



Introducing Sex & Worship (They're Quite Similar)

Welcome to the BibleGrapes theme study on Sex & Worship!

Here you'll find excerpts from my current book-in-progress, *Sex & Worship: The Presence of Intimacy, Passion, and Pleasure*. I'm sharing my thoughts prior to its publication for several reasons: I value your feedback; I need your prayers as I write; and I believe that what God has to say about our sexual lives is too valuable to keep it hiding on my hard drive until I finish the book. As I continue this venture, I pray that I will represent Him well.

God connects sex and worship; He pointedly describes how intimacy, passion, and pleasure pervade both realms. Sex, as God planned, is at its finest when intertwined with a joyful awareness of His presence. Not a lot of people make that connection.

Most of what we read or hear about sex focuses on behavior. That's not my focus. I center on the heart. As a pastor, I'm quite familiar with heart territory. When people come to me they expect to talk about the issues on their hearts. And so they do. Sometimes they tell me the same joys and delights they tell their families and friends. But more often I hear about matters less often discussed. Fear. Loneliness. Loss. Frustration. Anger. Hopelessness. Longing. Sometimes people even work up enough courage to talk about their sexual lives. I've had the repeated privilege to be trusted with such intimate sharing.

Many folks *know* they're dissatisfied with their sex lives but have little idea why that's so. Most have read advice on technique (which can help) – but learning technique hasn't gotten rid of their critical spirit. It also hasn't eliminated their fears, doubts, or guilty feelings. Some have followed the oft-spoken advice to "look after your own needs" – and ended up feeling vaguely alone and empty. (So has their partner.) Others have practiced communication skills and worked at emotional connection but still sense that something is missing.

A lot of folks *should* be dissatisfied with their sex lives but don't know it. They have no idea they're settling for far less than God wants to give. They may master skilled technique, clear communication, and emotional freedom – all wonderful things, yet all incomplete. What's missing? An awareness of God's presence. They unwittingly fail to combine physical pleasure with spiritual joy.

Heady human pleasures, alluring as they are, easily distract us from the awareness that God is sharing (and providing) our pleasure. When we invite only our bodies and souls into bed but leave God outside our bedroom door, sexual intimacy never reaches its intended potential. As C.S. Lewis said, we settle for far too little:

“It would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.” [C.S. Lewis, [The Weight of Glory](#)]

We’re designed for more thorough pleasures than body and soul can provide. Why “fool around” with mere earth-bound sex when we can welcome God’s participation and discover that there’s more to sex than we ever imagined? Let’s connect not just with our spouse, but also with the Lord. Such three-way intimacy – between husband, wife, and God – brings into our sexual experiences unexpected exquisiteness, for sex is at its finest when intertwined with a joyful awareness of God’s presence, participation, and delight.

Sex is at its finest when mingled with awareness of God’s joyful participation.

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