

Christianity- sexual ethics

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Sexuality is important in the lives of all Christian adherents and it is for this reason that Christianity offers many explicit instructions on sexual intercourse and sexual behaviours, such as when, where and with whom sexual expression is permitted. Guidance for the expression of sexuality is sourced in the Christian sacred texts the New Testament and the Hebrew scriptures and differs throughout the various Christian denominations. Christians are essentially encouraged to enjoy sexual relations within the confines of a loving, adult, heterosexual and married relationship, any other sexual behaviour is considered sinful. That is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, they become one body” (Genesis 2: 24) The Christian teachings on sexual ethics from Christian sacred texts teach adherents that there is strictly to be no adultery; “ You shall not commit adultery” (Exodus 20: 14). Each Christian denomination teaches that divorce is a sin, “ everyone who divorces his wife makes her commit adultery, whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery” (Mt 5: 31-32). Likewise, each denomination is also opposed to remarriage, viewing it as betraying God’s wish; “ whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery” (Mk 10: 12).

Each Christian denomination teaches that unfaithfulness is not permitted within the Christian Church and is a great sin against God, teaching Christians to ‘ love your wife just as Jesus loved the church’ (Ephesians 5: 31-2). Adultery in all forms is seen as an immoral sin from all denominations. The Christian teaching on premarital sexuality differs between Christian denominations. The Catholic Church and Orthodox Churches emphasise chastity as essential, stating that there should be no sexual activity outside

or before marriage, however the both churches acknowledge human mistake and view chastity as a gradual process.

Evangelistic Protestant Churches have a strict no sex before or outside marriage view, whilst mainline Protestant Churches state that marriage is the ideal location for sexual activity, however accept the individual's own decision as to their sexual whereabouts. Homosexuality is rejected throughout all Christian denominations aside from mainline Protestant Churches, due to Biblical instruction of natural law; men and women were intended for each other in hopes for children; “ Men, leaving natural use of woman, burned in their lust toward one another; men with men” (Romans 1: 26-27).

Mainline Protestant Churches accept the medical opinion and reasoning for homosexuality, viewing that people cannot help being homosexual, as it is something they are simply born into. Mainline Protestant Churches permit a loving, committed and faithful homosexual relationship. Contraception is another highly controversial matter throughout the Christian Church regarding sexual activity. All Christian denominations permit contraception as a way of regulating the number of children and space between births, except for the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church has strict teachings that all unnatural forms of contraception are impermissible, based on natural law. Catholics view sex and fertility as a part of nature and view it as wrong to unnaturally prevent the conceiving and life of a new human being, and thus, even within a marriage, unnatural products such as condoms and the pill are not allowed. However, the Catholic Church does permit natural methods of birth control

such as rhythm control and allows for unnatural contraception to be used to treat sexual medical conditions only.

Each Christian denomination teaches that within a marriage, sexual intercourse should be participated in for a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle for a loving and committed couple; ‘ two people become one flesh, so they are no longer two but one’ (Genesis 2: 24). The Church teaches that sexual activity should always lead to new life and hopes for children, otherwise it is viewed as selfish; ‘ be fruitful and increase in number’ (Genesis 1: 28). Inside a marriage is seen by all denominations as the desirable place for sex where children can be raised. God created sexual intercourse to unite an individual with their partner in Holiness.