



# Solomon on Sex

## *God, Sex and Culture*

Small Group Work Sheet

January 8, 2012

### Part 1 - Ice Breaker

- Who is on your *Solomon on Sex Invest and Invite Card*? What steps have you taken to invite them?
- Have you given away any *Solomon on Sex Invitation Brochures*? To whom? How did it go?
- Did you choose to use a yard sign?

### Part 2 - Sermon Review

1. What did Pastor Kurt mean when he said that people have often treated sex as god? What is an example of this today? In history?
2. What are some modern day examples of the church treating sex as gross?
3. The sex is gross view often comes from half-truths, fears and bad experiences. What would you say to a person who has this view -- to try and convince them that sex is good?
4. What was your reaction to the statistics on consumption of pornography (\$60 billion a year business)? How far do you think politicians should go in fighting or regulating this industry?
5. Read Genesis 2:18-25: As a group think of all the implications for marriage and sex that come from this passage of Scripture (especially vss. 22-25)?

### Part 3 - Digging Deeper

The view that *Sex is Gross* has often been a view for Christians throughout history. Here are some humorous (but sad) quotes on the negative views taken of marital sexuality.

The ancient church was comfortable reaching into the marital bedroom and telling couples what they could and couldn't do. At times, church authorities tried to "outlaw" marital sex for much of the year.

*Church authorities issued edicts forbidding sex on Thursdays, the day of Christ's arrest; on Fridays, the day of his death; on Saturdays, in honor of the Blessed Virgin; and on Sundays in honor of the departed saints. Wednesdays sometimes made the list too, as did the 40-day fast periods before Easter, Christmas, and Pentecost, and also feast*

*days and days of the Apostles, as well as the days of female impurity. The list escalated until only 44 days a year remained available for marital sex!*

Leap forward to the 1800's and we find the deeply rooted attitude on the grossness of sex still controlling the church. One of my favorite illustrations of this comes from a letter written by a pastor's wife to a young woman before her wedding day. (This woman may have been a pastor's wife, but as a pastor, I am thankful she was not my wife!)

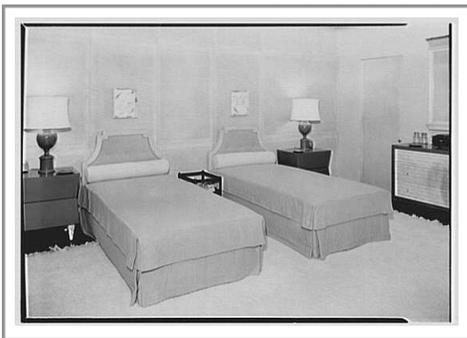
*To the sensitive young woman who has had the benefits of proper upbringing, the wedding day is, ironically, both the happiest and most terrifying day of her life. On the positive side, there is the wedding itself; on the negative side, there is the wedding night, during which the bride must "pay the piper," so to speak, for the first time the terrible experience of sex.*

*At this point, let me concede one shocking truth. Some young women actually anticipate the wedding night ordeal with curiosity and pleasure! Beware such an attitude! One cardinal rule of marriage should never be forgotten: GIVE LITTLE, GIVE SELDOM, AND ABOVE ALL, GIVE GRUDGINGLY. Otherwise what could have been a proper marriage could become an orgy of lust.<sup>2</sup>*

Another humorous example of the perceived grossness of marital sexuality is seen in a quote from Lady Hillingdon, a British aristocrat.

*I am happy now that Charles calls on my bedchamber less frequently than of old. As it is, I now endure but two calls a week, and when I hear his steps outside my door, I lie down on my bed, close my eyes, open my legs and think of England.<sup>3</sup>*

The negative attitude on human sexuality was still firmly entrenched in the early 1900's. Now I know why the parents in *Ozzie and Harriet* and *Leave it to Beaver* slept in different beds. Here is a quote from a popular book in 1907 on how a groom can love his bride sexually.



*Thousands of married men and women are suffering from the effects of excessive sexual indulgence. They drain their physical powers, weaken the intellect, and fail to attain the happiness and grand results which would otherwise be possible for them. It might be said that no man of average health, physical power and intellectual acumen can exceed the bounds of once a week without at least being in*

<sup>1</sup> Philip Yancey, "Holy Sex," *Christianity Today* (October 2003), p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> Ruth Smythers, "Instructions and Advice for the Young Bride," *The Madison Institute Newsletter* (New York: Spiritual Guidance Press, Fall 1894).

<sup>3</sup> Tom Gledhill, *The Message of the Song of Songs* (Downers Grove, Ill." Intervarsity, 1994), p. 171.

*danger of having entered upon a life of excess both for himself and for his wife.*

*Marital moderation is most easily secured and maintained where married persons occupy separate beds. Sleeping in the same bed is the most ingenious of all possible devices to stimulate and inflame the carnal passion. Often the best arrangement is to occupy separate rooms because then you can escape the sexual excitement which comes daily by the twice-repeated exposure of undressing and dressing in each other's presence.<sup>4</sup>*



I found these quotes humorous. I hope you did too. Next week, we will open up the *Song of Solomon* and see marital sexuality as God intended.

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<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Sylvanus Stall, D. D., *What a Young Husband Ought to Know* (Philadelphia: The Vir Publishing Company, 1907). pp. 79, 91, 95.