heart, there is an altar; on every altar, a god. Which god(s) is on yours?”
(Unknown- paraphrased)

Idolatry certainly did not die after the shenanigans that happened during the Exodus. We have a pantheon of gods on display all around us... and sex is certainly one of them. But isn’t sex a *good* thing? Isn’t it part of God’s plan and design for us? Of course it is! Without sex, you and I would not exist. However, as with all things God created, the devil has distorted the image and purpose of sex as well as the gift of sexuality. Pastor Michael Todd, the lead Pastor at Transformation Church, put it quite effectively: “This perversion of sex in society today, is silently eroding the destinies of so many people... The norm in society is that sexual culture is defined by Culture and not by the Word of God.”

I am sure you know a lot about the “Cultural” definition of sex, but how much you know about the “Biblical” definition of it?

‘V’ is for Valentine

As I got deeper into this issue, I realized I knew very little about ‘God’s view on sex’ myself. I kept bumping into societal norms and notions that relate to the topic such as dear old Valentine’s Day.

Imagine a pre-school teacher asking her class: “Kids... ‘V’ stands for?” and without hesitation, little voices chime with a resounding “V is for Valentine, teacher!” Everybody knows what a ‘Valentine’ is...even little toddlers! The world has been wired to think ‘red = love’; ‘heart-shapes = love’; ‘flowers and chocolates = love’. Can anybody guess what is used as a unit of measurement of this ‘love’ today? Sex. The sexier the better.

But... “Is that all there is?” (Black Eyed Peas – ‘Shut Up’) Is this the sum-total of love? Is this the true meaning of sex, the gift God gave to humanity?

Fantasy, Rom-Coms and Reality

Almost every woman I know has spoken of a scene from a movie or series with great longing or hope. Almost every little child wants to live a fairy-tale/fantasy in some way. Though this is generally innocent, when combined with the ever-growing porn industry and the over-sexed media industry, these platforms for 'hopes and dreams' could develop into breeding-grounds for lust and sin.

With our 'hope' and 'longing' formulated by the unrealistic glamour, progression and circumstances set out by what we feed our minds, it's not difficult to see why we tend to rush into relationships and into stages of relationships better left until marriage. We fix our eyes on the hope of "The One" and "Mr/Ms Right" based on standards not always aligned with God's plan for our lives. We all know how these things go... First comes love, then comes marriage, then comes the baby in the golden carriage. And sometimes sex comes before love. And sometimes money is what leads to marriage. Sometimes the baby, unwanted by both parents, gets dumped in a dumpster or toilet.

Our focus is so vested on 'body'... consuming enjoyment from what our fleeting emotions dictate to our flesh. Where is God in all this? And what happened to that "Real love"? "That grandmamma and granddaddy love?" (Marley Music - 'Give Me That')

"Elke pot het sy deksel" (Every pot has its lid)

I was greatly fascinated to find that the story of Tobias from the book of Tobit features in the Mass liturgy for weddings. This story tells of the young Tobias being sent by his blind father to Medes, where he experiences God's provision in all areas of his life, through the help of the angel Raphael. One blessing in particular, is one where he encounters and marries a woman whom he meets in Medes. This woman, Sara, had (unofficially) married 7 times! Each time, a demon would kill her spouse before the marriage was consummated. But, through the help of the angel Raphael, this did not happen to Tobias. (Phew!)

I believe it is possible that God worked through the unfortunate deaths of those seven men to show Sara and Tobias the sanctity of the marriage bed. If God does not give the 'yes' and bless the physical and spiritual union, then watch out for unwelcomed (and potentially deadly) guests...

Go deeper

Sex is only a portion of a relationship, one that cannot be enjoyed fully without spiritual intimacy, love and God's 'yes'. Yet, it plays a major role in the plan God had for humanity. (Which is probably why the devil would want to distort it...) Someone once said: "Sex is God-given and thus must be God-governed. It is powerful and can cause you to stumble if not used in the right context and time." So sex is holy. It is pure. It is beautiful. But that isn't always the case, because of our often vicious, selfish and pitiful inclinations.

In the next segment on this issue, learn more about the effects resulting from the misuse of sex and its impact on our Church and society.