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BIB 303 OA Christian Thought
October 8, 2022
Chapters 1-5

Theological Sexuality

I have recently read *Beauty, Order, and Mystery: A Christian Vision of Human Sexuality*, Gerald L. And Todd Wilson, ed, 2017. This book takes the very hard question about sexuality that we have in some of our churches today. Such as marriage, homosexuality, pornography, transgenderism, and gender dysphoria and provides us with theological vision of human sexuality for the church. This book is a series of essays written about several topics. Each authors approach their topic with thoughtfulness. And bring a level of humanity to this book as the writers bring us into what they have experienced personally. I find this book to be very helpful as my husband is a pastor and I am soon become one. It is very important to us both to establish a church built off of love and not judgement. A church built off of the unchanging word of God. It has become even more apparent in our world that these forms of sexuality are not going anywhere. So we must learn how to address them in the way that Jesus would. His parables and actions showed us to treat those who were looked at as different. Jesus's compassion and love for all people aided in his popularity and trust.

Each author does a good job of stating their argument clearly and supporting facts with scripture. Which I believe to be awfully affective, as these teachings need to have scriptural references behind them. To further drive the point that sexuality teachings need to be taught in

the church. Todd Wilson in part of his essay points out the fact that the New York Times columnist Ross Douthat says, “a large swath of America decided that two millennia of Christian teachings on marriage and sexuality were out of date”. (P160) Wilson says, in reaction to that comment, “We are suffering from a loss of vision”. (p160) I couldn't agree more with those words. He proves his point by giving examples such as, premarital sex, increasing cohabitation , adultery, divorce, out-of-wedlock births, dysfunctional sexual relations between spouses, the hook up culture on college campuses, sexual abuse, and pornography. There is so much sexual disorder in the world that it is no surprise we as a church have no idea how to address it. We have let it go for so long, just not talking about it. We have got away from God's original plan for sex. The next author Beth Felker Jones addressed creation and rejected the Gnostic hierarchical dualism approach. This teaching she denounces because it divides humans into two. Dividing material from spiritual. Forgetting about the flesh altogether and focusing more on spirit. Teaching sex is impure. Jones, further argues in 1 Timothy 4:3 Paul insists that “everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected, provided it is received with thanksgiving” (p289) Making her point to reject the flesh and focus more on the spirit is not what God wants. She talks about creation and how God looked on everything he created and said it was good. She says, God created our bodies good. Jones says, “we have shaped dreadfully distorted sinful caricatures of male and female and then called them God's intention”. (p385) I'm sure in this quote she's addressing how we have over sexualized our bodies. In ways like pornography, strip clubs, and things as simple as lingerie ads. We are a society that has made billions off of sexually exploiting our bodies. Wesley Hill's another author, who is himself a homosexual Christian. Who lives a celibate homosexual life. His essays. Answers the question, Who do homosexuals love?

He argues against the idea of marriage being redefined. Hill sums his essay up by stating, homosexuals should love their neighbors as themselves.

In conclusion, sexuality needs to be something talked about openly in church. When I started dating my husband. I was frankly surprised about how much he knew about sex. It was because it was a conversation his parents, who were Christians, did not mind having with him. But in my case my Christian parents thought it better, not to. They thought talking about it would make me want to do it. I believe that's not how we should raise children. These conversations need to become normal. Especially in church. Because God created sexuality. It needs to be taught in a healthy way. This book could help churches with understanding sexuality more. I would recommend this book for all who are mature enough to learn about what God tells us about our sexuality.