

# Squander & Defile God's Gifts

## From Spiritual Prostitution to Sacred Sexuality

Relentless Series: Oculi Sunday  
Lent Week 3 - March 20th, 2022  
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Ezekiel 16:14-63  
Genesis 38  
Songs of Solomon 7:1 - 8:14  
Matthew 6: 19-24  
1 Corinthians 10: 1-24

Sexuality and 'spirituality' get a bad rap in most Christian circles. The Bible has a lot to say on both. It is pretty common that we are exposed to the epistolic teachings of Paul and Peter who came after Yeshua. They were pretty hard-line 'no' on both. In fact, there was a comment by one of them that if you're *too weak* to be strong then you might as well get married to compensate. Not exactly a glowing review.

Paraphrasing of course, but that's more or less what they were teaching. So this week we're going to take a look at the basics of biblical sexuality and also spirituality or as it is referred to in the Bible: spiritual prostitution.

Now, these two concepts don't really go together. At least not biblically anyway. It's mostly just a literary device in that one is called prostitution which makes you think of sexuality and therefore we put the two concepts together... *or did we?*

The shamanic roots of the Hebrew faith that have somehow been lost throughout the Christian transition made for a complex situation for the new Hebrews. We see in the Old Hebrew Testament how God is constantly telling people not to dabble, then reprimanding them when they do. This is hard to understand because from our perspective the pagans and Christians are so different.

But the original Hebrew faith taught to make altars out of the earth, animal sacrifices, worship God wherever you were and seek God's counsel through a psychically gifted priest called a prophet. The truth of it when you really look at it is that the faith

practices of the different religions were not that different. That's why it was so hard to behave.

We were then told not to consult or listen to psychically gifted individuals, worship wherever/whenever we wanted, while simultaneously carrying God in our hearts while we're not allowed to talk to Him without a priest mediating the conversation; even though Yeshua and his buddies were mystics who lived out nomadic lives worshipping God with everything they did. ...And the whole Hebrew faith was based on following the advice of mystics.

\*If this is a line you have trouble walking, please note that StrixLand Run Ministries has an entire course dedicated to Mystic Christianity to help those who are trying to find their way to reconciliation as sensitive or curious people.

But, spiritual prostitution is not about being gifted and dabbling in the arts. It's actually about conflating, contaminating and defiling the practice by bringing in elements from other faiths or combining practices in a way that betrays the commands and instructions that were given. It's about the sanctity of a practice that was meant to be dedicated and set apart as holy. Not only is God a jealous God, but He also likes it how He likes it.

So when we go trying to create a medley and bring a bunch of things together to improve or upgrade practices, we're essentially saying that He didn't know what He was doing and we've got a better idea. Hubris is also something that God doesn't like. Pride being one of the seven deadly sins.

Modern spirituality does this same thing. In Christianity you pray and contemplate the Word; in the Catholic tradition you recite the rosary and prayers on a rotation of sitting, standing, kneeling; in the Hindu tradition you recite mantras, meditate, and do yoga; in the Muslim faith, you recite prayers while doing prescribed body movements, in Buddhism you have ornate recitations and rituals. Most of them use recitation, votive candles, physical movement rituals, incense, music, and diet. There are major similarities in the practices of the faith and the main argument is that the difference is only a matter of intention: who the practice is dedicated to.

Spiritual prostitution is a mish-mashing of all the different practises together. What does that look like? Modern spirituality. It's the art form of 'taste-testing'

different religions and faith practices, seeing the benefits or uses of each and smashing them all together to make a synthesis of all the powerful parts, or so the practitioner would say. But what is happening is not a powerful amalgam, rather a dilution of all and a confusion of the one who is trying to marry these different worlds. It is to squander and defile the gifts God made those practices for. The practices were given to the people to prepare them for the reception of Him.

When we combine practices, we may be incorporating elements that are offensive to God, rededicating practices to God, or indulging in new ways to please God. The problem is that our feeble human minds don't have the discernment to understand the difference. We also generally lack the discipline to stay on topic. You may start by using a similar practice, but rededicating it... but it is a slippery slope that easily slides into extending the boundaries to include elements that actually were premised on a conflicting belief or value. The problem is that if you are not a knowledgeable practitioner of the faith you are appropriating, you likely would not know those nuances.

In addition to it all, sometimes 'their' version is more beautiful, or romantic, or intimate. It feels lovely to ride that spiritual high, or feel a part of a welcoming community and so we start to bend towards the aesthetics of that new faith. We connect with people and in our admiration of their devout practice are inspired, and replicate it, seeking what keeps them so enthralled.

As communal beings, humans seek companionship. Our hearts are easy to leverage when we follow a God who appears remote. A God who takes eons to fulfill promises and speaks in silence. Seeking something more tangible, reaffirming, con-firm-able, is a fair path to follow. That is the lure of the 'local gods'.

The traditions usually talked about them in vibrate ways that interact and interfere with reality. Nativist religions had a god for everything, so anytime something happened it was a 'proof' of their mischief. In short, their gods were more present, interactive, available, and as each person had their own practice, so was the community when you didn't need a priest to do everything on your behalf. We seek connection and intimacy to feel more of ourselves.

In the Old Testament, we see temple prostitutes mentioned. At no point in the instructions to the Israelites does it state the key responsibilities or position of the

temple prostitute as a practice of the faith; although, there are express instructions that a daughter of Israelites must not be given in prostitution, even though there are examples of the men of Israel soliciting prostitutes, and **only** a priest is not allowed to marry an active prostitute. A retired prostitute or a non-priest seem to be fair game.

Many scholars interpret these passages as the temple being one of Asherah, a local Canaanite goddess, and so the temple prostitutes were not at synagogues (Hebrew temples) but at the temples of local religions. And let's be honest, the conduct of the founding fathers is not necessarily a benchmark that we should be aiming for. They're known for going quite off-path and getting themselves into a considerable amount of trouble.

Nowadays atheism is more a threat to the Christian faith than competing religions are and thus conflating practices of other faiths, although still common in the new age spirituality movement. The more present danger to the faith is actually interpersonal activities. It is much less likely that you were going to build an Asherah pole to worship than it is that you would worship your lover.

The problem is not just competing religions with false gods. There are a lot of passages in the Bible that refer to how a lover can turn your heart away from God, and that's because there is such a thing as sacred sexuality. We will actually worship and be devoted to our partner rather than worshipping with and through them in the relationship in couples devotion of a shared faith - even if you practice the same faith.

But in other passages, we see sexuality and the relationship between lovers, and husband and wife, as the language through which God talks about His relationship with Israel. This is both through the sacred sexuality of the Song of Songs / Songs of Solomon, which is basically biblical erotica, and the New Christian Testament; and also the analogy of spiritual prostitution as the wife of God being a harlot found throughout the prophets.

At some point in history, people made sexuality enemy number one against Christianity. How did this happen for a faith where one of the first tenets was to 'be fruitful and multiply'. If you are curious about those original tenets of the faith the Eden Commands, the Mosaic Ten Commandments, the Christian Two Greatest Commandments and Yeshua's Great Commission for the followers of HIS way are all looked at in-depth in the Foundations of Faith Series to help seekers know what is really expected of them.

Stuffy old Christian theologians promoting celibacy as a purity of the faith is not only in direct contrast to one of the original commands direct from God in Eden, but also elitist. The priests and prophets had families. There were very few people commissioned with a solo journey and the Hebrew people took great pride in legacy and care for their lineages. If God wanted people to never have sex: a) He would have made us like almost every other animal... they don't get pleasure out of it or do it as a hobby, and b) His precious people would have died out.

Yet, He kept promising lasting legacies and using the analogy of a good intimate relationship within a marriage as His way of explaining the ultimate goal of the relationship He wanted to have. Somehow it was all separated to be one mission or the other: procreate or serve God. If the 'best' people are God's servants, and they are meant to be celibate, then no wonder Christians didn't believe in survival of the fittest!

So how did this happen? Let's bring the point home... The founding fathers of Christianity believed that Christ was coming back, within their lifetime, to end this world. Legacies and cultivating lasting relationships no longer made sense in that context, conversion and salvation did, as did the imminent pressure to focus solely on the mission of evangelism. So between that, and how easily we get distracted by it, and how instead of worshipping through it humanity worshipped the practice of it... here we are.

And so, temple prostitution may not be much of a threat, but sacred sexuality is often left out of the conversation. Especially when the faith ended up promoting celibacy and restrictions and restraints on sexuality instead of embracing the sacred sexuality that the Old Hebrew Testament talked about. It pitted the two against each other instead of understanding them as integrated and integral to one another's success.

If one was designed to deny that sexual nature then they would be drawn towards celibacy or commitments and vows of chastity. However, if one were drawn to intimacy, actually they were meant to be married and in their union bring that level as a premise of their worship and a playground of their worship of God together as a community of believers.

Sexuality was a gift from God  
and we were told in the Hebrew Testament

how to explore that in safe and healthy ways...  
...in gross detail.

Somewhere along the lines someone made an enemy of sexuality. They divided the two, and in turn, sexuality instead of being sacred became the linchpin to many's downfalls. There is a call to integrate our faith in the purest forms. Denying any one aspect of humanity in order to be a 'good Christian' does not honour God. Understanding the healthy ways that those capabilities of humanity were intended, and embracing them, and therefore embracing one another in that sacred union ordained and commissioned by God is one of the ways that we understand the intimacy that God has to offer us Himself.

For some people, a lover is a distraction - they pull the heart away from God. For others of us, it delivers our way in. Together we build the devotional energy and together we enter into the temple of God. Love and sexuality are not inherently a distraction or a danger to the faith. And I think it's time we reconcile.

We are meant to be the bride of Christ.

And the sensory intimacy available in an ecstatic Christian practice  
is a clear indicator of how God not only made us (able) to feel,  
but also, clearly wants us to..

Soli Deo Gloria,

*Selah*