

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

Drawn from “Rules for Captives Part 1: The Bible’s Vision for Human Sexuality” A Sermon on Deut 21:10-14

Pastor Nicoletti @ Faith PCA Tacoma

11/2/25 AM

1. This week’s sermon was about “how to be a winner” (i.e. “what kind of person you should be when you have success... power ... authority, or influence.” Think about the realms of sports and of childhood games. What examples come to mind of “how to be a winner” and how **not** to be a winner?
2. In this week’s sermon and last week’s (which was on the same passage) Pastor Nicoletti used two different illustrations to explain how important context is to the right interpretation of Scripture. Recall those illustrations and talk about how understanding the Ancient Near Eastern context into which this law was given is important for helping us understand the passage.
3. Look again at how the captured woman is told to modify her appearance in verses 12-13. Compare those verses with 2 Sam 12:19-20, 2 Sam 19:24, Gen 35:2, Gen 41:14, Lev 14:8-9, Num 6:9, Num 8:6-7 and talk about both the symbolic significance of these actions and their intended effect on the man.
4. Look again at the sermon text and point out the specific ways in which the conqueror’s power over the captive is being restrained. What does this passage teach us about the Biblical vision of sexuality and power?

5. You are talking with an unbeliever about your Christian faith. She brings up this passage and says, “This text is an example of how the Bible is backwards, misogynistic, oppressive, and patriarchal.” How do you respond?

6. In the sermon, Pastor Nicoletti distinguished between “God’s trajectory for his people” and “His ideal.” What was he getting at with this distinction? What do you think about it? Can you think of other examples of social institutions in Scripture where this distinction might be applied?

7. Look up Gen 24:3, Deut 7:3, Neh 13:25-27, and 2 Cor 6:14. How do these warnings against marrying pagan women fit with the sermon text which clearly allows an Israelite to marry a pagan?

8. In the world right around you, where do you see the need for the Biblical vision of sexuality and power to prevail?

9. Where does this Biblical vision of sexuality and power challenge your own thinking, habits, or values? In your answer, think especially about the areas specifically mentioned by Pastor Nicoletti: family, church, work, and politics.