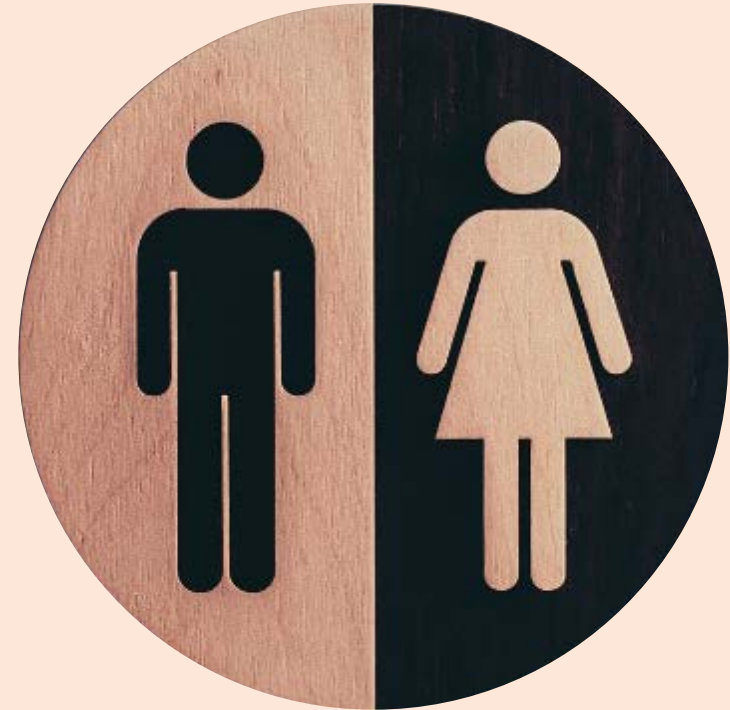
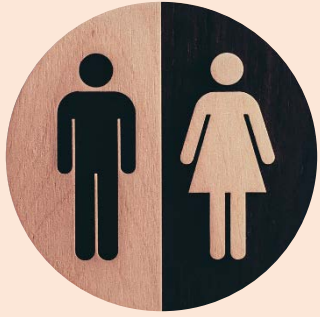


Jesus, Gender & Sexuality

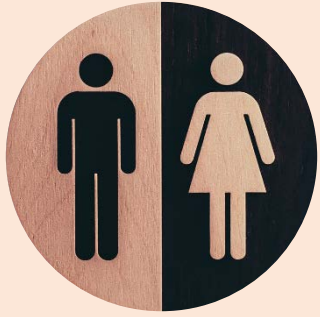
Week 4: Jesus
and Sexuality





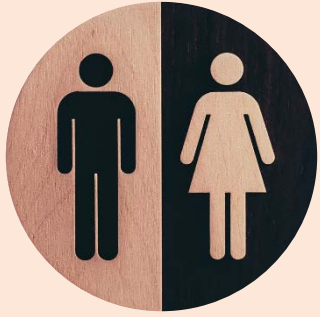
Jesus, Gender and Sexuality

- Question time after the service each week:
 - You can put your hand up ...
 - ... or ask a question at [slido.com](https://www.slido.com), #872255
 - Grab a coffee and come along – we will aim to start 5-10 minutes after the service ends.
- Aggressive questions will not be tolerated; arrogant questions will receive short shrift!
- Feedback, in person (preferably) or by email will be welcomed.



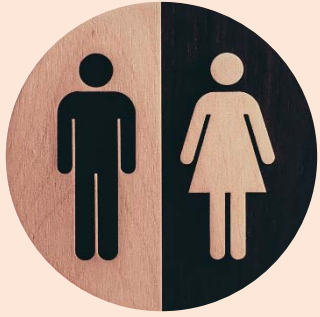
Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- Separating “gender” and “sexuality”:
 - “... sexual orientation is who you want to go to bed with, and gender identity is who you want to go to bed as.” (Rosaria Butterfield)
- Last week, **gender**.
 - “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” (Genesis 1.27)
- From today, **sexuality**:
 - “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.” (Genesis 2.24)



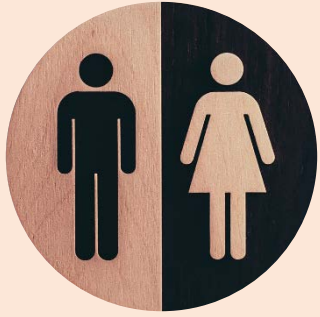
Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- CS Lewis in 1942 foresaw our day:
 - “Never forget that when we [devils] are dealing with any pleasure in its healthy and normal and satisfying form, we are, in a sense, on the Enemy’s [God’s] ground. I know we have won many a soul through pleasure. . . . All we can do is to encourage the humans to take the pleasures which our Enemy has produced, at times, or in ways, or in degrees, which He has forbidden. Hence we always try to work away from the natural condition of any pleasure to that in which it is least natural, least redolent of its Maker, and least pleasurable. **An ever increasing craving for an ever diminishing pleasure is the formula.**” (CS Lewis, *Screwtape Letters*)



Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- We live in an idolatrous age:
 - “sexual orientation ... and gender identity ... are driven by *the idol of sexual autonomy.*” (Butterfield)
- We have a God who rescues us from idolatry in order that we might know and serve him:
 - “⁸ ... your faith in God has become known everywhere ... ⁹ *you turned to God from idols* to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead – Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.” (1 Thessalonians 1)



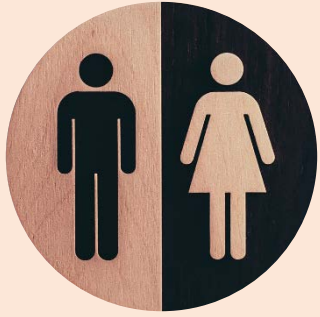
Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- God rescues and equips us in Christ:
 - “⁸ ... your faith in God has become known everywhere ... ⁹ you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead – Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.” (1 Thessalonians 1)
 - Jesus calls us to “**Repent**



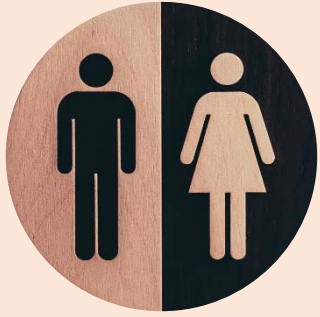
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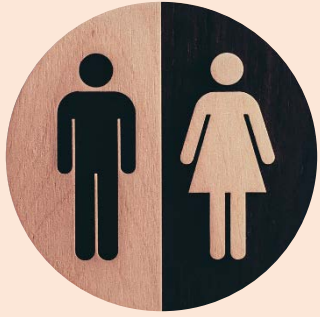
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 - This is the good news!
 - By his death, Jesus **rescues** us from God’s judgement.



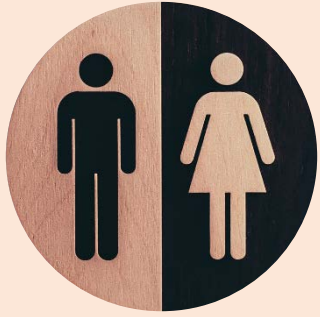
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 - Because of his **resurrection**, “we may live together with him” (1 Thess. 5.10)



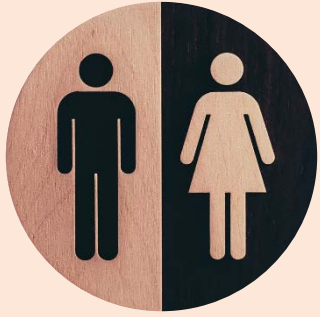
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 - Jesus calls us to “**Repent and believe the good news.**” (Mark 1.15)
 - This is the good news!
 - By his death, Jesus **rescues** us from God’s judgement.
 - Because of his **resurrection**, “we may live together with him” (1 Thess. 5.10).
 - As we await his **return**, we are called “to serve the living and true God”.



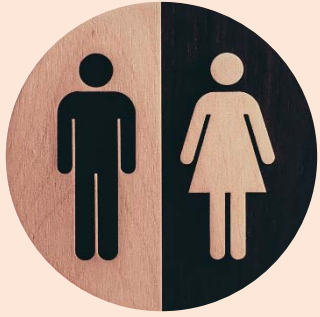
Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- What does this mean for our sexuality?
 - “² For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. ³ It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honourable, ⁵ not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God ⁶ and that in this matter no-one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. ⁷ For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. ⁸ Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.” (1 Thessalonians 4)



Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- Negatively:
 - Not optional: this is God's will, not his suggestion.
 - Don't even pretend to be a Christian if you aren't going to bother here: these "instructions" come with "the authority of the Lord Jesus." (v2)
 - "The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you." (v6)
 - Not easy: "sexual immorality" is the natural pathway for our sinful hearts.
 - Not popular: "the heathen, who do not know God" will be unimpressed.



Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- Positively:
 - God has shown us how to live in his word:
 - We have Jesus' instructions (v2), and God “gives [us] his Holy Spirit” (v8)
 - We can grow in this:
 - “we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this *more and more*.” (v1)
 - “each of you should *learn ...*” (v4)
 - It is a matter of love, not law:
 - “in this matter no-one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him.” (v6)
 - This is the greatest ambition: to be “holy and honourable” (v4) ...
 - ... not a tick-list grudgingly followed, convinced God is robbing us of pleasure.



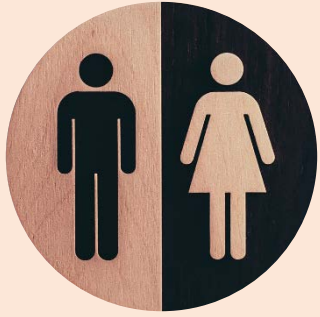
Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- What is “sexual immorality”?
 - The wrong question!
- What is God’s design for our sexuality?
 - “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.” (Genesis 2.24)



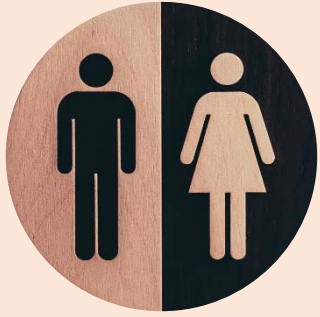
Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- Genesis 2.15-25: the origin of marriage
 - The Lord gives life – and defines good and evil (v15-17)
 - The Lord’s observation (v18) and solution (v19-23)
 - Animals are not a “suitable helper” (v19-20)
 - Only the woman can be “a helper suitable for him” (v20-22).
 - She is from his side, not the dust: his equal and opposite.
 - The man is delighted! (v23)
 - The Creator’s pattern is revealed (v24)



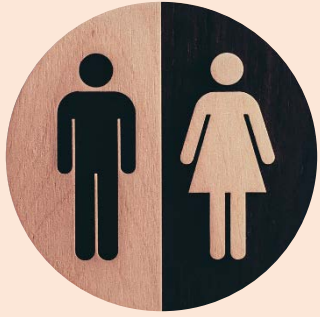
Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- At creation, sex was pure joy.
 - “The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.” (2.25)
 - There were (literally!) no barriers between man and wife: total intimacy, trust, acceptance. No sin, no shame – perfect and plentiful sex!
- But Adam and Eve sinned:
 - “When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was . . . desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.” (Genesis 3.6)
 - Now *we* claim the right to define good and evil – including about sex.



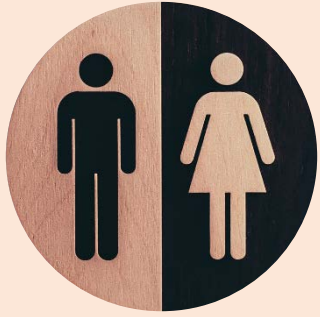
Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- With sin comes God's curse:
 - Intimacy is compromised:
 - “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realised that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.” (Genesis 3.7)
 - Suffering and the “battle of the sexes” begins:
 - “To the woman he said, ‘I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.’” (Genesis 3.16)
 - “Her controlling impulse is matched by his lordly ego.” (Ortlund)



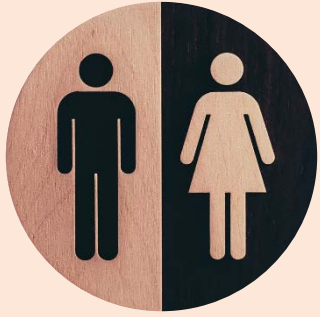
Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- We live in this world!
 - We want to define “good and evil” – especially sexual morality!
 - God gives us what we ask for:
 - “²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. . . .
²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵ **They exchanged the truth of God for a lie**, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is for ever praised. Amen.” (Romans. 1.18-25)



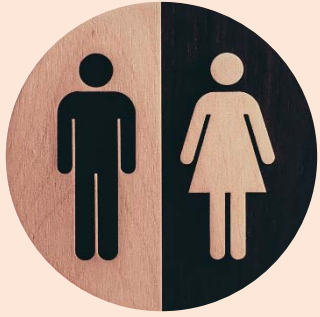
Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- What is the “truth of God”?
 - “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.” (Genesis 2.24)
 - The Creator’s purpose for sexual intimacy is lifelong, exclusive, monogamous, heterosexual marriage.
- What is “the lie”?
 - “heterosexual and monogamous marriage is the only context in which God intends sexual intercourse to be experienced, and indeed, enjoyed. The corollary is that it is forbidden in every other context.” (John Stott)



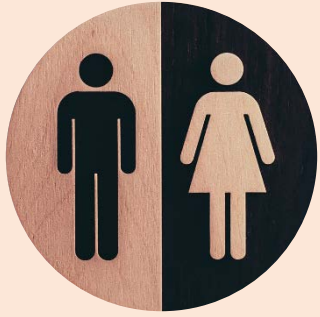
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Genesis 2.24	God’s design	Our sinful choice



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“his <i>wife</i> ... one flesh”	Marriage	Fornication



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“his <i>wife</i> ... one flesh”	Marriage	Fornication
“a man ... <i>his</i> wife”	Monogamy	Polygamy



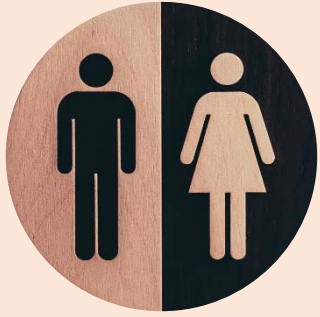
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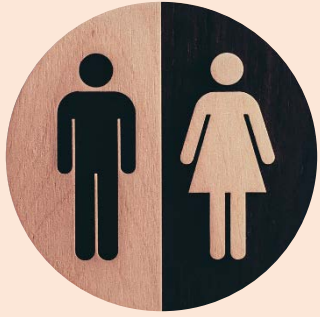
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“be <i>united</i> ”	Durability	Divorce
“be united ... <i>one flesh</i> ”	Sexual faithfulness	Adultery
“a <i>man</i> ... his <i>wife</i> ”	Heterosexuality	Homosexuality



Week 4: Jesus and Sexuality

- “It is God’s will that you should be sanctified ...”
- Given God’s design for our sexuality, we have two choices:
 - If we are **single**, God’s will is that we abstain from all sexual activity.
 - If we are **married**, God’s will is absolute sexual faithfulness to our spouse.
 - *All other choices* are outside God’s will:
 - They are neither “holy nor honourable” in his sight.
 - “He who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.” (1 Thessalonians 4.8).
 - God’s word has *much* more (positively!) to say to both the single and the married!



“Father, give me my share of the estate.”

“After he had spent everything . . . he began to be in need.”

“I will . . . say to him: Father, I have sinned”

“his father . . . was filled with compassion for him. . . . ‘this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

(Luke 15.11-32)