

Proposal

Sexual ethics have become a large source of debate in modern America and will continue as American sexual mores become more progressive. The church in America also faces the issue of how to respond to concerns caused by changes in American sexual ethics. While debates about sexual ethics are not new, the debate has reemerged in modern society, primarily as the result of two movements, the Sexual Revolution and the Self-esteem Movement. Both movements shifted belief in human value away from inherent value, as a result of humans being made in the Image of God, to a more anthropocentric understanding of human value. The Sexual Revolution has especially deep philosophical roots in ideas that stand in stark contrast to the image of God, such as eugenics. Likewise, the Self-esteem movement, with its roots in Objectivist Philosophy, makes humans the arbiters of their own self-worth by making value contingent upon one's own rationalistic understanding. Recent polling shows a shift not only in society but in the church as well on issues, including divorce, abortion, pornography, and gay marriage. All of these issues, by shifting away from traditional sexual ethics, devalue God's image bearers. Because of the nature of this project, it is necessary to depend on a variety of sources. Much of the information comes from historical sources. Primary sources provide the secular arguments used in favor of the modern sexual ethic as well as rebuttals by those who were opposed to this modern ethic. Also important are works of philosophy and literature reviews. Polling data was utilized to understand current cultural opinion as well as the Church's shift in opinion regarding sexual issues. Finally, books on church history as well as works of theology and apologetics were examined in order to argue for the Christian sexual ethic.