

Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
Audio Media Services
Fearless – Ep 107 – Sex Outside of Marriage
Final Transcript

Cissie Graham Lynch:

00:00:00 Today's episode of *Fearless* is another one of those topics that's not always the most fun to talk about, but it's also one that you probably don't want to listen to while your kids are in the car. But I do think this is a subject that needs to be addressed and it's so important and I hope you take a listen on today's episode.

MUSIC STARTS

Cissie:

00:00:18 Hi, I'm Cissie Graham Lynch. Welcome to *Fearless*, helping you have a fearless faith in a compromising culture.

MUSIC TRANSITION

Cissie:

00:00:39 So recently I was scrolling through social media and I came across something on my feed that really caught me off guard. And it was a friend from college and she had multiple posts about the anti-purity movement, and that's something new to me. Maybe you've heard of that, but I had to do some Googling and it's really this movement that's coming against the True Love Waits and how people that were a part of that, that were children or teenagers in the '90s that went through that in their church, felt like sex-shamed and they're coming out against it.

So it kind of set this like current landscape of what's going on. And *then* this summer, many of us were shocked by the comments at the prayer breakfast in South Carolina by Congresswoman Nancy Mace, where she awkwardly and candidly joked about her sex life with her boyfriend at the prayer breakfast, which shocked many of us. But should we have really been shocked, when we look at our current culture and what is going on, should we really, as the church, been shocked? Because we look at a culture that is on a *rapid* moral decline. And so many of these issues that I address here on *Fearless*, like the LGBT-related comment, the vulgarity in our culture when we look at drag queens dancing in front of children and having story time in kindergarten class, and teaching gender ideology inside schools and in our sports, and when we talk about pro-life issues here on *Fearless*, when we're talking about 60 million children are aborted since 1973, all of these are rooted from the same issue. And that's an issue that we're seeming to ignore. We're trying to talk about how to solve these problems, but we're ignoring the core issue—and that is sex outside of marriage. And no one talks about it.

And I want to be clear before I start on this episode, this is, once again, not always a fun episode and fun topic that we talk about here. I didn't think I'd be talking about sex before marriage here on *Fearless*, but I also want to remind you that I think a lot of people maybe they're feeling just this topic alone brings up just hurt or shame or guilt, and I just want to remind you that we serve a gracious and loving God. And this episode is really meant to challenge us as a church, to challenge us in the culture, and to be

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able to stand fearless. But in prepping last year for episode 88 on cohabitation—if you missed that, I encourage you to [check it out](#)—but there was something that emerged that revealed the court issue behind cohabitation that we’re even seeing inside the church and that’s the shift in how we as believers and as a culture think about sex before marriage.

And so I read some statistics—and these are going to be shocking—it says 33% of Christians say sex in a committed relationship is always acceptable with another 24% saying it sometimes is. This means that 57% of Christians think sex before marriage in a committed relationship is fine. And it says 50% of Christians say casual sex is acceptable, and [laugh], I’m trying not to laugh. My coworker yesterday said, You cannot laugh when you read these statistics ’cause they’re sad, but it’s wild to me to think how far we’ve come. ’Cause 18% say that an open relationship, meaning having multiple sex partners within a committed primary relationship, is fine. And 19% of Christians say sex on a first date is sometimes, they’re *always* acceptable.

And so my question is why the 180? Why have we not worked on taking the shame out of godly sex, instead have gone to the extreme of throwing in the towel on every kind of sexual ethic? It’s just like the True Love Waits movement. You know, the intention was so good and now these people who do not agree with it, that went through it in the ’90s, they’re going to a 180. And this has been a gradual decline over the decades to get us to where we are now, because what one generation tolerates, the next accepts. And it’s not just the kids that are misbehaving, if we should say, there is a high sexual activity rate in retirement communities and we’ve probably all have heard and read the statistics on STDs are exploding at a high rate in these retirement communities. And it’s like, who wants to think about grandma and grandpa having sex? No one, not me. This is awkward to talk about in these conversations, but they are serious and important to have.

And I think so often as a culture we say times have changed and we want to think God’s standards have changed, but they haven’t, because nothing is new under the sun. This has happened with generation after generation. ’Cause let’s remember that Paul in Scripture was dealing with a culture, even inside the church, that tolerated sexual immorality. Corinth was a city that worshipped sex. They had a temple to Aphrodite; sex was a part of their worship. They had priestesses, also known as prostitutes, who would come into the city and seduce men to take their money and then give it to the temple. And that’s the landscape that he was speaking to when he wrote in Scripture to not associate with sexually immoral people. *“Not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral,”* but the people that are called brothers and sisters that we *“must not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or slanderer, a drunkard or swindler. Do not even eat with such people.”* ’Cause, *“What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside.”* But, *“Expel the wicked*

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person from among you.” And that’s how serious he was taking sexual immorality within the church.

But how did we get here? Like when we look at our culture, we have allowed the culture to define how Christians are going to live, and we’ve allowed our standards to change. And of course, you know, it’s the ramifications of the free love and sexual revolution of the ’60s and the ’70s. When we look at our media and what they’ve allowed, you know, I cannot remember a TV show where Hollywood does not mock the virgin. The virgin is always laughed at, made to look stupid and ridiculous. And it was funny to me ’cause just a couple years ago we finally had a great movie as Christians. It was *Redeeming Love*, which was based on Francine River’s book that was probably one of the most popular fiction books inside the church. And it was this great film of a strong godly man who lives his life according to God’s Word, and all of a sudden Christians didn’t like it. They started bashing it and it’s like we couldn’t win here. But when we look at Hollywood and what they’ve taught the last two generations—and today kids learn from just social media, the pressures of Hollywood, things that they’re watching, the music they’re listening to. We’re telling our kids that they’re not even normal if they’re not trying both gender’s sexually.

And so when we look at our culture, it is on a rapid moral decline, but when we’re looking at the church, how did we get here? And I want to ask you the question: When’s the last time you heard a pastor speak from the pulpit about sexual immorality or the problems of sexual immorality? And recently, when I was preparing for this topic, I was listening to my grandfather on SiriusXM®. And funny enough, he was talking about this subject and he said back in 1967 in Winnipeg, “There was a time when I first started preaching 25 years ago that you wouldn’t mention this subject”—the subject of sex—“in public. Certainly not from a pulpit.” He went on to say, “I think we made a mistake. I think the clergy made a mistake. Now I think the pendulum has swung too far and now it’s *too* much of a subject of discussion, but the Bible has a great deal to say about it. And it’s certainly the great problem that young people are facing today.” And I look, you know, that was back in 1967, and in 2023, I believe that the pulpit is still sitting silent. The church has failed in this conversation because *now* we fast forward all these years and there’s been a massive paradigm shift in our culture as it relates to topics like sexuality. And I read that sociologists suggest such a moral paradigm shift should have taken centuries to happen, but it’s happened just in decades, and it’s been unprecedented in our lifetimes because of things like social media, the entertainment industry, politics, and inside the progressive churches. So when we look inside the church, I believe Christians have avoided this topic. We don’t talk openly about the purpose and the practice of marriage and *then*—we don’t talk about it—and then we expect to throw our young adults into marriage with very little guidance about sex.

And I just remember growing up, my mom never avoided the topic—sometimes awkwardly. I’ve often shared here that my mom always used the car rides to school kind of as her mission field, and she would, yes, talk to us about sex. She would talk to us

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about alcohol, the, our friends that we were making, drugs, anything that she felt led to talk about with us, and I'm thankful she did. 'Cause I can remember sitting in the car and she'd be like, Cissie, you cannot wait till you're in the backseat of a car with your boyfriend then to decide if you were going to be a virgin or not—and she was right. That was something I had to commit early on and be strong on. I couldn't wait till we were in those moments. And those are the topics my mom would have. She never avoided them. And let me just pause for a second. Maybe one of y'all need to hear that. Maybe you're a parent that needs to have that tough conversation with your child inside the car. And I would just encourage you, I know it's [laugh], it's hard to have these conversations but encourage you don't miss out with talking to your kids about that.

But we've also seen recent disasters of families who raise their kids in what would appear to be a conservative Christian home, but the culture of those families included avoidance of real conversations about sex and the outcome of *that* kind of family culture has been catastrophic. I think many times in the church we avoid it, thinking it was inappropriate to talk about things like that. And, for example, it's the Duggar family. From the outside, they looked like a conservative Christian family, but inside, the household was a very different reality that existed. And Josh Duggar, the oldest son, has now been put in prison for child pornography. He also had explicit relationships through the Ashley Madison website while married to his wife and then in his youth, he molested several of his siblings^{1, 2} and a family friend, and yet was sent to family friends to deal with his actions. And I think there's of course been negativity within the church and the Christian community towards what God made good. And Christians' expectations over the years, you know, we've attempted to have these conversations with our children, but in my opinion we have kind of failed in many different areas. I look at one generation where they would sometimes teach kind of in the reflection of moral innocence, which where they don't use biological terms for body parts and sex. Instead they're focusing kind of on the clear and honest, good and appropriate expression of like how God designed it, but it was just leaving our kids ignorant instead of equipped and informed, which also later leads to us as the parents not looking like the experts. We didn't give our children the facts. And our kids will always go somewhere where they can find the answers and where they can find the facts. So I just encourage you, make sure in your family, you're the expert when it comes to these.

And now we've told a generation: Go get a degree, go get a job, get a down payment on their house, you know, all at the same time while they've reached these sexual peaks in their lives, but are waiting for marriage because of all the external reasons the world would tell us to. And then I've also heard now Christian parents to *this* generation thinking that being a virgin when you get married, to save sex until your spouse, that that's impossible. I've actually heard Christian parents say that and that they would rather just teach their kids safe sex, because they know their kids are going to go ahead and do that, so it's like they've thrown in the towel on this subject already.

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But I want to go back to the very beginning with this incident of the South Carolina congresswoman. She was recently a new believer in the last few years, when I did some investigation, and though we did not all grow up in the church or under strong Biblical teaching, or maybe we've made our own mistakes in our lives, but this incident led to ask important questions about the church. And I read an article written by Bunni Pounds and she asked these questions about the church. And she said, in the first question, "How are we bringing people into the Kingdom? Are we explaining to them that the Bible a love letter from Jesus but [it's] also an instruction manual on the best way to live our lives?" Second, she asks, "Are we asking new Christians hard questions about their walk with God and the way they are living their lives—not to condemn but to serve them to walk before the Lord rightly? When was the last time we heard a sermon at our churches on the covenant of marriage, purity, holiness, sexual immorality and the boundaries that we need to keep to protect our bodies, souls, and spirits as Christians?" She also asked, "Are we personally being disciplined in some way and are we discipling someone else? Are we pouring into someone else and speaking the truth in love" over them? And then lastly, which has to do on cohabitation was, "When was the last time that we heard a Christian brother or sister refer to their "girlfriend" or "boyfriend" in the context of ... living quarters and question them *in love* about their living situation and provide some biblical wisdom for them to consider?" So, with all those questions that she's asking, she's just saying: Are we challenging one another inside the church? Are we discipling? Are we encouraging to live godly lives? Or, do we not want to hurt somebody? Do we not want to offend them by addressing sin in their lives? And instead we've just ignored it and allowed God's standards to slip. But what did God intend sex to be? God designed sex. It was His idea, His invention, His creation. He created it to be beautiful in its right place and the proper place. He gave it to man to be able to demonstrate the full extent of love, and that proper place for sexuality is in a marriage between a man and a woman. And sex was created to be amazing connection between a husband and wife, biologically and spiritually, but as a culture, we have lived outside those borders and those borders were given to protect us. And sex is a unique bond for marriage, making us one flesh with one other person in a singular relationship. As Matthew 19:6 says, "*So they are no longer two, but one flesh.*" Where, "*Therefore ... God has joined together, let no man separate.*"

In a culture which likes to devalue marriage, our hearts still long for the bond of marriage and what it means, even when we say otherwise. I read in an article 2 in 5 say marriage is outdated. 85% say they don't need marriage for a long-term committed relationship, but 83% say they want to get married. That doesn't really make sense when you look at the paper because they are telling us what they have been taught over generations. They're telling us what the world says, that they do not need marriage to be happy. They don't need marriage for a long-term committed relationship, *but* 83% of them say they want to get married. They long for what God created us to be: in a relationship with a husband or wife that is committed just between the two of them. And God wants us to have sex. He's the One that created it. He's the One that gives us a sex drive and He will fulfill that sex drive when it's used properly. And while sexuality is

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only one form of intimacy, it's the primary one that our very bodies were designed to form a deep emotional bond with a person we're sexually intimate with. And I think often, we as a culture, we want to blame God. We want to blame Him for the rules and the standards, that He doesn't want us to have fun, and all those laws that He gives us. And sometimes it seems like it's too much, that it's impossible to keep up with. But we have to remember that He is our Heavenly Father and He wants the very best for us. He wants us to thrive, and He knows the best way to do that. And it's like a fire. A fire is great. It heats my house. I can cook my food with it, but a fire which burns out of control, it destroys and it's dangerous. And He didn't give us these rules so we couldn't have fun. He gave us these boundaries to keep us safe and He's all-knowing and knows what's the very best to protect us so that we can thrive.

And yes, He wants to protect us. One, He wants to protect us with our health. According to the World Health Organization, more than 1 million sexually transmitted infections are acquired everyday worldwide. And almost 1 million pregnant women are estimated with an infected disease, resulting in over 350,000 adverse birth outcomes, mother-to-child transmissions of STIs—and that can also relate in a stillbirth, neonatal death, a low birth weight, prematurity, and other complications. So He knows all that that would protect our health and protect the health of our children. He wants to protect our future marriages. Any pastor, counselor, or therapist would be able to tell you the emotional and physical effects that past sexual partners cause in a future marriage. But God wants to protect you emotionally. You know, when we talk about this, very little is ever discussed about the emotional effect it has on somebody, especially for young girls and young women. Think of the guilt, the regret, the depression that follows when you have sex outside of marriage. Teenage girls who are sexually active have a high suicide rate because they feel rejection. We have fear; we have anxiety, and God knows that sex outside of marriage will cause all of this. So when we don't engage in sex the way that God intended it, we discover that no other sin affects the body like sexual sin does. 1 Corinthians 6:18 says, "*Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body.*"

And just a little note, you know, as we've talked about this, I think Satan of course uses it as one of his greatest strategies, his weapons before you get married, to destroy your heart and your mind and your soul, to destroy future relationships, so I think Satan uses that as a strategy. But I also want to say, I think he uses it also after you get married, that the things we're talking about, this is for inside our marriage and it's supposed to be awesome and wonderful, but then Satan uses it to tear you apart *after* you've committed yourself to your husband or your wife. You know, you're too tired or you're in a fight, and *all* the excuses that I don't have to go through over on a podcast, but just note that Satan is constantly using that to destroy.

But with all of that, the question is, when should we talk to our kids about sex? How do we teach our kids that sex is good and how to control their thoughts and behaviors, without making sex dirty or making kids feel shame for their curiosity? All those things

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that God created us to be; all these things that are natural. And to be honest, these are questions that I am personally asking because I have a 10-year-old daughter who I'm going to have to have these conversations with the years to come. As a mom, I want to get this right. I want to be the expert she comes to. I want to have that open relationship and those conversations. To be honest, I'm terrified to have those conversations. I was jokingly asking my mom over the summer if she would do it for me. And she left and goes, "I've been there, I've done that, did my job. It's your turn." But I do know that for my mom, these conversations, they were continual. It wasn't just like a one and done conversation. And that's up for you as a parent to know 'cause to be honest, I don't know the answer to that question. The timing for each family will be different. It will be different for every child. It will be different in different stages of their lives. But I *do* know the timing of having this conversation is getting earlier and earlier, because one of the reasons we're having this major issue is because Christian parents have been disengaged and confused. 'Cause the culture, politicians, educators, entertainers, they all tell us to let our children navigate it on their own, let it figure out on their own, which is a lie because they just don't want us teaching because they themselves are trying to remove us as the parent from being the expert, and they're trying to teach our kids.

Just recently I read an article where a parent took her child in, because they were sick, into the doctor and they had, 'This is a safe and free space' with a rainbow flag on it. And the parent showed concern and the doctor themselves said that is their job is to teach their kids about a safe place in sexuality. And she said, "No, it's your job to tell my kid if they have strep throat or not." So just so you know, they want to tell kids to navigate on their own when really they're trying to remove us as the parent. So the church cannot sit silent. Christian parents, you can't sit silent on this ... because we have another generation of parents being the opposite of fearless when it comes to this subject. We have to be fearless to be different in a culture that's telling us otherwise. We have to be fearless in the conversations we're having with our children even when they're uncomfortable. And even if we don't know how to navigate through those conversations, to be prayerful and asking the Holy Spirit to show us and give us wisdom as parents because we need to be the first ones that our kids come to. We need to be the ones that are transparent and the ones that are open. We have to be the expert in our kids' lives so that they don't go find it elsewhere because there is a world out there that is willing to tell them differently.

And we also, as parents, we need to elevate the importance and the role of sex inside of relationships and the proper relationships that God intended it to be and to teach our children how wonderful that is, that there's no shame in any of that—and there's no shame in the way that God intended it to be. And sadly, a lot of men and women feel shame, guilt, or hopelessness when it comes to this subject because of past decisions. And I want to remind you here on *Fearless* that we serve a loving God, a gracious God, and that it's never too late to change and to do what is right, to make a decision in our life that we're not going to live like that anymore, and we're going to do what's right before God's eyes and before God's standards. And I'll be the first to admit: I'm no

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expert in this area, but this is a topic that has been so heavy on my heart because I've seen so much of what's going on in our culture. It's just a product of this root sin that we are not talking about and that the church is not talking about. And I've seen so many Christians throw in the towel when it comes to this subject. We've given up on it. And our kids deserve better than that. The next generation deserves better. So these are hard topics, especially in the world of confusion that we're in. But to remember that God is not a God of chaos, He's a God of clarity. And that if you ask God to lead you and your family in these conversations, to help you stand strong in a culture and in—even inside the church where God's standards are being ignored—God will meet you and He will help you navigate through these uncharted waters [soft chuckle] that are very confusing and He will give you clarity.

MUSIC TRANSITION

Cissie:

00:25:40 Thank you for joining me here on *Fearless*. As always, I encourage you to follow me on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#). Also, if you've missed any old episodes and would like to get caught up, you can check them out on CissieGrahamLynch.com.

CLOSING MUSIC

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1. Ashford, Ben. 'He had his sister on his lap during bible time and touched her private area': Duggar family friend breaks down in tears recounting how 15-year-old Josh Duggar confessed to molesting four of his young sisters starting when he was 12 [Internet]. 2021 [cited 2023 Sep. 25]; Available from: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10280625/Duggar-family-friend-tells-court-Josh-Duggar-confessed-molesting-sisters.html>
2. Wikipedia. Josh Duggar [Internet]. 2023 [cited 2023 Sep. 25]; Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josh_Duggar#:~:text=He%20was%20found%20guilty%20on,prison%20on%20May%2025%2C%202022