

Call to Faithfulness
Exodus 20:1-2, Exodus 20:14
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Good morning, friends. It's good to see you this morning, and thank you for joining us on the livestream this morning as we continue to work through this series, "Renewal in the Wilderness." Just as a brief reminder, this comes from God to His people as they were to follow Him after he had rescued them from physical slavery. But that physical slavery was also a picture of their spiritual enslavement of not knowing the Lord. So He didn't just give them physical freedom; He brought them into a loving relationship with Himself. And His intention and desire was that He would lead them and provide for them a place to live and to flourish.

But how were they to live? How were they to follow Him? And so the whole idea of wilderness we have to, as westerners, turn upside-down. Because the wilderness is as this image is. It was a desert place. It had places of refuge and places to grow and flourish as a people. But His desire was that they would be renewed, renewed in their relationship with Him, and He would show them how to live.

But I want to state again—and it bears repeating every single Sunday in which we look at the law of God. The law of God is not the gospel. It is not the way to the gospel. It is not how you sustain yourself in the gospel. It is an outcome of the gospel. It's not what we do to clean ourselves up to get to God. It's not what we do to keep ourselves clean so that God will not be mad at us. No, God's law is a reflection of His righteousness, which we could never, ever obey or bear or even see were it not for God being the first mover. God's grace being the dynamite that actually makes things happen. And it is His grace that disrupted a people who were in slavery, and he called them into a relationship with Himself, because of His purpose, His sovereign decision, His incredible mercy and love. Not because of anything they had in and of themselves or would ever have or be. It was all absolute, 100% grace.

And so as we look at God's law again, at how He desires that we are renewed in our relationship with Him, we must remember that every week as we look at the law, we're reminded of the relationship from which the law is to be understood. And so each week we've been reading the beginning, the prologue to the law, and only then reading the commandment. And so is the case now. The law of God is eternal, righteous, holy, and glorious. But it is a millstone around the neck of anyone who fails to see it in the context of a loving, gracious, redemptive relationship with a holy and gracious God.

So hear now God's Word, Exodus 20:1-2 and then verse 14.

And God spoke all these words, saying,

"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

"You shall not commit adultery." [ESV]

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Pray with me.

Heavenly Father, we ask that your Holy Spirit would be present with us. Thank you, Lord, that we do not have to ask you to speak, because you already have spoken, and you speak to us every day through the beautiful power of your word, the refuge of your word, the truth of your word, the comfort of your word, the conviction of your word, and the restoring power of your word. Yes, Lord, you have spoken and are speaking. Now, by your Holy Spirit, ready our hearts, our minds, and our ears, and our wills, and our bodies, and our relationships, and our church, and the testimony of our church. Make us ready to

listen. And may you renew us and revive us again in the glorious blessing that you have given to us as a people. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

This is a call to faithfulness. It is not merely stated in the negative, "You shall not commit adultery." This is a call to faithfulness. But before I go any further, I must obviously suggest to you that once any time anyone says anything about any subject, you recognize you can't say everything. So everything that could possibly be said about marriage or human sexuality or sex within marriage cannot be satisfied with one sermon. So please, I ask you for grace. This is not meant to be the whole statement—but I hope, certainly, the central part of what God's Word is telling us here.

So with that said, as we consider what God is teaching us here in His law, to be able to understand the call to faithfulness through this command to not commit adultery must be understood that it happens first and foremost because God has established a relationship with a people who He has called His own. And He has called them into loving relationship with Him as those who are human beings, that are a reflection of who God is as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Because He has covenanted Himself to a people, calling them into relationship with Himself, He therefore has the sovereign right and providential rule to guide and direct our sexual relationships in our marriages.

So this is an important part, that the relationship between husband and wife flows as a picture of God's relationship among Himself and the Godhead but also with His people—established by Him, fueled by love, shaped and empowered by grace. And this is what we are called to. So to be able to understand what is being said here, we are going to do three things. First, adultery defined; secondly, understanding desire; and then, call to repentance. Adultery defined, understanding desire, and call to repentance.

First, adultery defined. When God's Word tells us here that it says that you shall not commit adultery, what is He referring to? There are two things in which we can simply understand this commandment. It is both what is being said explicitly and what is being said implicitly. Explicitly, what is being taught here by this command is marital fidelity. And what is being prohibited is any sexual engagement, any and all sexual behavior with anyone, except with the person to whom you are married. What is in view here is the honoring and protecting of the covenant marriage bond. Full stop. That is what is in view.

And because God has called His people to be married and to enjoy marriage, and then as God enables and wills—not always—but as God enables and wills, to be procreating and having families. This was God's intention. God's intention is that the marriage in between a husband and wife is intended to be a covenant bond relationship that is, again, a reflection of God's covenant bond of relationship with His people. And it is to be protected.

Watch the flow. God says, "What I have done to bring you into relationship to me." He then says, "You are to worship the Lord your God, and you are to have no other idols." Meaning that if you go outside the relationship with our heavenly Father and seek to worship anything other than Him, is a form of spiritual adultery. And that relationship is meant to be protected and honored. And God has done so because He's shown Himself to be faithful and loving and kind. And he says, "You shall have no other gods before me." And then that begins to rain down in all the relationships.

And then as we begin to understand, as we looked at last week, the whole idea of murder, when you take somebody else's life, what you are doing is you are marring the glory of the Imago Dei, the image of God, created in another. You're robbing God of something which He has created, and you're robbing them of life. That, too, is protected.

So what God has done for us is then to be mirrored in our relationship horizontally, and here it is the marriage relationship. What is prohibited, again, is to engage in any and all sexual behavior with

anyone except your spouse. What is in view is the honoring and protecting of the covenant marriage bond. But then there is also something, and many things, which are being taught implicitly. A word that I like to use is telescoping. Because of the subject matter and what's being protected here and honored, He's telescoping about all other forms of sexual behavior. The broader sexual ethic which the law does not explicitly say here is found in other places like Exodus 22, Leviticus 21, Deuteronomy 22, Deuteronomy 27, just to name a few. It goes into more explicit explanation that though marriage is the foundation of the sexual relationship which God has intended and created, there are also specific sexual prohibitions that is included within sexual immorality. That is implied within the law itself.

So adultery defined is not terribly complicated. And so often times, that's the reality of life. The definitions are simple. The application is far more complicated. And because we are sinners, as the Bible teaches, it is also something which is simple then made an absolute mess. You see, human sexuality is a gift from God. It is a gift from our God because we are made in His likeness, male and female, and we reflect the loving relationship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The scriptures present the grand vision of husband and wife mirroring the intimate relationship of the Trinity through the intimate, emotional, psychological beauty of a husband and wife in sexual union. This is God's design. This is God's gift. This is God's blessing.

And so it is a profound mystery. It is a profound mystery, which clearly humanity has not completely exhausted because we keep writing songs about it. We keep doing movies about it. We keep writing poems about it and books. We clearly have not exhausted the subject. Why? Because it is a profound mystery, beautiful and powerful. And we discover God's purposes for our sexuality and His will for how we are to express our sexuality because he is the one who has created us. This is the belief, the orthodox belief, of the Christian church. And the beauty and power of the gospel, the beauty and power of the gospel—let me say it again—the beauty and power of the gospel is what shapes who we are sexually and what that looks like in marriage.

Before we ever talk about anything else, we have to ask the simple question: who has the right to say who and what we are? According to the word of God—you may disagree with me. Disagree with me as you like, but I would encourage you to disagree with the scriptures first because it is the scriptures that say that it is God who is the creator of all. And if He is the creator of all, and He is the loving God of grace and mercy and redemption, then He is the one who gets to define us. I do not get to define myself alone. And what God is saying here in His commands is the relationship which He has set up, though not everyone is called to marriage. But those who are in marriage are obligated to adhere to the law because of an outcome of what God's grace has done in you and because of what He has intended for sex to be in the beauty of marriage.

But the realities are, as the scriptures clearly teach, as the result of the first two chapters of Genesis and then on into Genesis 3, we ought to grieve and lament the reality. As Paul would say, "For all have sinned. All humanity has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," found there in the earliest chapters of the Bible. Our disobedience and disregard for God. We've said, "We've got our own definitions. We're good." And as a result, the image of God and what He has intended for husbands and wives and sexuality as a gift has all been completely disordered.

But I need to state clearly that it is not just adultery defined as we see it here in Exodus 20, but it is also understanding desire itself. This is actually the deeper and harder work of being in relationship with a gracious God. And it is there in understanding desire that we begin to see the broader application of the seventh commandment. And I want to state clearly that Jesus in His teaching rightly understands how we are made, and He wants us to understand that sexual faithfulness doesn't find its beginning in behavior modification. It's actually something more hard to do than simply behavioral modification. It is actually

understanding that we are first and foremost not brains on a stick, "I think therefore I am." That's not what the scriptures teach. We're also not merely just automatons going around acting as whatever we want. We're not actors first. We are fundamentally, first and foremost, desiring beings. What drives our actions, what drives our reason and our thoughts is so oftentimes right-seated in the will and the heart and the desire of man.

And so there are two passages I want you to be aware of as Jesus more deeply applies the seventh commandment in light of a call for us to understand desire. But before I do, I want to just say, it's not just Jesus. And if you're not a believer and you're wanting to tune out, let me say, it's not just Jesus. It's also those who don't believe in Jesus say the same thing. Consider the words of the author David Foster Wallace. He says:

"In the day-to-day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism. There is no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship. If you worship money and things, if they are where you tap real meaning in life, then you will never have enough, never feel you have enough. It's the truth. Worship your body and beauty and sexual allure and you will always feel ugly. And when time and age start showing, you will die a million deaths before they finally grieve you.

"On one level, we all know this stuff already. It's been codified as myths, proverbs, clichés, epigrams, parables; the skeleton of every great story. The whole trick is keeping the truth up front in daily consciousness. Worship power, you will end up feeling weak and afraid, and you will need ever more power over others to numb you to your own fear. Worship your intellect, being seen as smart, you will end up feeling stupid, a fraud, always on the verge of being found out."

What David Foster Wallace is saying in very everyday street language, telling us to keep it up front in our daily consciousness, is "be careful what's going on at the seat of our desires." Because what you desire is what you worship. If we ignore desires, which are fueled and shaped by lots of things, we will not be aware of just how easily failing at the seventh commandment can be.

But hear now the words of Jesus. Two passages I want to bring to our attention. First, Matthew 5. In Matthew 5, Jesus says these words in verses 27 and following: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart." And then he gives the suggestion. "Guess what? If that's happening to you, you actually have the ability to gain enough self-control to say no." But what is He talking about, this lustful intent? So He's just taken the seventh commandment and taken it deeper, beyond the behavior on the outside, and shown us the connection to the inside desire. The word there, "lustful desire," is *epithumeó*, which literally means "lustful intent."

And that has in view the prohibition and use of pornography and all of its attendant families and all forms of lust, that though it might not be the physical engagement with another person that is not your spouse, in the heart, it is still the same sin but different by degree. And left unchecked, it will lead to greater and greater searing of the heart, hardening of the heart, and the damage to marriage. This is increasingly—let me say loud and clear—this is not just a man thing. It is also for women. Boys and girls. Jesus says, be careful of what's going on in the desire, the intent.

But then again in Mark 7, He says the following in verses 20 and following. He said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these [evil] things come from within, and they defile a person." What He's just done is

He's just gone along the moral law of God and said it's very easy for us to go along with our nice little Monday morning checklist and going, "Okay, let me see if those behaviors are lining up in my life." And we look to the exterior. And He says, "Be careful. It's not just about behavior modification."

Why? Because they start in the heart. Because when He uses the phrase in light of the seventh commandment, when He says the word "sexual immorality," the word that is being used there is *porneia*. And that word, *porneia*, is the word that we get the word "porn" and "pornography," but also covers all forms of sexual immorality such as prostitution, premarital and postmarital sex, molestation, sexual abuse, rape, homosexuality. All of these things are in view, that Jesus says, "Be careful that you're not looking to your external righteousness. Be aware of what's happening on the inside. Because that's the seat."

With that in mind, I want to clearly say that in the next month and a half, I will be 24 years in full-time vocational ministry. And in those 24 years, I have had the blessing and the honor and the challenge of working with those who are married and not married, those who are being counseled in premarital, those who are getting counseling in the midst of marriage, and those who are walking through the pain of divorce because of sexual sin. I cannot recall a single case that began with the flip of a light switch and the spouse decided to leave the marriage to find sexual satisfaction outside of it.

Exclusively—I'm just one pastor. But 100% of the cases I have walked through with others has always begun with a lot of million little microscopic decisions that are motivated and shaped by desires that have gone unchecked, unevaluated, unseen, because they are often being shaped by pains and hurt and anger and resentment that honestly people try to keep down, stuffed in, zipped up, under the veil. And then when that happens, over time, it must find a way to find a release. And it does, and it will. And it's not just for married people. It is also for those who are single, those who want to be single, and those who don't desire to be single. It is the problem of desire. Not that desiring is the problem. It's that we forget that that is often the seat. This is what Jesus is telling us to be careful of. Be careful of the sin that is crouching at the door.

And I want to say as loudly as I can, thank you Dr. Leland Ryken, professor of literature at Wheaton College. Thank you, Dr. Ryken, for what I'm about to say. I am so tired of Christians being portrayed as the sexually stiff, the cold, not romantic or understanding or having fun. Nothing could be further from the truth in reality. And so often times we're afraid of talking about the subject. And when we often have talked about the subject, whether about desire or sexual behavior, over the last 30 years, I fail to see many, many examples—I see some—but many examples where it's being taught the wrong way, in hurtful ways. And I will say, it is very easy sitting and standing in the comforts of the pulpit, with the bully pulpit, with a position by my name. It's very oh-so-easy to know that there are those who are hearing my voice, that hope that what I might do is take the finger and point at the world. That's easy. Because I remember what it was like to be those in the world who did not honor God or know Him or know His grace and mercy. I had no reason to curtail my sexual activity. No motivation.

This message isn't for the world first. It is for His church first. And if we have failed to understand desire, it is a warning to us to wake up. What is going on inside of you that is shaping your desires and your behaviors? How are you addressing them? Are you compartmentalizing them? You can have accountability for behavior. It's very hard to have accountability for desire, which is why we need the work of the Holy Spirit, the work of God's word and Jesus to hear us, inviting us in, to allow the light of God's word and the power of His grace and mercy to remind us that we've been brought into relationship with Jesus Christ, bought with a price, who gave His life for us that we might have life. And in so doing, those who call on Christ are united to Him.

And because we're united to Him, we're given the Holy Spirit, and we're given the word, which comes and gives me the third verse I want you to be reminded of. And that is this. 1 Corinthians 10:13. "No temptation has ever taken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability. But with the temptation, he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it." The Lord provides the ability to be renewed in our desires and in our behaviors, forgiven and remade and reshaped and healed, and to have the power to say "no" to desires that lead us away from fidelity. And He can replace them with new desires, to run to Him and to love our spouse as Christ loves the church.

That brings me to my final point this morning, the call to repentance. And so I normally don't do this, but I want to make sure that I'm not misunderstood. So I'm going to read from something that I've written. At the fall of humankind, recorded in Genesis 3, we began to distort and misuse the gifts of God to our own shame. But through His gracious, redemptive work in Jesus Christ, God is leading us from brokenness and rebellion to a full and beautiful restoration of our relationship with Him, and our human dignity, and our relationship with others. This is what God has done, despite our sin. Because God has made us and because He has redeemed us, He alone has sovereign authority to define who we are and how we ought to behave and desire in terms of our sexuality.

We, therefore, must resist every temptation and renounce every attempt to subvert God's purposes and His commandments concerning our sexuality. At the same time, as Presbyterians, if you are a Presbyterian, if you are a Christian—as Christians, if you profess Christ, we must readily and sorrowfully confess our manifold violations of His word as a people, as individuals, when we have engaged in premarital sex, adultery, ungodly divorce, and sexual lust of every sort. Not only before coming to Christ in faith, but also our sexual sin after we've come to Christ.

You see, it's all too easy to point the finger at the world that does not proclaim Christ, but we must come to terms with what's happened in the Christian church. But first, I want to start with the individual. First, a message to those who have experienced or are experiencing sexual brokenness as the result of someone else's sin against you. If you have been abused, accosted, raped, whatever the case may be, you need to hear loud and clear: you are not guilty of adultery. Can you believe that that's what some Christians have taught? You are not. That is not what the Bible teaches.

So therefore, I must tell you that if you have experienced sexual brokenness, we must all remember that we are all broken in every way. None of us can escape brokenness, which is why it requires profound humility without condemnation to come alongside one another in our brokenness, including our sexual brokenness, with the hope and the grace of the gospel, and be willing to listen and to hear. First, I believe what God calls us to, of course, is first individual repentance.

So just a couple questions. Is the gospel shaping your sexual relationship with your spouse? If you find that question even hard to imagine, I encourage you to find someone with whom you can speak. If that question makes you uncomfortable, the gospel then is not shaping your sexual desires. God has given sex as a gift, and you bet the gospel shapes it. We need to understand the freedom to ask the question, is the gospel shaping your sexual relationship with your spouse? Where it can give power and beauty to this unique relationship and provide a reason to celebrate sexuality and remember and model Christ's love for the church in our sexual relationship with our spouses.

Secondly, another question. Do you treat your spouse's body like a theme park that you visit once in a while like a cheap tourist looking for a thrill? Do you know that it is a lie, that your spouse's body is not your property? It is not. Our bodies are to be given to one another in marriage. As Christ gave His body for the church, we give our bodies to our spouses so that they might enjoy and flourish sexually. We are not a cheap tourist looking for thrills from them, for that can cause hurt and pain.

We must dispel this notion, as well, and must repent of the idea that men have sexual needs but women only have emotional sexual desires. First, we must dispel the lie that men can't help it. That is a lie and has no place in scripture. Men have been told for the last 30 or 40 years, "Well, ladies, men just can't help it." Not true. Because we know that sex is not a need. It is a good desire. Because if it was a need, then Jesus as savior wouldn't make any sense. It's a good thing. It's a gift. But it's not a need. And if you think your desire is beyond your control, we haven't fully then embraced the power of the gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit to remake our desires. He can wholesale over time at the deep sinews of your desiring life, completely transform what you desire and why. But that's the hard work, long work, deep work of spiritual maturity in Jesus Christ. Men can help it.

And women also have desires, and we ought not to blame them. Out of this idea that men can't help it came this whole purity movement, this idea, "Well, really, if women would just curtail how they're dressing, that will solve the problem." Or maybe, "I can't be with another woman alone, because that might be a problem." All along, what we're not understanding is that women hear that as "your sexual problem is my fault." It's not. Men must hear the power of the gospel to know what the grace and power and the renewing strength of the Holy Spirit can bring. No, I'm not suggesting perfection. But I am say self-control. For that is one of the fruits of the Spirit. And if it's a fruit of the Spirit, then the natural understanding and expectation of every man who calls on Christ is the following: then self-control is something that I ought to expect and can experience.

And we must dispel the lie. We must dispel the lie, again, and I'll repeat it, that our spouse's bodies are our property. I think I know where that comes from, but it's a misinterpretation. Our bodies are a gift to each other, not property, to be cherished and honored and respected and loved. And the desire issue is not just for men. It is also for women. It is a place where women, too, are called to repentance, to ask the question, how is the gospel shaping your desire for your husband? Is it disordered? Where do you need help? Where is the power of the gospel to bring renewal?

But not just individually are we called to repent of lies that we often find ourselves believing. It is also time, high time, friends, for us to not just individually ask the Lord to bring renewal and revival in the lies and sexual relationships of husbands and wives in the church. We, the church of Jesus Christ, must also repent and grieve and lament of the sin, of the sorry state of the testimony of the church of Jesus Christ on this front. We sometimes have self-righteously condemned others for their sexual sins while committing the very same things ourselves.

As a church of Jesus Christ, Columbia Presbyterian, we stand in need of God's forgiveness and of His power to live holy lives. We desperately need this renewal. But we also need the humble return to godly practice of our sexuality, but also godly, humble practice of coming alongside others, not with pointed fingers, but with prayerful postures. With humble and repentant hearts, return to the Lord and invite those inside the church and outside the church to find fulfillment sexually in how God has designed it. For in it, there is blessing.

But this self-righteousness we must continue to remember and confess and ask you, O Lord, please forgive us. Consider just the last ten years. The president of the National Association of Evangelicals caught in a sexual scandal, Ted Haggard. Joe White, head of Kanakuk Camps, the man who came after him, Pete Newman, all caught in sexual molestation. Bill Hybels, Doug Phillips, deep within the homeschooling movement and the purity movement, the Quiverfull movement, guilty of sexual sin. Bill Gothard, a man who preached a form of gospel that is not the gospel but legalism, himself guilty of multiple sexual offenses. Dinesh D'Souza, the Duggard family, CJ Mahaney and Sovereign Grace Movement, and last but certainly not least, the very recent and very real sadness for the victims of Ravi Zacharias.

Ladies and gentlemen, whether we agreed with any of these people, supported any of these people, whether we knew any of these people, I must tell you, it's not just these who are well-known. It's also from within the ranks of our own churches, with our own presbytery. My friends with whom I started ministry 24 years ago, sadly I've seen friends fall prey to sexual sin, both elders and teaching elders and deacons and leaders, ministry leaders. I must say, it greatly saddens me. Because even though we don't know all of these people, I must tell you, because they proclaim the name of Christ, the body of Christ is lumped in. And what the world sees and hears is condemnation. But what they see is hypocrisy. Lord, have mercy. Because in the face of the hypocrisy, thousands and upon thousands bought the books, went to the conferences, celebrated the ministries. And it didn't go unnoticed. And then when it tried to find its way into the light, the systems of protection went into full throttle. And the blame-shifting began to the victims. It's the same old story. Lord, Lord, have mercy.

But I believe, ladies and gentlemen, that God doesn't just offer bland, unspecific forgiveness and healing. If the gospel cannot bring forgiveness and cleansing and renewal in our sexual lives, it is no gospel. But the word of God tells us that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and that if we come to Him, Jesus comes to all as is pictured in the prodigal son. The father runs to the son and embraces him, not waiting for the son to clean himself up, not waiting for the son to make himself righteous. No, he embraces His son.

And Jesus on the cross embraced our sin, though He was not guilty of it, and He took it upon Himself, including all of our impurity, all of our filth, all of our sin, both in our desires, our dreams, our imaginations, and our physical impurities. He took it all, and He gives to us forgiveness. And He offers to us a renewing relationship, which goes deep down in a place where no one can see, and gives us new desires, new longings. And the platform and the grace to enjoy sexually beautiful marriages that are bound up in faithfulness, not because we're righteous, but because He's capable. Not because our husband might be handsome for now or our wife might be beautiful for now. No, because we get to give ourselves to them as the Lord has given Himself to us. And in that can be experienced a profound, beautiful, emotional, psychological, and physical flourishing that no song will ever capture, no poem will ever exhaust. This is what is on offer. But it requires work, by His spirit and grace.

Again, I can't say everything. I wish I could. I'm going to get to this afternoon and wish I had said something else, or maybe wished I hadn't said that. I don't know. Have grace.

We need to continue this conversation. And I encourage you, if you're in need of counseling and help, we want to help you find the need fulfilled, so that you can find those who can help you work through these important matters. But I pray for individual and corporate repentance, that we can walk humbly and quietly with our God in fidelity to Him, enabled by grace, and in fidelity with our wives and our husbands, to the glory of His name and to the flourishing of His church and the testimony to the power of the gospel. And that we, before the watching world, would walk alongside others who, too, are sexually broken and in need of grace and mercy and not condemnation. May the Lord do this. Let's pray.

Father, I thank you for the patience of my hearers. But Father, I ask that you would work in us deep and profound renewal, empowerment to fidelity with our husbands and our wives. And Father, I pray that our marriages would flourish, not because they are perfect or will ever be perfect, but because your grace is enough. Jesus is enough. But where there is brokenness, Lord, bring about the grace of the gospel. Where there is need of mercy, Lord, bring mercy. Where there is need of strength and self-control, may your spirit bring new desire. But Lord, if for no other reason, the first and foremost reason is that your name would be glorified and that the gift of sexuality and marriage would be honored and preserved to the glory of your name and for the benefit and good of your people. Lord, have mercy. Refine and renew us. In Jesus' name. Amen.