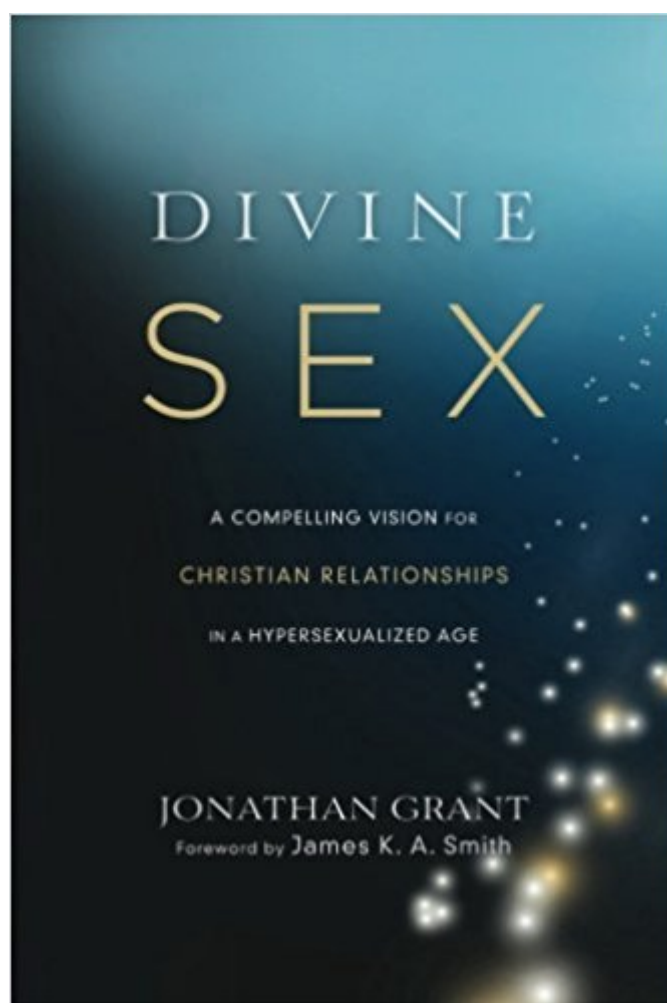


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# Divine Sex: A Compelling Vision For Christian Relationships In A Hypersexualized Age



## Synopsis

The digital revolution has ushered in a series of sexual revolutions, all contributing to a perfect storm for modern relationships. Online dating, social media, internet pornography, and the phenomenon of the smartphone generation have created an avalanche of change with far-reaching consequences for sexuality today. The church has struggled to address this new moral ecology because it has focused on clarity of belief rather than quality of formation. The real challenge for spiritual formation lies in addressing the underlying moral intuitions we carry subconsciously, which are shaped by the convictions of our age. In this book, a fresh new voice offers a persuasive Christian vision of sex and relationships, calling young adults to faithful discipleship in a hypersexualized world. Drawing from his pastoral experience with young people and from cutting-edge research across multiple disciplines, Jonathan Grant helps Christian leaders understand the cultural forces that make the church's teaching on sex and relationships ineffective in the lives of today's young adults. He also sets forth pastoral strategies for addressing the underlying fault lines in modern sexuality.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Faithful Discipleship in a Hypersexualized World" There are few issues in life that confront each of us like human sexuality. Every person struggles with making sense of relationships, eros, and longings, emotional as well as physical. Every man and woman wrestles with the lies of sensualized culture while holding at bay the effects of pervasive isolation and intense loneliness. In *Divine Sex* Jonathan Grant guides us through this journey with wit, grace, and honesty while being both wholly

theological and profoundly real."--Chap Clark, Fuller Theological Seminary"An exceptionally important and timely book. The gap between what passes for sexual and relational wisdom in contemporary culture and what actually makes for genuine human fulfillment has opened up so quickly and grown so wide that the lives of an entire generation are sliding headlong into frustration and despair. Grant addresses the issues directly yet sympathetically, countering contemporary folly with solid data, biblical wisdom, and grace. I wish it could be made mandatory reading for the entire millennial generation."--Craig M. Gay, Regent College, Vancouver"Grant compassionately exposes the powerful influences that orient us away from the heart of the Christian story by disordering our desires, explores the Christian reality of our shared life as sexual human beings in communion, and encourages us toward practices that embody the wholeness of cruciform life together--and he does so with candor, wisdom, and hope."--Cherith Nordling, Northern Seminary"In the intensely sexualized culture of the secularized West, Grant's thoughtful treatment is a valuable contribution to our understanding not just of our cultural conditioning but of God's design and the true sexual liberation we can experience as followers of Jesus."--Sam Metcalf, CRM-US, Fullerton, California"This is a book that needed to be written. . . . Absorbing Grant's insight, analysis, and constructive argument should not only deepen how we are talking about sex and discipleship; it should also give us new intentionality about the church as a formative community, enabling us to live into a different script that is good news--that our sexual lives are hidden with Christ in God."--James K. A. Smith (from the foreword)

Jonathan Grant (ThM, Regent College, Vancouver) is the leader of St. Paul's Symonds Street, one of the largest Anglican congregations in Australasia, located in the heart of Auckland, New Zealand. After beginning his career in law and investment banking, Grant pursued ordination training in the Church of England, serving in pastoral ministry at St. Mary's Bryanston Square, London.

Jonny is a great story teller who takes you on a journey founded on both real world personal experience and thorough academic research. This fine blend of reason and reality makes for an engaging read. His recount of how current thinking as evolved through time and cultural transformation provides context for a challenge to present paradigms. His vision for authentic relationships and willingness to speak out a clear message aligned with Jesus' way to abundant life offers hope to those robbed by conformity to current social norms. I enjoyed the journey, and have new perspective and context for relationship ahead. Well worth the read. Thanks.

I picked this book up out of curiosity and let it sit on my shelf for a bit. But once I finally got around to cracking it open, I was floored! The book is split into two parts. In the first section, Grant explores and diagnoses modern culture's sexual ethos. Grant has a firm grasp on the mores and social narratives of a postmodern (and post-Christian) culture, and turns to the research and expertise of Charles Taylor, Christian Smith, and James K A Smith, to bolster his already solid estimation. His conclusion is that in contemporary culture the individual is paramount, and his/her needs come before all else. As a result, meaningful and lasting sexual fidelity and chastity are rare. Part two prescribes a uniquely Christian response to contemporary culture's sexual convictions (or lack of) by proposing that the Church ought to incarnate an alternative narrative; one in which the "other" or the community are paramount, as we seek to emulate and embody the sacrificial love of God in Christ. Grant owes much to Stanley Hauerwas and Stanley J. Grenz in this respect, and with their help his case is made with stunning clarity and conviction. With the two pieces put together, the book essentially functions like a philosophical/theological "State of the Union" address - assessing where we are, and projecting where we ought to be going as Christians. Sexuality is at the center of the conversation, but it's used as a crux around which larger conversations about culture and God can revolve. It all rotates spectacularly and left me with my highlighter running out of ink as I strove to capture Grant's vision for myself. But while the book is intellectually engaging and provoking, what really makes it a gem is its spiritual depth. Grant clearly has a thriving devotional life and his pastoral heart is on display here, especially towards the end of the book. Certain parts of the book read almost like devotion texts, while never straying from the academic rigor necessary to write on a topic this complex. Such a balancing act is nearly impossible to find in modern Christian literature. Grant does a phenomenal job of providing a road-map of how traditional Christian sexual convictions allow us to flourish and thrive in the context of our own hypersexualized modern Babylon. I wish every modern Christian had this book as a lens through which to view our ever-changing sexual landscape. I recommend this book regularly, and can't wait to read whatever Mr. Grant writes next!

I was on staff at a large church in the DC metro area for 5 years, working with young adults, and am now rector at an Anglican church on Boston's North Shore, with a wide range of ages and social class and so on. I think Grant nailed it. This is an excellent insight as to how western culture now understands life - the story folks see themselves living - and to how we got to this point. It is compassionate yet also powerful in its critique; constructive and creative. One of the things I stress at the church I lead is that we have gotten cornered in the culture and our answer seems forever to

be “No and more no.” It would be better if we were to reframe the questions so that our answer can resound with God’s “Yes and always yes,” without changing the theology of the faith once passed down and the ethics that derive from that theology. This book is generative for the creativity needed in that endeavor.

My husband recommended this book to me and when I saw the title I was a bit put off. “Why does my husband want me to read a book about sex?” I thought. But I’m so glad I did. This book addresses human sexuality, not as an abstract concept, like a preacher who must mind the little children in his congregation might, but in a real and profoundly relevant way. There were several instances as I was reading that the author described how my generation thinks about certain things that I had to embarrassingly admit to myself that I have, on a subconscious level, bought in to the subtle lies I’ve been ingesting for so long. Thankful that the author doesn’t just describe our current sexual and cultural plight but prescribes truth from the Bible that is not legalistic and demanding, but quickening and hopeful. This is an important book for all of us in this hyper-sexualized age.

In *Divine Sex: A Compelling Vision for Christian Relationships in a Hypersexualized Age* Jonathan Grant draws on various academic disciplines to weave together an insightful but succinct description of the present cultural moment. This book is a refreshing and valuable read. Grant is real “he does not oversimplify the complex cultural dynamics that influence sexuality nor does he avoid exploring the uncomfortable stuff. Yet, Grant’s grace and the grace of the God he worships springs from the pages. There are no quick-fire solutions in terms of Christian response. Yet, the reader is left with much hope that the God who is in the business of redeeming and transforming can and does carry out such work in the lives of His children through the Christian discipleship and formation processes. Grant’s flair for writing and real-life stories make this book both an interesting and easy read. The vastness and pervasiveness of the issues explored and Grant’s mature treatment of them makes this a must-read for all.

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