

God's Guide to Sex

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Everyone knows about the similarities between animal and human sexuality, but what about the differences? And what are the implications of those differences?

God cares deeply about your sex life.

What? You've got to be kidding, right? After all, doesn't God say don't do it while most people do? Does He know what we've been doing?

Surprising to many, God is quite concerned about our sexuality and wants us to have the best sex possible. And yes, He does know what each of us has been doing. And He's disappointed that so many are cheating themselves out of one of the greatest joys of being human—a rich, rewarding sex life.

God created sex

The ironic part of today's flawed understanding of sex is that by rejecting God's instruction, many have ended up with greatly diminished happiness. What instruction does God give that allows us to understand and best enjoy His gift of sexuality? What's missing in the sexual education most people are receiving?

The mistaken ideas that God doesn't like sex and that He doesn't want us to enjoy this most intimate of human relationships is contradicted by the fact that *God Himself* was the designer and creator of the male and female bodies.

The Bible tells us that in the beginning, "God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; *male and female He created them*" (Genesis 1:27) So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

See All..., emphasis added throughout). In noting all of His creative efforts, including making us male and female, God said that it was all "*very good*" (verse 31). So there wasn't a design problem, and God clearly isn't against sex.

If God hadn't intended for us to have sexual relationships, He could have created us as androgynous beings, neither feminine nor masculine, who reproduce by an asexual process. But He didn't do that. God instead created us male and female with a strong desire to use and enjoy our sexuality.

And as we will see, following the biblical instructions God gave for this wonderful gift is critically important for the happiness all of us seek.

A closer look at the physical side

From a strictly physical perspective, it seems that human sexuality has been studied in every way possible. From the organs themselves to fertility to the intricacies of gestation and birth, we are awash with the technical details of sex. Indeed, it seems that more knowledge is available regarding these physical aspects than any single human being could ever think to ask.

Among those who have sought to add to our understanding was Charles Darwin (1809-1882), the British naturalist famous for his theory of evolution through natural selection.

Darwin spent thousands of hours studying animals and flora while postulating the implications of his studies to human beings. His ideas regarding sexual selection (the theory that competition for mates between individuals of the same gender drives the evolution of certain traits) were introduced in his first book, *Origin of the Species*, and even more exhaustively presented in his second book, *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*.

Yet in all this sea of knowledge, it seems that humanity in general has overlooked some simple observations that should lead any rational person to the conclusion that *human sexuality was designed far differently than animal sexuality*.

As Romans 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: See All... notes, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, *being understood by [means of] the things that are made* , even his eternal power and [Godhood]; so that they are without excuse" (King James Version, emphasis added throughout).

Put another way, things we observe about human beings (including their sexuality) should lead us to a better understanding of God. So what have we missed? In all of Darwin 's studies, what did he miss? And why didn't he see the spiritual connections?

Through his studies as a naturalist, Charles Darwin quickly realized that there were undeniable similarities between animal and human sexuality. Reasoning that he should only consider physical data,

Darwin theorized that all life came into existence through natural, observable means. This premise provided a basis for excluding God because God is supernatural—above and beyond physical dimensions.

Taking the scriptural account of creation out of the equation, Darwin assumed that human beings were simply part of the animal kingdom. This flawed premise has led to untold confusion not only about the origins of life, but also about what kind of human conduct would lead to the greatest human sexual satisfaction.

Noting that many animals typically mate with any opposite-sex member of their species that happens to be present at the appropriate time, some have mistakenly assumed that it is normal and natural for people to do the same. In fact, some proponents of Darwin's theory have openly admitted that their acceptance of his idea was sexually liberating. It gave them freedom to do whatever they wished. After all, if human beings are simply animals, why shouldn't we act similarly?

Sadly, this kind of reasoning has contributed to enormous ignorance about God's purpose for human sexuality. Sadder still, it has *diminished* our happiness. Commenting on those who rejected God, Paul explains that "their foolish minds became dark and confused. Claiming themselves to be wise without God, they became utter fools instead" (Romans 1:21-22 [21] Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

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See All..., The Living Bible).

In other words, when we refuse to accept God's instructions, our thinking becomes limited and unsound. This is especially true when it comes to sex.

Differences between animals and human beings

In observing the animal world, several important differences become quickly apparent. First, animal sexuality is, in general, much simpler than that of human beings. We might say that it is essentially "programmed."

In animals, mating occurs only when a female is "in heat"—that is, when the female's body has undergone changes, such as the release of a scent, to indicate to males that she is ready to be impregnated. Human beings, by contrast, are prepared for and willing to have sex much more frequently.

Second, animals mate for the purpose of producing offspring. Animals don't have sex simply for pleasure or because they love or have emotional feelings for each other, as do human beings. Instead, as already mentioned, animals essentially mate with whichever member of their species meets the selection criteria at the appropriate time.

If multiple females are around, males will often fight for the right to impregnate the females while the females await the dominant male, whichever one that happens to be. And as illogical as it may seem, some theorize that it is perfectly okay for human beings to conduct themselves the same way, mating with whomever happens to be around.

Third, animals have no shame when it is time to mate. They do so in the open, among the other animals, no matter who or what is watching. Exhibitionists notwithstanding, this is not the way most people conduct themselves.

So how did Darwin deal with these all-too-obvious differences between animals and people? While holding that human beings were still part of the animal kingdom, he theorized that we are simply at a higher level of evolutionary development.

Of course, when one rejects the biblical account of creation, such reasoning may seem perfectly logical. After all, if there are no guidelines or instructions, similarities between animals and people can give the appearance that there is little difference between the two.

When people act like animals

Setting aside God's instructions regarding human conduct, people have experimented with just about every kind of sexual relationship imaginable—including woman with woman, man with man, group sex, one man with multiple women, one woman with multiple men. Some are so perverted they approve of acts between adults and minors and even sexual activity with animals.

In spite of all the experimentation, research conclusively shows that traditional families—wherein sexual relationships are only between the father and mother—produce the most successful children.

As psychologist Robert Evans explains in his book *Family Matters: How Schools Can Cope With the Crisis in Childrearing*: "Children need what both fathers and mothers naturally provide. No wonder an

extensive review of studies of parenting found children raised by traditionally sex-typed parents to be more competent than others" (2004, p. 49).

But instead of accepting these results, those who reject God attack the research, arguing that it was flawed by preconceived social values and that when society becomes more open to alternative sexual relationships, they also will produce emotionally and psychologically sound, stable children. Such is the blind faith in faulty premises.

Pursuing the theory

When Darwin theorized that human beings were on a higher level than animals, he was onto a principle that he should have pursued more fully. Regrettably, he omitted the data that could have reshaped his thinking and provided the keys to the understanding he was seeking. He chose not to accept what the Bible reveals about the unique status of humankind.

When we look into God's Word—His instruction book for mankind that includes additional knowledge beyond what we can physically discover—we find the crucial information that helps us understand human sexuality. God's Word reveals that we are indeed on a higher level than animals. In fact, we are so much higher than animals that we are *in a separate category altogether*.

In the earliest chapters of the first book of the Bible we find that God made each animal to reproduce "according to its kind" (Genesis 1:24-25 [24] And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. [25] And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

See All...). But when He made man, God made him in *His own* "image," in *His own* "likeness" (verse 26). Human beings were modeled *after God—not after other animals!*

Being created in God's image means that we have godlike abilities and potential unlike any animal. We can think in the abstract. We can make plans for tomorrow or for a lifetime. We have a highly sophisticated ability to communicate with each other through written and spoken words. We have mobile phones, computers and the Internet. We can appreciate art, music and beauty in ways that no animal enjoys.

And these magnificent qualities, so far beyond what animals can do, are only the beginning.

God, through His Word the Bible, tells us that we were designed for God's "pleasure" (Revelation 4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

See All..., King James Version), which includes becoming part of His eternal family (Ephesians 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

See All...; Luke 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

See All...). Unlike animals, we have the opportunity to live forever as beings transformed into divine spirit rather than earthly matter (1 John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

See All...; 1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

See All..., 41-53).

When we consider emotions and the spiritual principles on which human life is patterned, we see additional evidence that God made mankind, not animals, in His image.

Emotional differences between man and animals

While animals display a variety of individual temperaments, these emotional expressions are quite lowly in comparison to those of human beings. This huge difference between animals and people is so well understood that cartoonists have had extremely successful careers portraying animals with humanlike feelings and conversations. Their work is funny because everyone knows animals aren't just like human beings—especially when it comes to reasoning, conversations, perspectives and human emotions.

When we are feeling discouraged or upset, we have the capacity to self-analyze and change our outlook if we so desire. Our ability to do this is called "emotional intelligence," and although this varies with each person, we can all learn how to manage and even reshape our feelings. For example, it is common knowledge that we can often talk to others and choose behaviors—such as exercising or listening to calming music—that will reshape our thinking and put us in a different mood.

Although emotional intelligence has, until recently, been one of the most overlooked measures of intelligence, researchers such as Daniel Goleman have come to the conclusion that it is one of the most critically important measures of a person's ability to succeed.

This more highly developed emotional intelligence that is unique to human beings is also a means through which we can have understanding of and contact with our Creator. God, through His Holy Spirit,

can work with our thinking and reasoning. When we acknowledge that we do indeed have a Creator, we can read His Word and go to Him in prayer to help change our moods.

This emotional difference between animals and people is also an important aspect of human sexuality. For us, sexual intimacy forms an emotional bond. Under normal circumstances, we human beings each like to have our personal space. For example, in a typical, nonsexual conversation, we simply don't like people getting too close to us.

But as we all know, in the marital relationship there is not only closeness but a literal joining of two bodies together. This physical intimacy along with the pleasure of sexual intercourse tends to produce an emotional bond between the partners.

This is one of the reasons why people who have an intimate relationship and regularly have sexual intercourse miss each other so much when they are away and why they often get "the blues" or have "heartaches" when they break up. Sex for human beings is far more than simply a biological itch that can be scratched without further impact. God made human sexuality to be an intensely personal activity that produces far-reaching emotional consequences.

Spiritual insight from God's Word

While human beings quickly come to understand much of the physical side of sex, many acquire little knowledge of the *emotional and spiritual dimensions* that make it complete. Without this knowledge, men and women miss out on one of the greatest joys of life and the happiness that God makes available to those who understand His plan for humanity and follow His instructions.

So what was God thinking when He created us as sexual beings? This question is the one so very few ever ask; its answer is the foundation for sexual fulfillment.

When God made us, there were two major spiritual principles on which we were created. The first, already noted, is that we were made in God's image for the purpose of ultimately becoming part of His family.

In Genesis 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

See All... God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness." Of all God's creation, only human beings have this unique heritage and basis of existence. And just as we reproduce and expand our families, so God is likewise reproducing Himself and expanding His family, giving us the opportunity

to become part of that family (see John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

See All...; Ephesians 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

See All...; 2:19; 3:14-15).

In the bigger picture, we need to remember that this physical life is not all there is. This life is not the most important thing. A cause and purpose is being worked out here on earth that is far bigger than any one of us, yet each of us can be part of this grand design. (For more information about God's purpose for you, be sure to read our free booklet **What Is Your Destiny?**).

The second major spiritual principle on which we were created is related to our emotional intelligence and sexual conduct. In writing about marriage, the apostle Paul explained that the husband-wife relationship represents the relationship between Jesus Christ and His Church (Ephesians 5:31-32 [31] For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. [32] This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

See All...).

God's plan for Jesus to die for the forgiveness of our sins has been in existence since the foundation of the world (compare Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

See All...). The way Christ gave Himself for the Church is the model of conduct for husbands, and the way the Church is supposed to respond to Christ is the model of conduct for wives.

God wants us to learn to control our thoughts and actions and to learn what true love really is, and marriage is the best environment given to mankind for learning these crucial spiritual principles and traits.

When we understand that a definite intelligent design was involved in our creation by a great, loving God, we begin to understand just how different we are from animals. With this foundation, we can also have a greater appreciation for His rules for sex.

God's rules for happiness

When God created us both male and female, He knew that we would need instructions on how to use our sexuality for good—so we could lead full, happy, complete lives. In fact, when we study the Bible, the subject of sex is one of the topics mentioned most often. Yes, the Bible *is* filled with sex! And in its pages

God not only gives us timeless instructions about sex, but He also includes the results of what happens when His rules are broken.

God is no prude. He isn't embarrassed. He clearly explains what works best and what He had in mind for His gift of human sexuality. As a loving Father, He wants us to be happy. So He gives us instructions that will produce the full, satisfying lives we desire. In fact, key principles about sex are found in the first two chapters of the first book of the Bible!

After reading that God was the Creator of sex (Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

See All...), we then see how it was to be used: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed" (Genesis 2:24-25 [24] Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

[25] And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

See All...).

From this brief overview we learn several important principles. First, we see that the foundational definition for a family is *one man with one woman*. The biblical model for families is always one man with one woman. It is never a man with another man or a woman with another woman.

Also, this one-man-one-woman relationship was not a continuation of the parents' family, but the beginning of another. The relationship between the man and his wife was the primary and foundational one in the sense that it came into existence prior to children and was designed to continue after children were born and reared. In spite of human attempts to redefine family, God here establishes His intent that one man be the husband of one wife.

From the Genesis 2 account we also note that the man and woman who left family to become a new family unit were to "become one flesh," including intimacy and sexual relations (1 Corinthians 6:16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

See All...).

This is the only context—with one's spouse within marriage—in which God sanctions sexual activity. He declares sex within marriage to be holy, honorable and good (Hebrews 13:4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

See All...) while condemning *all* sexual activity outside of marriage—including homosexuality, group sex, bestiality, premarital sex and adultery.

Narrow-minded thinkers who mistakenly assume that God's instructions about sex are overly restrictive and thwart the individual's happiness ironically *reject* the very instruction that leads to the *greatest* human happiness.

While almost any male and female can have sexual intercourse, all sex isn't equally satisfying—and sex outside of marriage can be particularly unrewarding. Commenting on the qualitative analysis of sex, counselor Pam Stenzel, in her book *Sex Has a Price Tag*, writes:

"Several years ago, researchers did a study on who was having the best sex. Conventional wisdom says that the people who are having the best sex are those who've had a lot of experience with a variety of partners, and who feel free from rules and regulations about sexual activity—in other words, the people who have sex whenever they want with whomever they want.

"Guess what? Conventional wisdom is wrong. According to the studies, married Christian women are having the best sex. That's right. Church women are the most satisfied group of sexually active people. I'm betting their husbands are pretty happy, too" (p. 34).

As much as some people hate to admit it, God really does know what He is talking about when it comes to sex. The laws He gives us regarding our sexual conduct are designed for our good and our happiness!

The sex chapter

Students of the Bible often name specific chapters to reflect their contents. For example, we may refer to 1 Corinthians 13 as the "love chapter" and to Hebrews 11 as the "faith chapter." Yet how many people today, even Christians, have any idea as to which chapter could be called the "sex chapter"?

Leviticus 18 is one of the best candidates for such a title. In this passage, God gives extensive instruction regarding those with whom we should not have sex and why these prohibitions are so important. Before getting into the long list of illicit sexual relationships, God begins by explaining that obedience to Him means living a different lifestyle than those who reject Him (verses 1-5).

Then, after listing people with whom we should not have sex, God said: "Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled . . . You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, either any of your own nation or any

stranger who dwells among you (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled) . . .

"Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so that you do not commit any of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I am the Lord your God" (verses 24-30).

Sadly, the percentage of professing Christians who still engage in extramarital affairs and end their marriages in divorce is just as high, and sometimes even higher, than among non-Christians. God obviously is not pleased with such conduct because it is counter to His instructions and wreaks havoc on the happiness and stability of marriages. Innocent children are often the unintended victims.

God hates such conduct. Remember, He calls these activities "abominations," meaning things horrible and detestable— *because they lead to human heartache and suffering.*

If you have committed a sexual sin such as fornication or adultery, keep in mind that God is very willing to forgive us of such sins once we repent and change our conduct (Acts 2:38) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

See All...; 1 John 1:9) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

See All...). The blood of Jesus Christ our Saviour was shed to enable us to have a new start (Hebrews 9:14) How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

See All...). When we repent, His blood covers our sins and we have a fresh opportunity to live in ways that please God and bring His blessings.

Delayed gratification

Waiting to experience sex until one is married, and then having a sexual relationship only with one's spouse, requires self-discipline and personal integrity. Obedience to this code of conduct is not only honorable and pleasing to God, it is a key to happy, long-lasting marriages. The benefits *far* outweigh the restrictions.

Waiting for the right time to "awaken love" is critical in terms of healthy sexual development (Song of Solomon 2:7) I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.

See All...). As Solomon wrote in the book of Ecclesiastes, "To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3:1 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

See All...). There is also "a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing" (verse 5).

An obvious but underreported fact is that a child's sexuality is greatly shaped and influenced by parental example—as well as by whomever first awakens the child's sexuality. Oh that we would teach our children God's ways by living them ourselves!

Regrettably, society today has turned things upside down. It ignores the proven benefits of following God's instructions and portrays sexual immorality as normal and healthy. Pornography and masturbation warp God's purpose for sex. The media broadcasts the false message that everyone is doing it, which only adds to the breakdown of families and the misery of adults and children alike.

The good news is that society is going to be changed by Jesus Christ at His return. The time is coming when adults will be sexually responsible and children will be taught God's values (Jeremiah 31:33-34 [33] But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

[34] And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

See All...). The bad news is that things will get worse before they get better.

Sexual behavior in prophecy

Just before Jesus Christ returns to earth at the end of "this present evil age" (Galatians 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

See All...) to usher in the age of the Kingdom of God, Bible prophecy tells us that sexual immorality will be rampant. While Jesus and those who truly follow His example warn men and women to repent of their sins, including sexual ones (Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

See All...; Mark 6:12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

See All...; Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

See All...; Revelation 3:19As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. See All...), many people at that time will engage indiscriminately in sexually promiscuous lifestyles.

Even after a series of plagues to punish mankind for its sins, many will refuse to abandon their sexual immorality for the far better lifestyle revealed in God's laws. In spite of severe punishment, Revelation 9:21Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

See All... explains that people will still refuse to "repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts."

In spite of the perilous times and punishments to come, God is calling people today to live in harmony with His laws. God wants to give us everything that is good and healthy for us. He wants us to take pleasure in sex within marriage and reveals to us the keys for most enjoying this wonderful gift.

God really does want you to have the best marriage, family and sex life possible. Why not follow the instructions of our loving Creator? *GN*