

GARDEN SEX

Key Points:

1. All humans have a desire for intimate companionship.
2. Sex is *tov*.
3. The desire for sex and sex itself is good.

OPENING QUESTIONS

Is desire good or bad? What makes desire good or bad?

VERSE

God created humankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them,
male and female he created them...

...God saw all that he had made—and it was very good!

Genesis 1:27, 31

NOTES

This is the first poem or song in the Bible. It's like God is singing over his creation and he declares it is *Tov*. Again we see that God created sexed human beings with differentiation in regards to sex. God has created beings that are his visible representation.

Tov is the Hebrew word for good. *Tov* has to do with the human senses—taste, touch, smell, sight, and sound.

“*Tov* is used all through scripture to depict bread, wine, honey, lotion, perfume fruit, yeast, and a shade tree in the hot middle east. *Tov* can be translated *pleasing or lovely or beautiful*”.¹

The taste of fresh fruit in your mouth is *tov*.

The warmth of the sun on your skin on the beach is *tov*.

The sight of a beautiful man or woman is *tov*.

Sex is tov.

¹ Comer, J. M. (2016). In *Loveology* (p. 81). essay, Zondervan.

The LORD God formed the man from the soil of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being...

Genesis 2:7

The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a companion for him who corresponds to him.” **19** The LORD God formed out of the ground every living animal of the field and every bird of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them, and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. **20** So the man named all the animals, the birds of the air, and the living creatures of the field, but for Adam no companion who corresponded to him was found.

God sees that what he has made is *tov*. However, he notices that it is not good that man is alone. Adam probably looked around him and noticed that every animal and even God enjoys community and intimate relationship. (Gen. 1:26 “let us make man in *our* image...”)

Adam’s desire for intimate relationship and companionship is *tov*. This desire to be like God is *tov*.

Point 1

All humans have a desire for intimate companionship.

“Adam’s creation was not complete because he lacked a “helper” who corresponded to him. This deficiency led God to pronounce Adam’s condition “not good.”[163] This follows the pattern of the triune God’s own existence in which He is surrounded by His heavenly court. Man should normally live in community even as God does. God not only evaluated Adam’s condition, He also rectified it.”²

So, the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep, and while he was asleep, he took part of the man’s side and closed up the place with flesh. **22** Then the LORD God made a woman from the part he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

All throughout scripture God puts people to sleep before initiating a new relationship. This is to signify that no part of the gift is earned but that it is solely a gift from God.

Which part of the body does God take the woman from? Why?

It symbolizes this key theme of partner. Co-responsibility and co-heir of grace and purpose.

We even find that Adam begins singing a poem over this beautiful bare creature in God’s likeness that correlates to Adam’s sexuality.

² Constable, T. *Genesis 2*. <https://netbible.org/bible/Genesis+1>.

“This one at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
this one will be called ‘woman,’
for she was taken out of man.”

24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and unites with his wife, and they become one family. **25** The man and his wife were both naked, but they were not ashamed.

Genesis. 2:18-25

God’s provision of a wife for Adam is a concrete example of God’s knowing what is good for man.[165] Companionship replaced isolation. For companionship to be satisfying, however, there must be oneness in the marriage (cf. 1:26-27). Self-centered living destroys oneness and companionship.

Point 2
Sex is tov.

“Beauty, attraction, the desire of lovers, touch, arousal, foreplay, the joy of a kiss on your mouth, the orgasm—it’s all tov.”³

This teaches us an important truth that God is a God of pleasure. He isn’t a grumpy old man with white hair sitting on His throne mad at the world and who doesn’t want to enjoy or have fun.

Sex is an important desire because it points us to an even greater truth that we are made for love. To give and to receive love in a selfless way to another.

Sex wasn’t given by God to fix our loneliness or mend our desire for companionship. It was meant to point us the greatest companionship. To be fully loved unconditionally, fully known and accepted, fully pursued, fully desired by God (YHWH).

It was also given to us as a way to engage in God’s mission to multiply and fill.

Sex is tov. But sex outside of God’s original design is not tov. Just as it wasn’t good for man to be alone it is not good for him to experience the gift of sex outside of its intended context which is a covenant relationship between one man and one woman.

How do we arrive that sex is only between one man and one woman in the covenant relationship called marriage?

“That is why a man leaves his father and mother and unites with his wife, and they become one family.”

Genesis 2:24

³ Comer, 2016 p.82.

Verses 18-25 teach us much about marriage.

1. God instituted it.

2. God intended it to be monogamous (not monotonous). One woman completed Adam (cf. Matt. 19:8).

3. God intended it to be heterosexual.

4. It involves both a physical and a spiritual union (2:24; cf. Matt. 19:4-5).

5. The husband was to be the head of the wife. God created Adam before Eve, and He created Eve for Adam (cf. 1 Cor. 11:8-9; 1 Tim. 2:13).

6. A woman can be a complete person without bearing children. A wife's primary function in marriage is to complement her husband, not to bear children.

7. Normally, a couple, following the lead of their representatives, Adam and Eve, should "be fruitful and multiply" (1:28). God did not specify how early in the marriage and to what extent. He left this up to the couple. Couples may choose when and how many children they plan to have, though God may sovereignly overrule their plans.⁴

Point 3

The desire for sex and sex itself is good.

Let's get back to the idea that God (YHWH) is a God of pleasure.

We see that Jesus is always enjoying good things that God has created!

"For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon!' **34** The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him, a glutton and a drunk, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' **35** But wisdom is vindicated by all her children."

Luke 7:33-35

...God who richly provides us with all things for our enjoyment...

1 Timothy 6:17b

We need to enjoy creation as an act of worship. Including sex.

"Sex, at its best, at its highest, at its holiest, is play."

-Richard Foster

It's both procreation and recreation.

⁴ Constable, T. *Genesis* 2. <https://netbible.org/bible/Genesis+1>.

Notice that the first command God ever gave to humans was to “be fruitful and increase in number”. That’s odd to us because that isn’t always the message we have heard from the church because with the invention of contraceptives we have disassociated sex from procreation.

For too long the message of the church has been reduced to don’t!

“Don’t view porn.”

“Don’t masturbate.”

Don’t make out.”

Don’t sleep around.”

“Don’t sleep together before you get married.”

All of that IS true. But the problem is that the Bible doesn’t start with a negative command about sex. It is a positive command—be fruitful and multiply.

“The man and his wife were both naked, but they were not ashamed.”

Genesis 2:25

Remember that this is all before the fall.

We were sexual before we were sinful.

Imagine sex without guilt or shame! Nothing to hide! Just pure, unadulterated joy between a man and woman in a covenant relationship. That is *tov*.

We have been shaped by dualism. The idea that the physical world is evil and only the spiritual world is good. So every time we have a pleasurable or *tov* experience we have a hint of shame. As if we aren’t supposed to enjoy what God has made to enjoy.

Sex is not dirty. Sex is spiritual and holy within the covenant relationship.

Even after the fall God’s view of sex doesn’t change. Sex is *tov*.

Sex is good. We need to make sure that God’s gifts don’t become gods themselves.

Song of Songs ch. 4 readthrough and commentary