

Come and Become pt. 8: Bulbous

Intro / Recap:

-Matthew 5:1-12 is known as the Beatitudes.

-those verses kick off The Sermon on the Mount

-Jesus basically says “are you: spiritually poor, sad, broken, weak, do you ever feel you just lack faith, or are not “god’s kind of person”? Good NEWS! **God is inviting you to be a part of what he is doing in the world**”

-God invites us to **Come** to Him through Jesus just as we are, and he will cause us to **Become** something through following Jesus.

-We talked last week about Matthew 5:27-32 where Jesus’ warned against “CULTIVATED LUST”

-Cultivated Lust can set BEHAVIOR in MOTION that will TRASH OUR LIFE

-break ourselves and our families and end up doing things we never thought we would

-Even if we escape the worst damages, Cultivating desires for things that we do not or should not have is recipe for Perpetual Dissatisfaction.

-we can empty our marriages of love, passion, intimacy and joy together

-So the trick is to not cultivate Desire for things we don’t or shouldn’t have.

-but there is a reason that we all Cultivate lust the way we do

-so today we will seek to understand this tendency and FIND the WAY forward God intended

Problem: The role sex plays in our lives and culture has been Unnaturally Expanded.

-Sexuality has become BULBOUS, OVERGROWN, and DEFORMED.

-Illustration : (show 3 overgrown photos overgrown 1-3)

-the first example is just funny, but the other two you begin to see a problem

-When something outgrows its natural scope real problems occur.

-In the early 1900's Sigmund Freud popularized a theory that people are, fundamentally sexual beings.

-he believed that the desire for sex was behind almost all of our behavior.

-everything from how you tied your shoes, to whether you chewed ice or smoked a pipe,,,, all of that was somehow linked to sexual desire or identity.

-Western Culture has grabbed onto this idea with both hands.

-I remember growing up as a Christian kid:

-I believed Jesus would return any moment,, final judgment would take place,,,, and I would spend ETERNITY in Heaven

*-but I used to pray at night before bed that God would **POSTPONE his RETURN** and HEAVEN, because i wanted to get married first.... You can guess why....*

-when faced with eternal reward,, eternal life,, and the restoration of all things,,,,, OR getting married so I could,,,, well you know,,,,, I PRAYED FOR THE LATER!!!!!!!

-Is it Possible that WE HAVE AN IDOL?

-is it possible that we are hoping for fulfillment and happiness from something that cannot deliver?

*-when people in the ancient world had **idols** they **sacrificed**: crops, animals, EVEN PEOPLE, to little stone figures,,,, they had become convinced that if they sacrificed enough,,,, this idol WOULD GIVE THEM THE LIFE THEY WANTED*

-Their hope was misplaced. That statue was not capable of doing what they imagined.

-it had grown larger in their mind than it was in reality.

-1 Corinthians 6:12-20 "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything. 13 You say, "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both." **The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.** 14 By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself?

-The Apostle Paul is addressing sexuality in a culture that had many similarities to ours today.

-I want to focus today on one specific similarity:

-they believed that their appetites told them what they should have (sensuality)

-if you hunger for something it always makes sense to eat it

-if you desire someone or some experience it always makes sense to fulfill that desire

-That culture operated on the underlying assumption that the Good Life was found in Always Answering Appetites.

-to a certain degree ours does as well

-Illustration: Story of woman answering call while preaching

-Not all calls need to be answered

-There are plenty of times when NOT ANSWERING your phone is better for your life.

(obviously preaching...)

-romantic dinner with spouse ,, DONT ANSWER

-in a bathroom relieving yourself,, DONT ANSWER

-There are times when answering your phone will make your life better, and there are times when answering will make your life worse.

It is not always good to Answer when Desires Call.

-The people in Ancient Corinth quoted an old saying when pigging out on food:
“food for the body and the body for food”.

-what they were Essentially saying was “Eat to live AND Live to Eat”.

-They were elevating the consumption of food, from a function of life, to a purpose of life.

-Paul is trying to relate how they handled food to how they handled their sexual appetite.

-Paul condemned a pattern of living that made physical pleasure into a driving motivation in life.

-NEITHER of these two appetites were the POINT of THEIR EXISTENCE

-and they should not be treated as such

-We know what happens when we simply feed our food appetite when and however it calls.

-the appetite grows larger and and it begins to desire unhealthy things rather than healthy things.....

-Weightloss, Health, and Fitness are HUGE INDUSTRIES in our culture because our desires do not naturally lead us to HEALTH.

-your body has “built in wanters” that are supposed to keep you doing the things that keep you healthy

-but we have gotten to a point where our food wanters ARE KILLING US

-so we Pay People to help us with what should be a natural function

-Similarly as a culture, we have over stimulated our Sexual Appetites and now they want things they should not have.

-they also want much more than they really have any function for

When it comes to sexual appetites, our WANTER can NO LONGER BE TRUSTED.

-to answer that call every time it comes would lead us to ruin

Paul warns about Consequences of Feeding Overgrown Appetites.

-He said, *"I am free to do anything but not everything is Beneficial"*.

-1. There are things that you are free to do, but doing them will bring you Harm.

-I had a friend growing up who took bullets (actually blanks) and a ball pin hammer

-he was setting these bullets on the stone curb and hitting them with the hammer

*-it sounded like guns going off and was **SO FUN for a while***

-Until one blew in half, and half of the shell WENT RIGHT THROUGH HIS LEG

-He had to explain to doctors how he managed to shoot himself without a gun or real bullets for that matter

-As stupid as that was, There is no law to prevent him from doing it.....

-He had the right to do that,,, but it was not good for him

-There are many things you have the right to do as Americans, but they are very bad for you as a person.

-2. We are sometimes overly concerned with FREEDOM TO, when we should also be thinking about FREEDOM FROM.

-"I am free to do anything but I will not be mastered by anything"

-When we become focused on exercising our "Freedom To" we risk Forfeiting "Freedom From".

-occasional desire or craving when Answered turns into a regular appetite

-regular appetites when Answered turn into Habits

-Habits that are based on appetites turn into Compulsion

-that is when you are controlled by something

-Free TO has turned into CONTROLLED BY

-Every time we say yes to an appetite, that appetites Influence in our life grows.

-Illustration:

- in the early 80's the United States did not like the growing power of Iran
- so we found a guy in a neighboring nation named Saddam Hussein
- because we could,,, we give him billions of dollars,,,, then we let him buy billions of dollars in weapons from us
- we trained his soldiers for battle and provided him with Secret U.S. Military intelligence to give him the edge over Iran
 - 11 years later we had to INVADE IRAQ and over throw the government of this guy name Saddam Hussein
 - he became a vicious murderous dictator killing thousands of his own people
 - he started invading neighboring nations and taking over
- when we were being shot at during that war,,, it was with bullets and guns that only 10 years earlier WE HAD GIVEN THEM
- we were free to do that but the exercising of that freedom later HURT US
- we set something up as a servant but it later became a task master.**

-“Freedom to” can quickly become “Compulsion Under”.

A proper understanding of what we really are can shrink our Appetite back to a Healthy Size.

- You are not what Freud said: You are not “at your core, a sexual being”.
 - sexuality is not the underlying fundamental reality of your personhood
 - but when we believe you *are a sexual being*; then constant cultivation of sexual desire makes sense**

-When you allow that kind of expansion of your sexuality it becomes Bulbous and Deformed.

- not in the funny way like the guy with the big arm*
- in the gross and debilitating way like the person with the BIG TOE*

-when sensuality becomes that overgrown we expect things of it that it cannot deliver.

- you will always be let down by reality
- you will dig further and further into it thinking that everybody else must be GETTING MORE OUT OF THIS THAN I AM.
 - but they are not, it is just NOT ENOUGH TO DEFINE YOU

-Look again at what Paul said: *-The body, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14 By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself?*

-Sex is not the Point of your physical existence. God is actually the point of your physical existence.

-God has given you a physical body because he planned for you to be an individual body part of the BODY OF CHRIST

-God built you TO BE A PART OF MAKING JESUS PHYSICALLY REAL TO THE WORLD.

-In your redeemed state you are intended to be a unique embodiment of the Eternal God.

-you were meant to reflect his glory

-you were meant to share in his work in the world as you carry out his will

-That is what YOU ARE FOR

-that is why he gave you a body

-When the pursuit to reflect his glory and carry out his will, is at the center of our existence everything else begins to make sense and fall into place.

-Your sexuality is a part of your life. *Its NOT YOUR LIFE.*

-The exercising of our sexuality within the marital context God has given is a God honoring thing.

-inside marriage, and in a way that serves, respects, and where it is about each other and not about me...

-in that context this thing brings, joy, it unites us with our spouse, and it points to God's goodness.

-but again please here me,,,, while this can be very good,,, it is just AN ASPECT of God's blessing,,,, It is NOT THE ASPECT

-dont turn this blessing into an idol

-Point of Existence 101:

-Humanity is the only thing in creation that is both Physical and Spiritual

-we are the unique connection point between the Spiritual God and his Physical creation

-God's intention is for humanity to Know him spiritually and Represent him physically.

-As such you have been hardwired with an Appetite for Union and Intimacy with God.

-One of the most fundamental ways humans get messed up is that we unwittingly try to fill this appetite with other things.....

-But I want to show you where King David the Psalmist learned to recognize what he really needed.

-Psalm 84:2-5 & 10 My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. 3 Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young— a place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God. 4 Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you. 5 Blessed are those whose strength is in you, 10 Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

-David could give himself anything he wanted, but he had figured out what his heart really needed

-He figured out the DEFINING NEED and REALITY of his life

-As we draw what we need Spiritually we are able to be what we are intended to be Physically.

-close:

-You are not fundamentally a Sexual Being. You are a Son or Daughter of Creator God. You were Built to connect with him and Reflect him.

-Seeing yourself as you actually are is the key to living as you were intended to live.

-when that is the case our sexuality begins to shrink back to proper size

-Learn to cultivate the pursuit of what you were really built for, rather than Deforming ourselves by making a Secondary Appetite into a source of Identity or purpose.

Pray