



**FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH**

# **“The Biblical Design of Gender, Part 22”**

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***Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.***



### The Biblical Design of Gender, Part 22

#### Genesis 39:6

**6 Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.**

We attend Church to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

Our takeaway point in this series on the Biblical Design of Gender is that:

God has designed man as the cooperative coalition of husband and wife so that man can successfully achieve the objective that God has given us to exercise dominion over the earth, developing wisdom and knowledge in preparation for further responsibility in our eternal life.

Our last lesson chronicled the episode of Judah and Tamar, in which Judah unlawfully impeded the Levirate marriage of the last of his sons with Tamar, the widow of Judah's oldest two sons. Tamar didn't take the situation lying down, but, after Judah's wife died, Tamar seduced Judah into marrying her himself rather than causing her to go unmarried and childless.

In **Genesis 2:18**:

**18 And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."**

**Genesis 2:24** tells us:

**24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.**

A man's wife is the helper that God intended for him. The Apostle Paul tells us, in **1Corinthians 11:8-9, 11**:

**8 For man is not from woman, but woman from man.**

**9 Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.**

**11 Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord.**

And when God created women for men, the clear corollary of the creation is that God created women such that they would need men, just as men need women. Tamar wanted a husband; she had had two husbands, but the fact that



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she was experienced did not preclude her from wanting the comfort of a man.

**Song of Solomon 1:2-3** tells us:

**2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth—For your love is better than wine.**

**3 Because of the fragrance of your good ointments, Your name is ointment poured forth; Therefore the virgins love you.**

The desire of a woman for the touch of a man is part of the creation of God. God created our skin with nerve endings that allow us to stimulate and comfort one another. I was reading an article about comforting the bereaved, and the question arose as to what one could say to a person that had just lost a loved one. The author wrote that people often feel awkward when someone for whom they care is going through bereavement, and sometimes words just do not properly convey the feeling of sympathy that the person trying to comfort wants to convey to his friend. The author wrote that in some cases, the best thing you can do to bring comfort is to hug your friend, and allow the physical touch of your bodies to one to convey your feeling, because words can't express it.

So the physical is important in our conveying our feelings for one another. That may be the reason that having sexual intercourse with one another is colloquially called "making love", as love in marriage is God's intended outcome of a man and woman becoming one physically. Unfortunately, every experience that God designed as positive can be used by the devil to create a negative in our life, just as the devil perverted the positive practice of eating in the garden.

God intended man to be sexually satisfied. God gave us our sexual organs when He created us, and also gave us a compatible partner with whom to relieve our aloneness and to exercise the ecstasy of the erotic. But God intended for each of us to only have one sexual partner. God created sexually transmitted diseases as a method of punishing us for disobeying this tenet, just as God kicked the man and the woman out of the garden for eating the forbidden fruit.

So the plan of God for the enjoyment of our sexuality is clear. **Hebrews 13:4** tells us:

**4 Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.**

**Proverbs 6:23-29** expands on this concept:

**23 For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life,**

**24 To keep you from the evil woman, from the flattering tongue of a seductress.**

**25 Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her allure you with her eyelids.**

**26 For by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life.**



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**27 Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?**

**28 Can one walk on hot coals, and his feet not be seared?**

**29 So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; whoever touches her shall not be innocent.**

As we read in the case of Shechem, who seduced Dinah in Genesis 34, sometimes the man is the aggressor in the situation and is predominantly responsible for sexual sin. But I know of a fellow who owned a lawn maintenance company. He hired several young college football players to work for him during the summer, and trained them to run the machinery and cut the lawns. Riding the mower was not a bad job, but the physical labor came in the clean up work, in which they had to trim hedges, edge the lawns and pick up the cut grass and trash.

One day, my acquaintance sent a young man to work on a huge lawn at a mansion in which the owner of an accounting firm resided. The young man completed his mower work, and started collecting the grass for pickup. Being a hot day in the summer and having a lot of ground to cover, the young man took off his shirt, strapped the blower to his torso, and began walking the yard. Unbeknownst to him, he attracted the attention and the interest of the lady of the house. She became focused upon watching him as he blew the grass onto a tarp in large piles, and then, with muscles wet with sweat and rippling, picked up the bundle and emptied it onto the trailer.

The young man worked steadily, walking and lifting throughout the morning and then, around noon, decided to take his lunch break. He had a brown bag lunch, and he decided to lie under a tree to rest and to eat.

The lady of the house was still watching him as he lay under the tree. She could almost see the sweat running through the furrows between his pectorals down to his ripped stomach muscles as he munched on his sandwich. He was resting on his elbow, and she could see his bicep as it bulged between the ground and his shoulder. She noticed the v shape of his torso as it proceeded from the width of his shoulders to the narrow size of his waist. As she watched him, he finished eating and lay back under the tree as though he was going to take a nap. She decided that it would only be neighborly to offer him something cold to drink, so she prepared icy glasses of lemonade, tea and water and put them on a platter. Then she headed for her back door to go out to her yard.

As she sashayed toward the place where the young man was laying, he noticed her shadow and rose up on one elbow to see who was coming. She could see the clear definition of his stomach muscles and his firm, taut obliques. She stopped, took a deep breath, and smiled at him. "Young man", she started, "you look as though you have been working hard. Would you like something cold to drink? Lemonade, tea or maybe just water?"



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“Yes, ma’am”, he said, in a deep rumbling voice that seemed to make the ground upon which she was standing slightly quiver. “I wouldn’t mind a glass of water, if that’s not too much trouble.”

“No trouble at all”, said the woman, as she walked closer to give him the glass. As she stooped down to hand him the glass, he raised his arm to take it from her, and their arms touched. To her, his skin felt like steel covered by velvet.

The young man took the glass from the woman. He didn’t sip, but simply leaned his head back and poured the water down in one huge gulp. Then he looked at her with his large brown eyes and smiled at her with those pearly white, regular teeth and rounded lips. He spoke to her again, “Thank you very much.”

As she rose from her crouch after handing him the glass and watching him drink, he rose as well, pushing himself off the ground with one massive arm and jumping to his feet without dropping the glass. He continued smiling at her as he handed her the glass. “Well”, he said, “lunch is over and I have to finish this up. Thanks again for the water.”

She backed away as he picked up the blower and started strapping it to his bare torso once again. She continued backing up for several steps, and then she realized that she was walking backwards so that she could watch him. She shook her head, and then turned around and went back to the house as he switched on the blower motor.

In another half-hour, he was done. He loaded up the truck, strapped everything down, looked toward the house, smiled, and then got into the truck and pulled away.

The woman sighed. She realized that she needed oxygen, because she had been unconsciously holding her breath. What a pleasant morning, she thought to herself, as she took a deep breath. It’s beautiful outside.

When her husband came home, she didn’t say anything about the young man to him, but later that night, as they turned off the lights to go to sleep, she found herself seeing the young man’s regular features and bulging muscles in her mind’s eye. She shook her head as she realized that she was thinking about the young man, and she snuggled closer to her husband. He was, however, already asleep.

But she realized that she really wasn’t sleepy, so she slipped out of bed and went downstairs to warm a glass of milk to make her drowsy. She drank the milk as she savored the mental image of the young man that was in her head. But then, she shook her head and said to herself, What am I doing?

She tipped back upstairs, slipped back into bed and closed her eyes. I’m not thinking about him, she said to herself. Then she closed her eyes and eventually, went to sleep.

A week later in the morning, she heard a truck coming up her circle driveway. The truck passed the house and proceeded to the garage. As she looked out of the window, she found herself hoping that the lawn care company



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sent the same young man as was sent the previous week. They don't always send the same guy, you know, she said to herself.

She went to the kitchen window and looked out as the truck door opened and a young man exited. It was the same young man. He looked up at the sky, stretched, and bent over. Then he straightened up, went to the back of the truck and let down the trailer gate. He squatted down to unhook the chains that were keeping the riding mower on the trailer bed on the driver's side, then he walked around to the side facing the house and squatted down again to duplicate the process. The woman gasped, as she saw the difference in width between the young man's shoulders and his waist.

Having released the chains, the young man got on the riding mower, steered it slowly down the ramp at the end of the trailer, and then, when the mower was completely on the ground, he started the mower and began steering it toward the grass.

The lady realized she was light-headed. What's the matter with me?, she thought to herself. Then she realized, as she did the previous week, that she hadn't been breathing. She took a deep breath, turned away from the window, and then poured herself a cup of coffee.

She walked over to the bay window overlooking the back yard and settled down to watch the young man ride on the mower. Finally, the young man completed his ride, and pulled the mower back onto the trailer. He reached in the back of the truck, pulled out the blower, and then, the moment for which the woman had been waiting finally came. The young man put the blower down, lifted his arms over his head, grabbed the back of his collar, pulled his shirt over his head, and put his shirt on the seat of the truck.

Barechested and sweaty, he began strapping the blower on his torso. The lady could see the definition of his stomach muscles from her vantage point just before he slipped the blower over his head. The young man reached inside the bed of the truck, pulled out a tarp, put it on the ground, turned on the blower and began walking and blowing grass.

The lady recognized that coffee was too hot for that which she was watching, so she poured herself a tall, cool glass of lemonade and sipped as the young man strode over her lawn blowing grass. And as he did the previous week, he worked until about noon, took off the blower, and reached in the truck for his lunch.

As the young man lay under the same tree eating, the woman poured three tall, icy glasses of water. But, then she stopped. She ran upstairs quickly, and put on a pair of shorts, a tight shirt and a pair of high heeled shoes. She flounced her hair, freshened up her makeup, and inspected her toenails to make sure they were polished. She quickly brushed her teeth, reapplied her lipstick, and then went back downstairs to see how the young man's lunch was going.





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The young man was folding up his lunch bag. When he completed, he put the bag in his pocket and stretched his arms up over his head. Then he clasped his fingers behind his head and laid back in the shade of the tree. The lady could see his chest rising and falling as he breathed. She watched him for a minute, and then she picked up the tray of water. What am I doing?, she thought to herself. But she felt irresistibly drawn to the young man.

As she did the previous week, she sashayed out to the young man with the tray. And once again, when he saw her shadow, he looked up. His eyes widened, just a bit, as he surveyed the legs and taut chest, with just a bit of cleavage, coming towards him. When she was about arms length away, she stopped, turned sideways, bent down to set down the tray, then crouched down like a baseball catcher with her legs apart and handed the young man one of the cold glasses of water. “Want some?” she asked, playfully.

“Uh, thanks for the water”, the young man replied, as he gulped it down.

“I wasn’t sure that you had enough the last time”, the lady responded throatily, glancing briefly toward the tray of water and then look back into the young man’s eyes, “so all this is for you.”

“Thanks”, said the young man, “it sure is hot.”

“Yes”, said the lady, “it is hot.”

“Out here, I mean”, said the young man, “it’s hot out here.”

“Well”, said the lady, “It’s my guess that it’s probably pretty hot wherever you are working.”

“Yeah, working”, said the young man, “guess I’d better get back to it.”

As the young man straightened up his arm to get up, the lady grasped his bicep. The young man froze as the lady caressed the muscle fibers in his bicep, and then ran her fingers down to his forearm. As she started to run her finger back up his arm, the young man rolled away from her and jumped up, towering over her because she was still crouching down. The lady looked up at him, sighed, and then stood up. Then she turned her back on him, bent over from the waist, and reached down to pick up the tray. She swished her hips from side to side as she walked away, and then she looked back over her shoulder. “Have a nice day”, she said. “If there’s anything else you need, or want, just come to the house and let me know.”

As we read in the case of Shechem, who seduced Dinah in Genesis 34, sometimes the man is the aggressor in the situation and is predominantly responsible for sexual sin. But this is not always the case.

**Romans 3:23** tells us:

**23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

And all means all, because the meaning of all is all.

There is a reason for sexual attraction. Sexual attraction insures the fulfillment of God’s prime directive to increase and multiply. But God gives us the parameters in which we can exercise our sexual attraction, and we have the



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responsibility to be sexual within the parameters that He gives us. But the fact that we decide to follow God's plan and get married does not make the devil impotent to test our resolve to do that which the Lord says do. And this applies to women as well as it does to men.

You may remember, in our last episode, that Jacob's sons had a beef with their brother Joseph. Although Joseph was the younger of the brothers, he was also the son of Jacob's beloved wife Rachel, and was Jacob's favorite. **Genesis 37:4 tells us:**

**4 But when [Joseph's] brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him.**

So the brothers sold Joseph into slavery, and convinced their father that Joseph had been eaten by wild beasts. **Genesis 39:1-6** tells us:

**1 Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there.**

**2 The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.**

**3 And his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hand.**

**4 So Joseph found favor in [Potiphar's] sight, and served him. Then [Potiphar] made [Joseph] overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority.**

**5 So it was, from the time that [Potiphar] had made [Joseph] overseer of his house and all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had in the house and in the field.**

**6 Thus [Potiphar] left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and [Potiphar] did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.**

Joseph is the son of his extremely good looking mother. He has been in charge of Potiphar's farm, and so Joseph has spent many hours in the field working hard on the crops and the cattle. Joseph is in good shape as well as being handsome. And **Genesis 39:7** mirrors our story as it says:

**7 And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me."**

Joseph is young, Joseph is good-looking, Joseph is in shape and Joseph is prosperous. Potiphar's wife has never had as much discretionary income as she has since Joseph has come to town. And Joseph is available. He is in the house, and his master trusts him completely. And Joseph is not married to anyone, and, as we know, it is not good for a man to be alone.

So, Potiphar's wife knows that Joseph is susceptible to seduction on several levels. Being young, strong and without a wife, it stands to reason that





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Joseph must need some type of sexual release. After all, he is human. Joseph would be a good partner for Potiphar's wife, because they would not even have to leave the house to get some. And Joseph is a Hebrew, a man of a different race. The fascination of racial differences can be a real turn-on. When Potiphar's wife considered all these attributes, she decided that Joseph would be a good partner. So, she propositioned him. But in **Genesis 39:8-9**:

**8 But [Joseph] refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand.**

**9 There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"**

And that's the point. **Hebrews 13:4** is not written by a husband or a wife trying to regulate their spouse. **Hebrews 13:4** is written by God. When we have sex out of wedlock, whether adultery or fornication, our sin is against God even more so than our spouse. God tells us, in **Proverbs 5:3-8**:

**3 For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey, And her mouth is smoother than oil;**

**4 But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, Sharp as a two-edged sword.**

**5 Her feet go down to death, Her steps lay hold of hell.**

**6 Lest you ponder her path of life—Her ways are unstable; You do not know them.**

**7 Therefore hear me now, my children, And do not depart from the words of my mouth.**

**8 Remove your way far from her, And do not go near the door of her house,**

This is the same warning that God gave the man and the woman in the garden about the tree. Eat from it, and your punishment is death. Sexual immorality is analogous to the forbidden fruit in our generation. But Joseph rebuffed the woman and refused to participate in sin. But the devil will not stop bothering you just because you tell him no. And Joseph made one tactical error. **Genesis 39:10-11** tells us:

**Genesis 39:10-11** tells us:

**10 So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her.**

**11 But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside,**

Being alone with someone of the opposite sex is a situation that can lead to sexual sin. In earlier lessons, I talked about the importance of chaperoning your teenagers when they have social interactions with members of the opposite sex, because although your children are probably good Christian kids and they know the Biblical rules, impulse control is a real problem for anyone that is immature. And, as I once said, the best thing to control a teenager in heat is a



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parent in sight. But Joseph and Potiphar's wife were alone, which was Joseph's tactical error, and Potiphar's wife lacked impulse control. **Genesis 39:12** tells us: **12 that [Potiphar's wife] caught him by [Joseph] garment, saying, "Lie with me." But [Joseph] left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside.**

William Congreve, the seventeenth century English playwright, wrote a line in his play, "The Way of the World", which reads "Heaven has no rage like love to hatred turned, nor hell a fury like a woman scorned." Potiphar's wife pursued Joseph verbally, and then, when they were in the perfect position to consummate the relationship that she wanted to have, she pounced. When Joseph spurned her advances, even to the point of leaving his garment in her hands and running outside, Potiphar's wife was embarrassed. Not only that, she realized that Potiphar might ask Joseph what happened to his outer garment, and Joseph might tell the truth, as honest as he was. Now, Joseph had not ratted on Potiphar's wife before, even though she made advances to him, but Potiphar's wife knew that Joseph could not be counted on to lie when asked a direct question. So she decided to cut the truth off at the pass with a preemptive strike. **Genesis 39:13-15** records:

**13 And so it was, when [Potiphar's wife] saw that [Joseph] had left his garment in her hand and fled outside,**

**14 that she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, "See, [Potiphar] has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice.**

**15 And it happened, when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled and went outside."**

A convenient reversal of the truth. I read this week that Ben Roethlisberger, the quarterback for the Pittsburgh Steelers, has been suspended for six games of an eighteen game season for a sexual dalliance with a young woman against her will. She went to the police with her complaint, but the district attorney who investigated the case found that the young woman fabricated at least part of her story, and decided that he would not be able to convict Roethlisberger beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law. The commissioner of the NFL, on the other hand, only has to be convinced by a preponderance of the evidence in order to hand down a penalty, which is a lower standard. The evidence was clearly that something happened, and since this was the second allegation of criminal sexual conduct in a public place against Roethlisberger, the commissioner threw the book at him.

But Joseph as not like Roethlisberger. He was an excellent worker and the Lord was with him, and Joseph had never been accused of doing anything dishonest the whole time he had been in Egypt. However, fellows are funny about their wives. If a wife comes to a husband with the account of someone hitting on them, the fellow tends to believe his wife, especially if she has physical evidence, such as Joseph's coat. Next time, Joe, keep your coat on.



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So Potiphar's wife lied to keep out of trouble. Joseph never tried to rape anyone, including her. But that just goes to show you that women are no more paragons of virtue than are men. Just like Ben's case, when a woman cries rape, the allegation must be thoroughly investigated to ascertain the facts in the case, especially in a he said/she said situation. Sometimes men do rape. But sometimes women lie. Dinah was talked into having sex, not raped. Sometimes when women decide to have sex, they regret the consequences of their decision later and then cry rape after the fact. You can only get to the truth by investigating. And maybe even not then. No one knows what goes on behind closed doors.

But since some things can't be fixed, they are to be avoided. Paul tells us, in **1 Corinthians 7:1**:

**1 Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.**

It is singularly difficult for a man to rape a woman that he hasn't touched. To not touch a woman is an avoidance mechanism. If a man touches a woman incorrectly, even if his motives are pure and the sin is only in the woman's mind, the man can't fix it. He can apologize, but he can't untouch her. On the one hand, to not touch women seems kind of prudish, but on the other hand, the prudes usually tend to stay out of trouble. And Paul goes on to say, in **1 Corinthians 7:2**:

**2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.**

So, brothers, if you just must touch a woman, get a wife and touch her. And sisters, if you just must touch a man, get a husband and touch him. God has nothing against touching; once you marry a person, you can touch them all you want, but it's a good idea to avoid touching people of the opposite sex to whom you are not married. Shaking hands is okay, I suppose, because you are generally at arm's length, and not much can be blamed on you if you stay at arm's length, and have a chaperone present.

But Joseph did not have a chaperone. Joseph left his garment, and Potiphar's wife told the story first and framed it the way that she wanted to.

**Genesis 39:19-20** records:

**19 So it was, when his master [Potiphar] heard the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, "Your servant did to me after this manner," that his anger was aroused.**

**20 Then Joseph's master [Potiphar] took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were confined. And [Joseph] was there in the prison.**

Falsely accused and imprisoned. It's a terrible situation for Joseph. But **Genesis 39:21-23** tells us:



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**21 But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and [the LORD] gave [Joseph] favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.**

**22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing.**

**23 The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper.**

So, although Potiphar didn't acknowledge Joseph's honesty, God did, and although Potiphar put Joseph in prison, God allowed Joseph to maintain his position of authority.

I'm reminded of another Man who was judged falsely and found guilty without cause. But they didn't put Him in prison. Rather they nailed Him to the Old Rugged Cross. He suffered, bled and died, not because of His own sin, but because of the sins of others, just as Joseph was imprisoned for the sins of Potiphar's wife.

The Man is Jesus Christ, who did nothing on this earth but good. The judge knew that the accusation against Jesus was false, but the judge lacked the courage to call the truth the truth and let Jesus Christ go. So Jesus Christ endured the mocking, the spitting, the crown of thorns, the three hour period when the sun didn't shine, and finally, He hung His head in the locks on His shoulder and He died. But just as Joseph maintained his leadership status in prison, Jesus Christ maintained his leadership position in the place of the dead, where He preached the gospel to the spirits in prison, and freed such of them that acknowledged his sacrifice.

And then Jesus Christ came out of the prison of the grave, rising from the dead on that Sunday Morning, with all power in heaven and in earth in His hand. God was with Jesus Christ, just as God was with Joseph, and just as God will be with us if are not faithless like Potiphar, but rather have faith in the goodness, mercy and grace of Jesus Christ, as who died on the Cross so that our sins, sexual and otherwise, can be forgiven as He tells us in **John 3:16-17**:

**16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

**17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.**

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