
Words of Truth

Who Defines What Is Vulgar?

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Cultural and religious traditions are dangerous in numerous ways. The Lord teaches us about the dangers of following traditions of men (Matthew 15:1-9 and Colossians 2:5-23). Many of us have been brought up with cultural beliefs that certain subject matters are more sensitive than others. Some of us have been taught that there are subject matters that are appropriate for adults, but not for children. Sex has been euphemized as, “the birds and the bees” to shield the nature of sex.

The word “vulgar” has several definitions. The one in which we are discussing is defined like this: “lacking in cultivation, perception, or taste : coarse b : morally crude, undeveloped, or unregenerate : gross c : ostentatious or excessive in expenditure or display : pretentious 2 a : offensive in language : earthy b : lewdly or profanely indecent” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). Based on that definition, would a discussion on homosexuality be vulgar? Based upon the definition of “vulgar”, would talking about penises be a vulgar discussion? The answer to both questions is, yes!

Do you know what that means? It means the Bible is FULL of vulgar terms and subject matters. Thus, Christians do use vulgar terms. Do you agree or disagree? How uncomfortable are you with this subject matter already? If you are feeling discomfort, why do you feel that way? Let’s jump into our study.

Why Are Some Uncomfortable With “Vulgar” Terms And Subjects?

The Lord says: *“Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled”* (Titus 1:15). When Adam and Eve were created they spent their early days naked and they were not ashamed (Genesis 2:25). It was not until sin became part of their lives that they were then aware that they were naked (Genesis 3:1-11). If you put a two year old boy in the bath tub with a three year old girl, do they act like they are ashamed to be in that tub together? From experience as a parent, I tell you they are not at all ashamed. They do not look at nakedness like most adults do. Why? They are pure. They are undefiled. They are like Adam and Eve were.

Since we are to be pure (I Peter 1:13-16), don’t you think it would be good to train your mind to be like those innocent children (Matthew 18:1-4)? As disciples of Christ, we are supposed to *“speak as the oracles of God”* (I Peter 4:11). If your mind is the way it should be,

and you speak from God's word, your speech is going to include many things that the world will call "vulgar".

The Talk Of The Faithful Is Often "Vulgar"

The words "circumcise", "circumcised", "circumcision", and "uncircumcision" add up to about ninety usages in the KJV. Most of those discussions refer to a man's penis. There are plenty of Scriptures about women's breasts too. Consider passages such as this: *"Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love"* (Proverbs 5:18-19). Those two verses are, what many would consider, "vulgar".

Sex is a subject matter covered throughout the Scriptures in discussing both authorized sexual activities (Song of Solomon 4:1-7, Song of Solomon 7:1-9, and Hebrews 13:4) and sinful sexual activities (Genesis 19:1-11, Leviticus 18:6-23, Galatians 5:19-21). Some contexts cover both the good and the bad about sex (I Corinthians 6:15-7:5). Large breasts are compared to small (Song of Solomon 8:8-10) and even figurative imagery of a large male member and high sperm amounts are used in the Scriptures (Ezekiel 23:19-20).

Are we supposed to pass over Scriptures such as the one's mentioned above or the many others that could be cited? Are we supposed to not think about such things? Who says so? If such talk is immoral, then God is immoral. If such talk is vulgar, then God is vulgar. Some might say that much of this is in the Old Testament. That is true, but they are echoed in the New Testament as well (i.e. Luke 15:30, Romans 1:16-32, Ephesians 5:5, etc.). Furthermore, we are supposed to study and teach the Old Testament (Romans 15:4 and I Corinthians 10:1-12). Now we must also ask, are these things just "adult subject matters"?

Are These Just "Adult Subject Matters"?

The Scriptures (all of them) are supposed to be taught to children as well as to adults (II Timothy 3:14-17). That has long been the case (Deuteronomy 6:3-7). How can someone understand James 4:4 if he or she does not understand what adultery is? How can anyone understand Jeremiah 2:20 or Matthew 21:31 if they do not understand what a harlot is? How can you understand Ephesians 2:11-17 properly if you never discuss a penis? These "vulgar" things are only considered "vulgar" by people of carnal minds!

Conclusion

Murder and lying are just as disgusting as being whoremongers (Revelation 21:8). If you can talk about murder and lying, why are you uncomfortable with sexual terminology? Could it be that you are struggling with a carnal mind (Romans 8:5-8 and Galatians 5:16-17)? Be careful what you call vulgar! Unwittingly, you might just be charging God with sin!
