

- I am very grateful to observe that some of our magnificent players and some of our numerous spectators were able to return from Charlotte in time to get to chapel this morning. And we're able to get to chapel here in Squaw Valley, North Carolina, No minister of the gospel ever needs to give an explanation for walking into the pulpit of a Christian Church and preaching on the subject of Christianity and sex. It is as proper a topic in a church pulpit as the subject of Christianity and the life to come. However, I would like to note in passing that we have not had a sermon in this chapel on this theme during the past three years. And in view of the fact that almost every time I have been invited by a denominational group to speak to their group, it has been requested that I speak on some phase of this topic. I believe there is an interest on the part of students in knowing what Christianity has to say about sex. And I believe that students and adults are entitled to know what Christianity has to say about this important subject. And for this reason, I have prepared a sermon which will deal in a general way with an orientation to the interpretation that Christianity makes of sex. There are four basic presuppositions we should keep in mind as we think about this subject. The first is that everything in the world, including the instincts, the passions and drives of the physical body were created by Almighty God. And he is quoted as (indistinct) everything that he had made that it is very good. The second basic presupposition is that it is the intention of God that we should praise him, not by being sad and downcast, but by being happy and joyful. He would have us follow the thrilling advice of Beethoven that we should praise the Lord with holy songs of joy. John Wesley was famous for his saying that sour religion is the... the devil's religion. Now the third basic presupposition that we should keep in mind, as we begin to think about Christianity and sex is that God never places us in situations nor endows us with instincts that create temptations we are powerless to overcome. It is his revelation that we are never tempted above that which we are able to bear. The fourth basic presupposition I would like for you to keep in mind, not simply between now and 12 o'clock, but for the rest of your life is, there is a time and a place for every good value of life. Some things which are wholesome and very good in one place are unwholesome and very bad in another place. For example, a shovel full of very rich earth is a blessing in the garden, but it would be a curse if you found it in the middle of the dining room floor, it is entirely in order to find egg and jelly smeared on a breakfast plate at 7.30 in the morning. But if you see egg and jelly smeared on a plate at 11 o'clock, you normally say the plate is dirty. Sexual intimacy inside the vows of marriage is one thing. Sexual intimacy outside the vows of marriage is an entirely different reality. Now these basic presuppositions should be kept in mind as we come directly then to our topic. What is it that Christianity has to say about sex? Very simply stated it could be put in these words. God created men and women and endowed us with certain physical capacities, which are mutually attractive and by means of which when bodies are joined, the human race may be perpetuated upon the earth and the love of a man for his wife and vice versa, may be expressed and deepen. Our Lord Jesus Christ himself said, Have you not heard that God made them male and female and said for this reason, that is for the reason that he made them of two opposite, but complimentary sexes, for this reason shall a man leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife. And the two shall be one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. Now this joining of flesh is considered in the Christian understanding of life to be an experience reserved exclusively for monogamous marriage. This is the Christian view of sex. The apostle Paul in his letter to the Corinthians

represents biblical Christianity when he says that neither fornicators nor adulterers shall inherit the kingdom of God. Now fornicators of course are persons who give their bodies to each other before marriage. Adulterers are persons who are married and who give their bodies to others than their spouses. And said the apostle Paul, representing all of biblical Christianity, either and both are outside the realm of the kingdom of God. I think it is worthwhile pointing out at this juncture that the negative aspects of the Christian teaching concerning sex are not intended primarily to thwart the sex instinct or desire or drive, but rather to protect and guarantee the fulfillment of it in Christian marriage. This is the important point to remember. Because Christian marriage, when it is conceived as it ought to be, is the most thrilling and the most wonderful experience that can come to an individual, either male or female in this life on earth. There is no kind of joy or happiness, no fulfillment of life that can compare with that which is possible inside the circle of love which is created by a really Christian marriage. Within Christian marriage, there is the possibility of the fulfillment of all the basic psychogenic needs of mankind. In a marriage of trust and of love, there is the satisfaction of the desire for someone to share your joys and your sorrows. There is the possibility of rearing children in a normal and healthy environment. In Christian marriage there is the possibility of the expression of the id without being odd. There is the possibility of living at peace with your superego, the possibility of being a creative citizen in a way which is probably not possible any other way in life. There was a typographical error in the local newspaper last September, which I think says this better than anything else that comes to my mind just now. On September 6th there was a story in the Durham paper reporting a marriage that took place in Asheboro in a Quaker church. The headline writer inadvertently omitted the name of the groom, so that the caption to the story read like this. Quaker service unites Lilian Borough. There was more truth there, than was intended. There is nothing like a Christian marriage, whether it's Quaker or Presbyterian or Methodist to unite an individual within a marriage and all of his basic necessary psychogenic requirements, nothing that does it quite like the Christian marriage. It not only unites two people to each other, but unites each individual within himself or herself. Well, a great many young people see very clearly this Christian view of sex and they would like to adopt it as the pattern for their own living, but there is a problem connected with it. They see another picture with equal clarity. Fornication and adultery are very widespread. They hear the names of Freud and Kinsey bandied about, and without knowing specifically what either one of them said or wrote or without knowing what other scientists working in this same area have said about the research and the conclusions of Freud and Kinsey, they adopt a generalized impression that the practice of sexual intimacy, whether inside or outside of marriage, is the universal practice that the sex instinct is a kind of tidal wave forever rushing onward, drowning your resolutions and your better judgment and your good intentions. Well, is that the state in which we find ourselves? Is man possessed by an uncontrollable sex instinct which God has created, and which absolutely dominates him? That assertion would be seriously open to question by psychiatrists and psychologists and marriage counselors. Every one of these people working in this field are quite aware of the fact that a large percentage of the illicit affairs which are entered into, are entered into for reasons entirely different from that of the sex instinct. This may be surprising to some of you, but it is not surprising to persons who work with individual problems as a part of their vocation. Here for example, is a young man who hates his father. His father has not allowed him to have the boat he wanted or the car he wanted or to go to the school he wanted, hasn't allowed him to do a great many things he wanted to do or has made him do things he didn't want to do and he hates his father. He rebels against him. He is in a state of emotional rebellion against his father, and he wants to do something that will hurt him. Well, he knows that his father will be extremely

upset if his son should transgress in this area. And so he deliberately, though not always consciously enters into an illicit relationship to clobber his dad, or here is a husband who has done something that has outraged his wife enormously. She is seething with resentment and wants to get even. Counselors know that very often such wives, or if it's reversed, the husband will enter into an illicit affair with someone perhaps whom he or she despises simply to get even with the mate who has done something to anger them, or here is a man who basically feels inferior. This is one of the most typical cases of illicit sex relations for reasons other than the sex instinct. This man feels inferior. He doesn't feel he's really and fully a man. And so in neurotic fashion, he seeks a wide variety of extra marital relationships to bolster his sagging ego. And ironically, the reason behind it is not that he is possessed of a tremendous sex urge, but that he feels inferior at this point. Any psychiatrist knows that there are a great many young ladies who leave the path of decency and become illicit for no other reason than that they do not feel loved or accepted by anyone, human or divine. They either did not receive affection and acceptance at home from their parents, their brothers, or their sisters, or they received so much of it that when they left home and came to college, by comparison they feel quite unloved and unaccepted. And so feeling that this is the surest way to be accepted, at least on some level and at least for a short length of time, they offer their bodies. The last of these motives that I wish to mention now is the motive of being afraid to be left out and how we do fear being left out. From the age of about two on through life we find boys and girls, young men and young women, old men and old women doing this, that and the other for the simple reason that somebody else is doing it. How many people went to Charlotte last night even though they did not have a ticket to the ball game, simply because their fraternity brothers were going or their roommate was going, it was the thing to do, the place to go. How many young people have lowered their sex standards for the exclusive reason that they didn't want to be left out? They had heard that it was the thing to do, and they didn't want to be left out. Now, the reason why this is particularly important in this generation, as opposed, perhaps to earlier generations is that as the Harvard sociologist Sorokin has pointed out in a book published three years ago entitled the American sex revolution, there has been in this present generation, a cultivated emphasis upon everything pertaining to sex so that the sex emphasis of the present civilization is one that has gone far beyond the normal expected emphasis upon one biological urge, as opposed to others. As Sorokin points out, in our civilization, sex permeates TV, movies, magazines, newspapers, art, the theater, commercialism, and is used to sell everything from automobiles to cigars. And as he further points out, it seems that we cannot have even a livestock exposition without the exhibition of sex in one form or another. We have some evidence here in our own state that Sorokin may be right. A short time ago, there was in Winston Salem, the untimely death of a beautiful girl. Newspaper report of her death, which was published while her remains lay at the funeral home as a corpse carried the false statistics on the tape measured statistics of her figure. Kim's... Sorokin may be right. We may have pushed this matter far beyond what is either wholesome or normal. Now the significance of that is this, that if an impression is created by this, that this is something which everybody does and does all the time, then you see if I'm not involved in it, whether married or not, I'm being left out and nobody wants to be left out. So we see that there are at least five motives, which do not originate with sex at all, which account for a significant percentage of the illicit relationships in this area. Now, what is very important for us to remember at this point is, that whatever may have been the real reason for this neurotic sex activity, as an attempt to solve a basic psychological problem, this attempt proved to be not a solution at all to the basic psychological problem, because to whatever problem existed originally is added the factor of guilt. And when you mix inferiority and guilt, you get a guilt complex, or when you mix hatred and guilt,

you a guilt complex, and the guilt complex is far more difficult to eradicate than any of the simple feelings which led to this neurotic activity. And so we should keep this in mind as we approach this subject and as we think about the reasons why there is so much immorality, and as we think soberly about the choices we shall make. There is just one other unwholesome approach to the subject of sex which should be cleared up in even such a brief treatment of the subject as is possible in one sermon. And this has to do with the reasons we give ourselves for not being promiscuous. If it is true, as the old saying has it, that the ultimate treason is to do the right thing for the wrong reason, then I think we better take a look at some of the reasons we give ourselves for maintaining outwardly the Christian principle and ethic of sex. Some of these reasons are very unwholesome. Take this one. The daughter is packing, getting ready to go away to college. And mother comes into the room and says, "Now, dear, just remember when you get to college, that if you break the 10 commandments, you may get pregnant." Well, you might. And if you did, it would be very bad. But then on the other hand, a good many people have broken the 10 commandments and they didn't get pregnant. And then here's this father helping his son unload the suitcase at college. And for the eleven hundredth time he says to him just before leaving for home, "Now son, remember what we've told you about sex? Because if you don't, you may get a disease." Well, you might. And this disease is one of the serious health problems of America today. But again, there is a possibility that you won't, because a great many people have forgotten what dad said about sex and did not get a disease. I think the worst reason of all is the one which young people usually give themselves, for maintaining an outer resemblance of Christian ethics. They say to themselves, well, if we don't practice the Christian principle, the campus cop may come along and bang on the car door. The fear of being caught is a powerful deterrent, but it is not a good one. There have been many people who were immoral and did not get caught. Now over against these dire threats of what might happen, stands the normal human response to a challenge. We generally expect people when challenged to accept the challenge and try to beat the odds, whether it's basketball or debating or war or business or sex. The natural human response is to accept the challenge and try to beat the odds for the sake of beating the odds. But the greatest difficulty about these reasons of probable peril is that we shall become preoccupied with these and fail to note the certain consequences of immoral activity. The certain consequences, which come every time any person violates his standards. The first is a two-fold realization. The realization that I am the kind of person who will be sexually intimate outside marriage, and my partner is the kind of person who will be sexually intimate outside marriage. Now this two-fold realization at first appears to be as unimportant as it is obvious, but actually this two-fold realization becomes a land mine, which will explode when stepped on later. And there is a second certain consequence that comes and that is that when we prematurely attempt to reap the fruits of marriage, we rob the relationship of marriage of some of its unique interest, which God intended that it should have and which it must retain if marriage is to be the enduring and the happy relationship you want it to be. Now these are certain consequences and there is one more. By the practice of sexual intimacy outside marriage, whether before or during marriage, we associate physical intimacy with anxiety and guilt, whether we do it consciously or intentionally or not, we nonetheless do it, so that in marriage we find physical intimacy associated with anxiety and guilt. And this is one of the ways by which great damage comes to the marriage relationship itself. Francis Merrill of Dartmouth, in a book on courtship and marriage, which was published last year, points out that every study that has been made to date, which touches on this point, conclusively shows that your chances of happiness and success in marriage are greater if you refer, if you conserve and refer to marriage, all physical intimacy. And so it seems to come down to this, that you need to make the

choice of what you want out of life. Do you want a Christian marriage with its tremendous fulfillment? It's thrilling exhilaration of joy, completion, happiness, mutual respect, trust, love. If you do, then you have to begin preparing for it. And one of the kinds of preparation that is necessary is to read the letter to her that has been published on sex, to prepare for it by becoming the kind of person who will inspire trust and confidence in your mate. And by beginning to build a courtship with someone who is worthy of your devotion and with whom you can be romantically in love. And now I would like to depart from customary homiletical procedure just now. And instead of giving the usual kind of conclusion, I would like to end the sermon where it began, with a consideration of the basic presuppositions, which undergird all thinking about Christianity and sex. First, everything in the world, including the instincts and passions of the body were created by Almighty God. And he said that everything he created was very good. Second, that it is his intention that we should glorify him, not with sourness and a long face, but with joy and happiness. And third, that he never places us in situations nor endows us with instincts that create temptations, we cannot overcome. And fourth, there is a time and a place for every good value in life and it is important to know the true time and the true place. Oh God who has made us for thyself and who has created us in thine own image, grant us grace to keep that image alive. May we not mar it by surrender to a baser image, help us always to have the mind in us, which was also in Christ Jesus, our Lord. And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.