
Scriptural Wisdom and Practical Help for Surviving Troubled Times

SEXUALITY

"YE ARE ALL GOD'S TEMPLE"

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**SEXUALITY...
... "YE ARE GOD'S
TEMPLE"**

OVERVIEW

The Problem

Somebody once remarked that if God had to do it all over again, He would make humans sexless because of all the "hassles." Yet, God did create human sexuality. He created humans with the capacity to not only biologically reproduce, but to also experience pleasure in the act of sexual intercourse. However, like many divine institutions, humans have blighted sexuality with sin and human despair, failure, manipulation and selfishness, or as the woman put it, "hassles." Furthermore, sexuality has been corrupted and perverted. However disgusting or heinous we may find these problems to be, they unfortunately exist in our community. People need help and Scriptural wisdom and the Father's mercy in overcoming these sins.

Author William Graham Cole pointed out in one of his books that sexual sins are unique in one important aspect:

Stolen goods can be returned, or compensated for, lies can be retracted and corrected, covetousness can be overcome. Even idolatry can be undone and forgiven. But the sex act once committed with another person cannot be undone. The inter-personal relationship has undergone a radical change, and the couple concerned can never return to where they were before. Something indelible has stamped them both.

What does this mean? It means that sex is an area where you really can't afford to be casual or careless, an area where if you have any wisdom at all you will look and look and look again before you leap.¹

Many are seduced into thinking that there is a better way than God's. Many people have sadly learned the bitter truth:

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.²

¹ Quoted by Norman Vincent Peale in, **Sin, Sex and Self-Control** (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Ltd., 1965), p. 87.

² Proverbs 16:25

Sexuality... "Ye are God's Temple"

Humans are sexual beings. Regardless of whether we're single or married, we struggle with issues of sexuality. Unfortunately, this struggle has been intensified in our Western culture. Dr. Pitirim Sorokin, the first professor and chairman of the Sociology Department at Harvard University, wrote that, "Our civilization has become so preoccupied with sex that it now oozes from all pores of American life."³ However, as one writer put it, the "real world of sexuality is very unlike *Playboy*: it includes tragedy, loss, and aloneness along with comedy, pleasure and triumph. Vulnerable people need wisdom."⁴ We need biblical wisdom in the area of sexuality as we need it elsewhere.

Christian disciples don't have special flesh. Consequently, we share in common many of the same problems that our contemporaries do, including sexuality. William Masters and Virginia Johnson have reported that at least 50 percent of marriages are flawed by some form of sexual maladjustment or dysfunction.⁵ Therefore, it's probably safe to assume that many marriages among believers are also plagued with sexual maladjustment or dysfunction.

Jeremiah had disdain for the leaders of his day who "dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious" (Jeremiah 6:14, NIV). As disciples, many of us have wounds, some visible, some not. Regardless of the nature of the wound, it must be tended to, or else it will worsen. Sexual problems are usually, not always, symptomatic of greater problems which need correction. Failure to attend to these problems can result in fractured marriages. A failure to adhere to biblical sexual standards will ultimately destroy a person, a family, a community and a nation.

One of the most forceful teachings of the Old Testament is "the Balak Strategy."⁶ Israel's enemies could only triumph over Israel if Israel allowed itself to be morally defiled. The most prevalent apostasy in the Old Testament was Baalism.

The worship of this Canaanite god and the other Canaanite gods such as Ashteroth and Baalim centred around the worship of sex in all its forms, including the worship of the human genitalia. Numerous tablets, statues and engravings have been found at the Ras Shamra archaeological site depicting their obsession with sex.

Of course, this "Balak syndrome" is still true. Today, believers are besieged by a war on the family. Jeremiah

wrote that "the heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can

³ Pitirim Sorokin, *The American Sex Revolution* (Boston: Porter Sargent Publishers, 1956), p. 19.

⁴ Tim Stafford, "Great Sex: Reclaiming a Christian Sexual Ethic," *Christianity Today*, Vol. 31, October 2, 1987, p. 27.

⁵ William H. Masters and Virginia E. Johnson, *Human Sexual Inadequacy* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1970)

⁶ Numbers 22-25

understand it?"⁷ Not surprisingly then, all of us – to some extent -- employ various defensive mechanisms in an effort to avoid examining ourselves. These mechanisms include:

- rationalization
- justification
- scape goating
- re-directing blame
- denial
- repression
- lying

Historically, our community has not openly dealt with issues of sexuality very well or very often. Some of the reasons are actually valid. Sexual intercourse is inherently a very private and intimate act. It's also something very sacred. Unlike the world, we view the matters of sexuality with a sense of reverence and holiness. It is not something to be profaned, perverted or debased.

On the other hand, many disciples, especially those new to the faith, wrestle with issues concerning about what is right and wrong in the arena of sexuality. All too often this void has not been filled with sound biblical exposition. Rather, too many only voice mere opinions. Yet, even where the Bible does speak, we fail to provide some of the sound, pragmatic reasons why God's ways are best. Our young people have become especially vulnerable to the "lies" of our peers.

While the Apostle Paul wisely counseled us to be "wise unto that which is good, and simple [harmless] concerning evil,"⁸ the writer to the Hebrews also implored us to have our "senses exercised to discern both good and evil."⁹ Furthermore, even the Lord Jesus Christ himself counseled us to be "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."¹⁰ Certainly we want to refrain from discussing sexuality in just a biological manner. We do well to avoid graphically talking about sex, especially those behaviours that are immoral or distasteful. In a limited sense, ignorance is bliss. As the Apostle Paul wrote, "I had not known lust, except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet.'"¹¹

On the other hand, we don't want to avoid exposition or discussion altogether because the void will be filled with partial or faulty information. This "silence" can result in disastrous consequences too.

How do we reconcile these two positions? Simple. We should exhort and encourage one another to

⁷ Jeremiah 17:9, NASB

⁸Romans 16:19

⁹ Hebrews 5:14

¹⁰ Matthew 10:16

¹¹ Romans 7:7

"...cease to do evil; [and] learn to do well..."¹² We should also learn to discern or understand why certain behaviours are sinful, harmful and unhealthy for us. Not every disciple is spiritually mature enough to accept a "Thus saith the LORD." Sometimes, we also have to supply reasons why certain behaviours are wrong. As you see in this section, there are reasons outlined against every deviant sexual behaviour as well as reasons why we should pursue God's ways.

Some may also argue that, as the Apostle Paul wrote, "it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret."¹³ Yet, in the preceding verse, Paul exhorts believers to "reprove" the "unfruitful works of darkness."¹⁴ On the surface, it seems like a contradiction. But it isn't. The word "speak" in Ephesians 5:12 is the Greek verb "lego" which has the connotation of describe or narrate. So, in fact, Paul isn't counseling us to talk about the "unfruitful works of darkness" but rather to reprove them. In addition, he also adds that it is a "shame" to narrate or describe them. This is wise counsel. Narration of ungodly acts will not keep us "simple concerning the ways of evil." On the contrary, they may pique the curiosity of some. Suffice it to reprove them with reason.

We're exhorted to provide people with a "reason of the hope" that lies within us. It can be deduced therefore that we can equally provide people with reasons why we don't believe in something. God's ways are best, even those principles which ought to guide our sexual conduct.

Scriptural Wisdom

See appropriate section for biblical references.

Biblical References

See appropriate section for biblical references.

Practical Help

Unfortunately, many times "sinners" are strictly counseled "to just stop it." The method that many of us use for overcoming sin can be aptly described as "white knuckling" (pure will power) or the "Avis" method of overcoming sin -- just try harder! For some people this works. For many it doesn't. We have a responsibility to "feed the flock" and help them escape the danger of the secular wolves that hound us.

¹²Isaiah 1:16-17

¹³Ephesians 5:12

¹⁴Ehesians 5:11

The shepherds of Israel were soundly denounced by Ezekiel because:

Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock.

The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them."¹⁵

Certainly we don't want to be classified as this type of shepherd. But if the extent of our counsel is merely "Just say No!" or "Don't do it!" we are not fulfilling our mandate to feed the flock in the appropriate manner. Below are some general principles that will be especially helpful in counseling a brother, sister or friend who struggles not only with sexual problems but with all sin.

The Toolbox of the Biblical Counselor

The goals of counseling and church discipline are fourfold:

1. overall welfare of the ecclesia
2. restoration of the sinner to righteousness
3. reconciliation between sinner and brethren and God¹⁶
4. freedom from guilt and shame"¹⁷

There are five common words pertaining to "counsel" in the New Testament:

1. *Parakaleo*: to beseech, exhort, encourage, comfort (see Romans 12:1; Romans 15:30; 2 Corinthians 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:11)
2. *Noutheteo*: to put in mind, warn, confront (Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 4:14; Colossians 3:16)
3. *Paramytheomai*: to cheer up, encourage (1 Thessalonians 2:11; John 11:19, 31)

¹⁵Ezekiel 34:3-4

¹⁶"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought [something] against thee: leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." (Matthew 5:23-24)

¹⁷John White and Ken Blue, *Church Discipline That Heals: Putting Costly Love Into Action* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), pp. 23-24.

4. *Antechomai*: to cling to, to hold fast to, to take an interest in (Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13)
5. *Makrothumeo*: to be patient (Matthew 18:26, 29; Hebrews 6:15; James 5:7)

Combined, these words provide a biblical definition of what it means and takes to counsel another brother, sister, teenager or friend.

In order to be spiritually helpful, an effective, biblical counselor will employ all of these attributes at one time or another.

The Perfect Counselor

The Lord Jesus Christ was and is the greatest counselor of all. Pattern your counseling after the Lord's, and you will be effective. He excelled in counseling primarily for the following six reasons:

1. He knew what was in man's heart; he understood human nature.
2. He had the ability to cause introspection with his ability to ask precise, soul-penetrating questions. Next, he also was a great listener.
3. He really cared for those he came into contact with.
4. His close relationship with His Father provided Him with a strong biblical basis on which to draw spiritual insight.
5. He knew what people needed to do to change, and he knew how to motivate them to want to change.

6. He had spiritual balance: he knew when to be directive and when to be indirect. He knew when problems rooted in the past had to be dealt with, and he knew when and how present problems had to be addressed.¹⁸

Imperfect Counselors

There's something to be said for vicarious learning. We can learn how not to counsel from the example of Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar and their running discourses with Job:

¹⁸Frank B. Minirth and Walter Byrd, *Christian Psychiatry* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1990), pp. 211-212.

1. They were talkers, not listeners. Their advice, although eloquent at times, was impractical, too directive for Job's mind set, and too legalistic and dogmatic.
2. They were accusers. They didn't seek understanding, nor did they display empathy.
3. They were proud. Meekness is a prerequisite for dispensing counsel.
4. Perhaps most importantly, their concept of God was inadequate or too small. They failed to see God's greatest glory and power -- that of mercy, grace and compassion.

Here are some basic principles, by no means exhaustive, to bear in mind when sharing advice or providing counsel to someone in need:

Abstinence

"Abstain from all appearance of evil." (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." (1 Thessalonians 4:3)

Avoid Gossip

"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the ecclesia: but if he neglect to hear the ecclesia, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. (Matthew 18:15-22)

"He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends." (Proverbs 17:9)

Compassion

"[Jesus as high priest) ... can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way: for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity." (Hebrews 5:2)

Confession

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

Directives

This is nothing more than straightforward, direct advice. The Lord Jesus Christ used this method as did Solomon

Fear

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." (Jude 21-23)

Flight

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7)

"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." (2 Timothy 2:22)

Forgiveness

"And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil." (Luke 11:4)

Friendly

"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." (Proverbs 17:17)

Gentleness

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." (2 Timothy 2:24-26)

Help

"If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."

(James 2:15-17)

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." (1 John 3:17-18)

Holiness

"For God hath no called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." (1 Thessalonians 4:7)

Humility

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness: considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:1-2)

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." (1 Peter 5:5-7)

Indirect Techniques

Stories, parables or questions can help others discover insights about themselves and their problems.

Judgement

"Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment." (John 7:24)

"Judge not, that ye be not judged." (Matthew 7:1)

Reconciliation of these two passages:

In the John 7:24 passage, Jesus is telling us to not to be critical of others, and don't look down upon them and think that you're better." The same word "judge" ("krino") in Matthew 7:1 is used in the context of be discerning and don't jump to hasty conclusions.

Listening

See the example of Elihu in Job 32.

Love

"Hate stirreth up strife: but love covereth all sins." (Proverbs 10:12)

"Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." (Luke 7:47)

Mercy

"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment." (James 2:8-13)

Prayer

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16)

Repentance

"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."
(2 Corinthians 7:10)

Self-Disclosure

The counselor may wish to share an example from his or her own life if it will help the troubled person. The Apostle Paul used this technique quite effectively in 2 Corinthians.

Take Initiative

"...Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." (Matthew 25:45)

"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (James 4:17)

Tough Love

"But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." (1 Corinthians 5:11)

"And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." (2 Thessalonians 3:14-15)

Understanding

Both the Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul wisely advised us against judging people too quickly or by cursory surface looks. What you see is not always "cut and dried." For example, a 1982 study revealed that as many as 80 percent of rapists were abused as children and suffered "a kind of emotional death" as a result of that trauma.¹⁹

In a study of 118 female chemical abusers, 44 percent were victims of incest and 75 percent reported that they were sexually abused before age 9.²⁰

In a study of 200 street prostitutes, 75 percent stated that they had been raped as children.²¹

It's been said that "the child is the father of man." Children carry deeper psychological and emotional scars with them into their teenage and adult years. Sometimes this hurt is manifested in sinful behaviours. For example, physical and sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency go hand-in-hand: 97 percent of male hard core delinquents suffered severe physical punishment and assault in their homes. These maltreated teenagers are also 24 more times likely to commit arson and 58 more times to commit rape than other teenagers.²²

Although your initial inclination may be to withdraw from such people, don't. The Lord Jesus Christ had the wonderful ability to be "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners"²³ yet be extremely kind, loving, compassionate and gentle to sinners who his contemporaries abhorred and avoided. You can make a difference in a "sinner's" life. Many of the so-called "low lifes" or "deviants" of our society are victims of equally horrific crimes and sins. They

¹⁹ David Gelman, "The Mind of the Rapist," Newsweek, July 23, 1990, p. 47.

²⁰ J. Densen-Gerber, "The Big Issue," Odyssey House (July 1977)

²¹ T. Elias, "Young Female Prostitutes," The Press, Vol. 10, no. 5 (October 1982).

²² J. Garbarino and W. Groninger, Child Abuse, Delinquency, and Crime (Chicago: National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, 1983)

²³ Hebrews 7:26

don't need stern, harsh judgments as much as they need love, forgiveness and direction in holiness.

"But the LORD said unto Samuel, look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."

1 Samuel 16:7

Combination of Directives and Indirect Technique

Usually, counsellor will begin with indirect technique, then provide direct advice from the Bible. This is the method Nathan used to help David discern the nature and gravity of his sin, followed by a direct confrontation (2 Samuel 12).

The Ecclesia is a Hospital

Cultivate an attitude in your ecclesia similar to that of a hospital where injured sinners are being rehabilitated into becoming glorious saints. Therefore, continually monitor yourself for self-righteous or legalistic tendencies:

"But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but then that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."
(Matthew 9:12-13)

Intervention Groups

If needed, form an intervention group to confront crisis. Consult the appropriate professional counsellor, e.g. alcoholism, on how best to intervene in a crisis situation. Don't do this unless you've been directed on how best to handle the situation by a professional counsellor or therapist.

Support Groups

Ideally, your ecclesia or a subset of it should act as a support group. In the event that that type of support isn't available for whatever reason, investigate possibilities of participating in a support group in which you feel comfortable.

Professional Help

Sometimes, it is appropriate to refer a troubled brother or sister to a professional therapist. None of us are totally equipped to handle the plethora of different problems, especially in the arena of sexuality. The only caveat would be to seek out a professional therapist with a similar world view and Christian ethic.

Success Stories

See appropriate section for biblical or extra-biblical accounts.

Brotherhood Contacts

Brother Bill Yake

Brother Steve Shuman

Brother Don Ifill

Note: Please contact Bill Yake on any of the subjects or related areas for further information.

MEDIA INFLUENCE ON VALUES

The Media: Sex, Lies and More Lies

Some naively claim that the media doesn't really influence our choices. Some scoff at the notion that the media can "sell sex." But, if there is no relationship between TV commercials and viewers' behaviour, why do American businesses spend about \$3 billion annually on advertising for prime time TV?

The entire industry of marketing is based on the premise that consumer values and behaviours can be influenced and manipulated. In other words, they can change the way you think and act. Sadly, the world view of the industry is not to strengthen biblical values. Rather, marketing is geared towards pleasing the flesh:

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."²⁴

In one of the most comprehensive media studies ever conducted, Linda Lichter, Robert Lichter and Stanley Rothman concluded that the overwhelming majority of the news people in major media outlets were hostile to Biblical values."²⁵ Some of their findings about the media stances are listed below:

1.	Have a pro -abortion stand	97%
2.	Oppose the traditional family structure	92%
3.	Have no strong aversions to adultery	84%
4.	Believe homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle	80%
5.	Believe that journalists should promote their ideas, values and perceptions	70%

In essence, the media are the apostles of another gospel. We do well not to base our values on their perceptions and opinions:

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."²⁶

²⁴1 John 2:16

²⁵S. Robert Lichter and Stanley Rothman, "Media and Business Elites," *Public Opinion*, (October/November 1981), pp. 42-44.

²⁶Romans 12:2

TV And Sex

The Lichter/Rothman Study revealed that the overwhelming majority of the media has no aversions to promoting their ideas and values. Television is one of the mediums through which the "Gospel of Free Sex" is preached to millions every night.

Sexual innuendo permeates our entertainment and advertising industries. Over the course of time, the average television viewer sees 9,000 scenes of suggested sexual intercourse or innuendo in one year alone.²⁷

It's estimated that the average high school graduate will have watched over 15,000 hours of television by age 18. More startling is that 81 percent of sexual activity shown or alluded to is committed outside the bonds of marriage.²⁸

The Journal of Communication reported that, "television portrays six times more extramarital sex than sex between spouses. Ninety-four percent of the sexual encounters on soap operas are between people not married to each other."²⁹

Pornography

Pornography, "kiddie porn," has become an all too accepted form of entertainment today. The advent of the VCR increases the likelihood that kids will be exposed to pornography at home. The average viewer of MTV -- Music Television -- spends 68 minutes a day watching rock videos.³⁰ Many of these videos have been called "porn rock". *Newsweek* noted that rock videos are "something that seems to distill all the worst elements of television into one potent package."³¹

One of the other disturbing trends in the rock videos is the combination of sex and violence, which has prompted psychologist Dr. Joyce Brothers to say, "Teenagers have not fused the idea of love and sex. So when you teach them that sex and violence are related, it's extremely dangerous for their future behaviour."³²

²⁷Richard Stengel, "Children Having Children," *Time*, December 9, 1985, p. 81.

²⁸Sheila Fletcher, "Experts Seek Answers About Teen Pregnancy," *Oklahoman*, February 2 1984, pp. 1-2; cf. Liebert, Sprafkin, and Davidson. "The Early Window: Effects of Television on Children and Youth," 1982, p. 171.

²⁹Bradley S. Greenberg, Robert Abelman, and Kimberley Neuendorf, "Sex on the Soap Operas: Afternoon Delight," *Journal of Communication*, Summer 1981.

³⁰*Billboard*, July 1985, p. 3.

³¹*Newsweek*, December 30, 1985, p. 54. *Cleveland*

³²*Plain Dealer*, April 15, 1984, p. 1 D.

One study has revealed that people with liberal attitudes about sex were exposed to "erotica" at a younger age than those who had more conservative attitudes about sex.³³ Christianity views pornography as being wrong and sinful because, not only is it addictive, but it promotes false expectations towards your spouse or prospective spouse. In addition, it's usually based on the exploitation and degradation of women and/or children.

Researcher James Check of New York University noted the effects of pornography on its viewers:

The investigation by Check has obvious implications for public health. It shows that, on the whole, common, non-violent pornography has the strongest influence on men's willingness to force intimate partners into forms of sexuality that are not necessarily to their partners' liking, and on the propensity to force sexual access. Violent pornography apparently has the same power to increase rape proclivity, although its influence on the coercion of specific sexual act's is limited if not negligible.³⁴

In referring to a 1985 Michigan State Police Study, "A report in the January 1, 1982, issue of *Christianity Today*, involving 38,000 victims of rape between 1956 and 1979 revealed that 41 percent of the victims were sexually molested immediately after the rapist had read a pornographic magazine or had seen a pornographic video presentation."³⁵

Unfortunately, one of the strongest influences on the human mind is the power of images portrayed on the screen. The main problem is that many people can't distinguish reality from television. Dr. Thomas Radecki, research director for the National Coalition on Television Violence, states that, "Our insensitivity to the violence of rape is undoubtedly fostered by our massive diet of entertainment."³⁶

Radecki cites recent statistics which show that one out of eight Hollywood flicks depict a "rape" theme. Moreover, he adds that by age 18, the average American will have seen 250,000 acts of violence and 40,000 attempted murders on television." By age 15, the average American child has witnessed 13,000 murders on TV.

³³Michael J. McManus, ed., *Final Report of the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography* (Rutledge Hill Press, 1986), p. 264.

³⁴James Check, "The Effect of Violent and Nonviolent Pornography," (Ottawa: Department of Justice for Canada, Department of Supply and Services contract 05SV.19200-3-0899). June 1984, p. 1.

³⁵Zig Ziglar, *Raising Positive Kids in a Negative World*, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1985), p. 33.

³⁶David Gelman, "The Mind of the Rapist," *Newsweek*, July 23, 1990, p. 52.

³⁷*Ibid*, p. 52.

According to Nielsen Media Research, the average daily TV viewing of Americans has risen from 5:06 hours in 1960 to 7:04 hours in 1992.

Ours is the first generation in the history of mankind that has gained its "socialization" from a machine -- the television. The gospel of television promotes indiscriminate sex, violence and alcohol abuse. About 90 percent of all movies contain the use of alcohol. The evidence strongly suggests that movies don't necessarily portray real life. On the contrary, they promote values contrary to that of good and wholesome. Fortunately, the rate of immorality isn't as staggering as is depicted on television. Yet, it has de-sensitized the moral consciousness of us, and made it easier -- or at least more acceptable -- to break God's commandments.

The media portrays a false reality about the following behaviours in which no consequences are seen or inferred:

- people drink but don't die in crash cars
- people smoke but don't get lung cancer
- people have sex but don't get disease or pregnant

In sum, the evidence and the broadcasting networks' bank accounts overwhelmingly prove that the media -- subliminally or subversively -- effects our attitudes and our behaviours. Their message is a *lie*. *Our generation has failed to learn this vital lesson: "A house built on sand will not last; neither will a civilization built on dirt."*

The Solution

"But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil."

1 Thessalonians 5:21-22

PRE-MARITAL RELATIONS

Pre-Marital Sex

The Problem

Pre-marital sex or fornication has become an accepted form of sexual behaviour in our society. Sadly, it has become more commonplace in the Christadelphian community.

Like many problems, fornication itself may be symptomatic of a greater problem. For instance, there is a lack of communication and love in many North American families today. Most kids spend less than 30 minutes with their fathers in any given day. About 25 percent of kids spend less than 5 minutes alone with their father every day.

This is resulting in some big problems. For instance, about 22 percent of parents never talk to their kids about sex.³⁸ Yet studies have proven that kids are less likely to be sexually active if they learn about sex from their parents than from their friends.³⁹

A study of 10,000 high school sophomores, conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, found that strong parental values and supervision has the most significant effect on teenage sexual activity, reducing the likelihood that their daughters would get pregnant by 42 percent⁴⁰ So the major problem seems to be that parents aren't talking with their kids about the values and principles.

List of Forbidden Sexual Relations For a Believer

The Bible leaves virtually no question unanswered concerning human sexual conduct. *The Book of Leviticus* is an Old Testament ethics handbook which provided sexual boundaries, designed to ensure a "blessed" state:

1. his mother (Leviticus 18:7)

³⁸David Van Biema, "Whats Gone Wrong With Teen Sex?" *People*, April 13, 1987, pp. 110-121.

³⁹Greer L. Fox, "The Family's Role in Adolescent Sexual Behaviour," in *Teenage Pregnancy in a Family Context*, Theodora Ooms, ed., (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981), pp. 73-130.

⁴⁰Alan Ginsberg, Sandra L. Hanson and David E. Myers, *Responsibility and Knowledge: Their Roles in Reducing Out-of-Wedlock Childbearing.* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Education)

Sexuality... "Ye are God's Temple"

2. his stepmother (Leviticus 18:7)
3. his sister or half-sister (Leviticus 18:9)
4. his grand-daughter (Leviticus 18:10)

Note: Rabbis infer from this that this prohibition also includes a man's daughter.

5. his biological aunt (Leviticus 18:12-13)
6. his uncle's wife (Leviticus 18:14)
7. his son's wife (Leviticus 18:15)
8. his brother's wife (Leviticus 18:16)

Note: The only exception was when his brother died childless, he marriage obligations and married his deceased brother's wife. took on the Levirate

9. his stepdaughter or mother-in-law (Leviticus 18:17) (Leviticus 18:18)
10. two sisters first sister, could he marry the second.

Note: Only after the death of the

- (Leviticus 18:20)
(Leviticus 18:23; 20:15-16)
11. his neighbour's wife (Leviticus 18:22)
12. beast another (Leviticus 18:19; Ezekiel 18:5-6)⁴¹
13. man (Numbers 25:1-9)
14. his wife during her menstrual period (Leviticus 21:7)
15. fornication (Numbers 33:52)
16. unlawful for a priest to marry a harlot pornography (Leviticus 18:17-18; 20:14; Amos 2:7)
17. harlot pornography (Leviticus 19:29)⁴²
18. group sex
19. prostitute

⁴¹"If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days not at the time of her period ... when she becomes clean, she shall count seven days." (Leviticus 15:25-28)

"Do not come near a woman when she is unclean ("tamei") with her menstrual flow to uncover her nakedness." (Leviticus 18:19)

⁴²Cult prostitution was quite common in the pagan world. Consider:

- In Syria, women voluntarily prostituted themselves for one day during the Feast Day of Attar (*Ephraem 459 C*)
- In Hierapolis, every maiden had to prostitute herself with a stranger in the temple of Astarte (Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, 1.18.7-9)
- In Byblos, women had to prostitute themselves with a stranger for one day

Note: Of course, if applicable, these prohibitions also applied for women. In addition, lesbianism was also prohibited (Deuteronomy 23:17).

Solution

As a parent, you can lay down a strong foundation for your child or children's value systems, including those concerning their sexual conduct:

"And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

A little preventative maintenance will go a long way in directing your teenager's sexuality. Dr. Stan Weed, Director of the Institute for Research and Evaluation, has identified the five most influential factors affecting the sexual involvement of teenagers. Monitor these factors and contribute a significant input into them. Don't rely on other people, e.g., school teachers, to do your job:

1. Your child's value system
2. Your child's social system (influence of family and peers)
3. Related risk behaviours (drug and alcohol abuse, steady dating, skipping school)
4. Personality system (personal efficacy, risk taking propensity, rebelliousness, future orientation, need for acceptance, and personal vulnerability)
5. *Information (knowledge about sexuality, reproduction, and contraception)*⁴³

during festival of the worship of Adonis or, if she refused, shave her head with the proceeds being paid to the temple (Lucian, *On the Syrian Goddess*, 15)

- At Paphos in Cyprus, no matter how financially well off she was, women had to offer themselves once as a prostitute before marriage; they did this in Babylon as well (*Herodotus 1. 199*)
- In Thebes, Egypt, any woman who was engaged had to act as a prostitute for one month in the temple prior to marriage (*Strabo 17.1.46*)

⁴³How To Help Your Kids Say 'No' to Sex," pamphlet produced by Focus on the Family, 1992, p. 5.

Note: Peer pressure is the main reason why teenagers participate in sex⁴⁴

What Can Parents Do At Home

Parents are a child's best frontline defense against promiscuity and teaching the most effective form of sex education -- abstinence. Sex education professionals Margaret Whitehead and Onalee McGraw offer some suggestions on how to teach your values to your children about sex:

- build a foundation of love, respect and personal dignity in your home
- teach your children good manners that show respect for others
- teach your children self-control and good habits
- help your children understand that there are consequences for their behaviour, and give them age-appropriate responsibilities
- show your children the importance of personal goals and virtues
- encourage them to keep busy with positive activities
- determine your own rules and regulations concerning dating such as starting age, supervision, curfews, purpose of dating, and attitudes towards "going steady"
- encourage your children to develop virtues and character traits such as self-discipline, honesty, courage, perseverance, responsibility and respect for others
- take your children's feelings and concerns seriously, and place them in their proper context⁴⁵

A December 1991 *USA Today* poll, which called chastity "the second sexual revolution," found that the majority of both adults and teenagers agree that today's teenagers don't hear enough about saying "no" to sex.⁴⁶

⁴⁴Planned Parenthood Poll, "American Teens Speak: Sex, Myths, TV and Birth Control," (New York: Louis Harris & Associates, Inc., 1986)

⁴⁵Margaret Whitehead and Onalee McGraw, Ph.D., "Foundations for Family Life Education," Educational Guidance Institute, 1991, pp. 61, 71, 86-87.

⁴⁶Kathleen McCleary, "Sex, Morals, and AIDS," *USA Today Weekend*, December 27-29, 1991, p. 4.

Chastity is a virtue, not a problem.

Despite what society purports, chastity or virginity is a virtue, not a problem. Shulamith, the central female character in the **Song of Solomon**, is described as being a "garden locked" and a "fountain sealed."⁴⁷ Chastity will guarantee a much happier marriage.

Sweep The Demons Out, and Invite Christ In

It's one thing to "sweep out the demons," but repression by itself doesn't work. You must also do something positive and active to overcome the lies and fallacies which besiege us daily. If you discover that your child has been sexually active, counsel them to stop immediately. Many parents are now adopting a philosophy known as "secondary virginity" after they find out that their children are sexually active. Tell them that it is wrong, but also tell them that God can forgive them. Thus, through grace and repentance, they can consciously choose abstinence until marriage or "secondary virginity."

Fill The Vacuum With Good Works

We must replace sinful patterns with righteous patterns of behaviour. It's not enough or as simple as stopping "cold turkey":

"Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."

2 Timothy 2:22

We do have the assurance that God will not tempt us beyond what we're able to endure:

"No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it."

1 Corinthians 10:13

Avoid Troublemakers

The Bible provides several tips which will help us avoid trouble. Sadly, the principle that "they are not all Israel which are of Israel" is equally true of the New Testament ecclesial members as it was of the

⁴⁷ Song of Solomon 4:12

Old Testament ecclesia.⁴⁸ Therefore, associate with those people with will build you up, not bring you down and wallow in the mire with you:

I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters; for then you would need to go out of this world. But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler -- not even to eat with such a one.

1 Corinthians 5:9-11

Don't Use Sexually Suggestive Language or Jokes

The Proverbs state that, "Iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."⁴⁹ One sure fire method of losing your "edge" is to loosen up your tongue and begin using sexually suggestive language and by swapping coarse jokes.

But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

Ephesians 5:3-4

Abstinence: The Biblical Way to Marriage

The Bible wisely counsels the unmarried to refrain or abstain from sexual relations prior to marriage.

Many young couples want to know what the limits are for physical contact during their courtship, dating or engagement period. Some activities, such as kissing and public demonstrations of affection seem harmless. The Apostle Paul actually addressed this question, at least in part:

"Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."

⁴⁸Romans 9:6

⁴⁹Proverbs 27:17

1 Corinthians 7:1-2

The Greek word for "touch" is "haptomai" which means "to attach oneself or touch" and is derived from Greek root word ("hapto") which means "to set on fire, kindle." It probably had a sexual connotation.⁵⁰ If we use this rule of thumb, unacceptable sexual behaviour is any activity that is bound "to set someone on fire" and lead to further contact and involvement, usually sexual intercourse. A modern day equivalent of Paul's teaching would be the prohibition against "petting" or physical stimulation and exploration, usually performed with the intent of sexually arousing another person or pleasing one's self.

The truth is that most, if not all, people are hard pressed to "slam on the brakes" as your testosterone is coursing through your veins at 500 mph. That's like trying to slam on the brakes of a runaway train going at full speed, and stop on a dime. It's probable that this won't happen. In fact, "petting" would seem to fall under the umbrella of the law of diminishing returns, i.e., an activity constantly repeated over a period of time tends to reduce the effect it has on an individual. To keep the same effect, stimulation must be increased, not just maintained. Simply put, after a time, petting does lead to the desire for more intimate sexual stimulation, usually sexual intercourse. The Apostle Paul wisely counsels us to abstain from sexual immorality:

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honour; not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God.... For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification."

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5, 7

Note: The Greek word translated as "abstain" ("apekomai") means "to go away from, to depart, to be distant, to keep hands off." So, as disciples, the secret is to "do the right thing" rather than "do the thing that feels right."

Moral of the Story:

"Grandfather, your generation didn't have all these social diseases. What did you wear to have safe sex?' The grandfather replied, 'A wedding ring.'"

Abstinence Curricula

⁵⁰Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 275.

Encourage your schools to implement an "abstinence" curricula which have become more common. Below is a list of good abstinence-based curriculum:

Facing Reality, a high school curriculum offered by Project Respect. Box 97, Golf, IL 60029-0097 or call (708) 729-3298.

Foundations For Family Life Education available from the Educational Guidance Institute, Inc., 927 S. Walter Reed Drive, Suite #4, Arlington, VA 22204 or by calling (703) 486-8313.

Has Sex Education Failed Our Teenagers?, a special comprehensive report offered by Focus on the Family, Colorado Springs, CO 80995 or by calling (719) 633-6287. In Canada, write P.O. Box 9800, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 4G3 or call (604) 684-8333.

Families, Decision-Making and Human Development, a curriculum for junior high to senior high. Available by writing Pnuema Press, 2275 Westpark Court, Suite #201, Euless, TX 76040 or by calling (817) 267-6847.

Learning About Myself and Others, a program designed for kids aged 6 to 11. Available from Anne Nesbit, R.R.#3, Orchard Circle, Pittsfield, MA 01201 or by calling (413) 698-2688.

Me, My World, My Future, a 15-unit middle school program teaching kids to delay selfgratification and the consequences of using tobacco, drugs and alcohol. Available from TeenAid, N. 1330 Calispel, Seattle, WA 99201 or by calling (509) 328-2080.

Teaching True Abstinence Sex Education available from Project Respect at Box 97, Golf, IL 60029-0097 or by calling (708) 729-3298.

The Sex Pushers: Your Children the Target, an Investigative Report. Write to: Texas Council for Family Values, 5202 Timberhurst, San Antonio, TX 78250 (cost is \$7.00).

There have been some excellent results by encouraging kids to abstain from sex until marriages'
"Come, Let Us Reason Together": Pragmatic Reasons Why Pre-Marital Sex Is Wrong

For those who are biblically mature, often a single "Thus saith the Lord" is sufficient proof to deter us from a certain activity or course of behaviour. For those who are still "babes" or in a state of spiritual infancy, some pragmatic reasons are often needed to supplement sound biblical teachings

⁵¹Wendy Corder, "Sex Gets No Respect from the ACLU," *Citizen*, vol. 5, no. 10, October 21, 1991, p. 6.

and values. Writer Lowell Thomas once said that you can't alter teenage behaviour much by claiming that something is "immoral" – it's a "twisted kind of accolade" -- but you can impact their thinking and behaviour by calling it "stupid." "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."⁵²

One of the unfortunate lies perpetrated to our youth is that pre-marital sex is a necessary prerequisite to marriage. Some reason that cohabitation or fornication is analogous to "Trying on a pair of shoes."

On the contrary, sexual relations should consummate a relationship in marriage, not begin it. Despite the contention put forward by some, "living together" doesn't work. For instance, a StatsCan survey in 1984 of 14,000 people between ages 18 and 65 revealed that couples who live together prior to marriage are more likely to be divorced than those who don't live together before marriage.⁵³

Alfred DeMaris of Auburn University and Gerald Leslie of the University of Florida discovered that those who "cohabited" before marriage actually "scored significantly lower in both perceived quality of marital communication and marital satisfaction."⁵⁴ Ironically, most of these couples break up because of dissatisfaction or sexual problems.⁵⁵

Cohabitation may look peaceful and idyllic, looking from the outside in, but in reality, it is far from it, as evidenced by an article entitled "Swinging -- and Ducking -- Singles" in Time magazine on September 5, 1988:

Psychologists and sociologists are finding that single couples can be surprisingly violent, especially those who set up housekeeping together before marriage. In almost two dozen recent studies, experts across the country estimated that an average of almost 30 percent of all unmarried individuals, whether dating, engaged, or living together, have been involved in physical aggression with the opposite sex.

According to psychologist Matti Gershenfeld, most cohabitating couples tend to hide their real selves - - mostly their deeply held beliefs, ideas, values and fears.⁵⁶

⁵²Proverbs 16:25

⁵³"Myth is Shattered," *The Guelph Daily Mercury*, (CP), December 20, 1986.

⁵⁴Alfred DeMaris and Gerald Leslie, "Cohabitation With the Future Spouse: Its Influence Upon Marital Satisfaction and Communication," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, February 1984, p. 83.

⁵⁵Mansell E. Pattison, M.D., "Living Together: A Poor Substitute for Marriage," *Medical Aspects of Human Sexuality*, Vol. 16, (November 1982):11:79.

⁵⁶Joyce Brothers, "When Unmarried Couples Live Together," *Reader's Digest*, Vol. 128, (April 1986):41.

Furthermore, both individuals consciously know that their "arrangement" is a "trial", and consequently, most avoid the notion of "commitment" completely. About 75 percent of couples who "cohabit" eventually break up.⁵⁷

Studies indicate that relationships based solely on sex or physical attraction are doomed to failure:¹

Studies show that a relationship based on physical attraction may hold itself together for three to five years. During that length of time two people are fooled into thinking, 'Well, we've been going together for so long, surely we can make it for a lifetime. This must be love.' On the other side of marriage, they wake up to see they had little in common and no basis for a quality relationship.⁵⁸

There are numerous reasons why sex is the wrong bonding material out of which to build a relationship:

Because sex is so powerful, it creates very strong emotional bonds between partners. These bonds can make us believe the relationship is deeper than it really is, that we know our partners (and our partners know us) much better than we actually do. Or, because we've had sex, we may be tempted to hang on to the relationship, not out of love, but just to 'save face.'⁵⁹

Some try to alleviate the guilt pangs by justifying fornication or premarital sex on the grounds that they're engaged to be married. Contrary to what many think, sexual intimacy prior to marriage "produced more broken relationships than strengthened ones."⁶⁰ Again, this is bad logic. Studies show that 50 percent of people who marry have been engaged at least once before.⁶¹ Therefore, engagement is no guarantee of marriage.

The other "leftovers" of premarital sex include "flashbacks" from previous sexual encounters and the accompanying guilt.

Dr. Elizabeth Whelan noted the correlation's between emotional instability and premarital sex in her book **Sex and Sensibility**. She cited a psychiatric study which showed that 86 percent of unmarried

⁵⁷ Josh McDowell and Dick Day, *Why Wait? What You Need to Know About the Teen Sexuality Crisis* (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life Publishers, Inc., 1987), p. 135.

⁵⁸ Stacy Rinehart and Paula Rinehart, *Choices* (Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1982), p. 95.

⁵⁹ Colleen Kelly Mast, *Sex Respect: An Option of True Sexual Freedom* (Bradley, IL: Respect, Inc., 1986), p. 23.

⁶⁰ Robert O. Blood, Jr., *Marriage* (New York: Free Press, 1969), p. 82.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 139.

women under psychiatric care were sexually active. Contrary to public belief, sex is not the greatest goal of any relationship. We are more than just physical beings. Humans are also emotive, intellectual and spiritual beings. Thus a total relationship requires more than just physical satisfaction. One survey of several thousand married women asked them what form of physical expression gave them the greatest satisfaction:

1. closeness or feeling of oneness with their partner
2. orgasm
3. coitus
4. foreplay⁶²

God wisely counsels humans to wait until marriage before becoming sexually intimate. Not only is it spiritually and psychologically damaging to engage in pre-marital sex, it also has physical consequences.

There's an obvious correlation between promiscuity and sexually transmitted diseases. There are about 20 sexually transmitted diseases which cannot be prevented by contraception. All too often, too many learn too late that pleasure is, as Plato said, "the bait of sin." While pleasure may be the bait of sin, humiliation, shame and guilt are its leftovers:

"I am afraid that when I come again my God may humiliate me before you, and I may mourn over many of those who have sinned in the past and not repented of the impurity, immorality and sensuality which they have practiced."

2 Corinthians 12:21

The Greek word for "sensuality" in 2 Corinthians 12:21 is "aselgeia" which means "a wanton defiance of public decency":

There was *uncleanness (ase/geia)*. Here is an untranslatable word. It does not only mean sexual uncleanness. It is sheer wanton insolence. As Basil defined it, "It is that attitude of the soul which has never borne and never will bear the pain of discipline." It is the wanton insolence that knows no restraint, that has no sense of the decencies of things, that will dare anything that wanton caprice demands, which is careless of public opinion and its own good name so long as it gets what it wants. Josephus ascribes it to Jezebel who built a temple in Baal in the very city of God itself. The basic Greek sin was *hubris*, and *hubris* is that proud insolence which gives neither God nor man his place. Aselgeia is the insolently selfish spirit, which is lost to honour and lost to shame, and which will take what it wants where it wants it in shameless disregard of God and man.⁶³

⁶²Robert R. Bell and P.L. Bell, "Sexual Satisfaction Among Married Women," *Medical Aspects of Human Sexuality*, December 1972.

⁶³William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible: The Letters to the Corinthians* (Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1954), p. 296.

William Barclay

The Daily Study Bible: The Letters to the Corinthians

We, like sheep and cattle, need fences. As one farmer put it, it's better for cattle to graze in a corralled pasture because they aren't subject to attacks by wild animals or they aren't likely to wander off. In a pasture, they are protected and free to graze.

Dr. Joseph Aldrich once said, "There is no prophylactic [condom] for the conscience." Above all else, it's through a "good conscience" that we give God at our baptism and beyond.⁶⁴ By continually examining our hearts, we can maintain a "good conscience." Deliberate or unintentional sin results in guilt and shame. It must be cleansed.

Scriptural Wisdom

The Bible encourages us to be self-disciplined, and this certainly includes the area of sexual activity:

"But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come."

1 Timothy 4:7-8

"Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life."

Galatians 6:7-8

⁶⁴1 Peter 3:21

Lessons From The Bible

Dinah and Shechem

Genesis 34:1-19 records the story of moral compromise in which Jacob's daughter Dinah "went out to see the daughters of the land" and, as a result of being in a compromising situation, she was violated, raped or seduced by Shechem, depending on how you read the text. She actually lived with Shechem for a period (Genesis 34:26).

Shechem appeared to have good intentions -- "prince of the country, more honourable than all his father's house" and "he loved the damsel and spoke kindly to her". However, in spite of Shechem's intentions -- the equivalent today would be -- "he loves me and he's going to get baptized someday" - - it was something which "ought not to be done" in Israel (Genesis 34:7).

Love is blind. Consequently, sometimes, although we "know" how we feel, we think we also know how the other person must feel. Generally speaking, men use love to get sex; women use sex to get love. It's a bad trade-off:

- "The factor that most decisively motivated women to engage in coitus and approve of coitus was belief that they were in love."⁶⁵
- "Romantic love led more women than men to be permissive."⁶⁶

Parents would do well to tell their children, especially their daughters, that boys and men will resort to lying in order to sleep with a woman.

A 1986 study at the University of Connecticut, reported in the *Journal of Research in Personality* (20:77), that most of the 75 males surveyed admitted that they used force or other manipulative or exploitative methods to have sex. This has been proven true with other reports as well:

Do men ever have sex against their will with women? Our recently completed study shows that the answer is a resounding Yes. In our sample population of almost 1,000 undergraduate

⁶⁵Ira Reiss, "How and Why America's Sexual Standards are Changing," in John H. Gagnon and William Simon (eds.), *The Sexual Scene* (Chicago, IL: TransAction Books, Aldine Publishing Co., 1970)

⁶⁶Ira Reiss, "How and Why America's Sexual Standards are Changing," in Ailon Shiloh, ed., *Studies in Human Sexual Behaviour: The American Scene* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 1970), pp. 200-209.

students, 62.7 percent of the men reported that they participated in unwanted sexual encounters.

What motivated these men to take part in sexual activities they did not want? Our questionnaire revealed that virtually none was physically forced. Most of these men blame 'pressure,' sometimes from the woman or from their peers, but often they blame what they consider to be society's prevailing sexual expectations for men. While society expects women not to be too sexually active or to agree to sex too readily, its traditional 'double standard' indicates that men should be sexually experienced and use sexual opportunities whenever they arise.

Charlene Muehlenhard in *Medical Aspects of Human Sexuality* (April 1989)

Susan D. Cochran conducted a study at California State University and discovered that 47 percent of men admitted that they would lie about the number of past sexual encounters to a current lover. In addition, 23 percent said they wouldn't tell a partner that they were currently involved sexually with someone else. Lesson: people lie!

Although chaperoning has gone out of "style," it is an option to consider, at least until your child reaches a suitable age. In fact, parents, especially in this era, should use extreme caution and discernment before allowing their children to date or "go steady." Contrary to public belief, most rapes are not committed by strangers lurking behind the bushes or in dark alleys. Most rapes are committed by men women either know or are acquainted with. "Date Rape" or "Acquaintance Rape" accounts for 80 percent of all rapes. Rapes committed by "strangers" only account for 20 percent of all rapes.

Mary P. Koss of Kent State University surveyed 7,000 college female students, and reported in the October 1985 issue of MS magazine that 51 percent of them experience some form of sexual victimization, and almost 90 percent of them knew their assailants. Eight percent admitted that they had actually been raped. We as adults have a difficult enough time controlling the flesh. Your children have this same flesh. Don't allow them to be placed in tempting situations in which they don't have the spiritual maturity to "Just say no!"

It's also advisable to teach your children about the dangers of flirtation. Flirting isn't cute. All too often these signals can be read the wrong way by the opposite sex:

"Men and women understand flirtation differently. Men tend to see it as a prelude to physical intimacy, while women regard it as a way to establish friendship."

A University of New Hampshire study conducted by Barbara Montgomery as reported

in the *Austin American Statesman* (February 27, 1990)

Samson and Delilah

Nearly everyone knows the story of Samson. Although he was a man of Herculean strength, he had a very human weakness -- pretty women. Samson was infatuated with a "woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines"⁶⁷ because, as Samson put it, she was "right in my own eyes."⁶⁸ He would also give into the "lust of the flesh" with a prostitute from Gaza as well marry Delilah who was the cause of his eventual downfall. It was only when his eyes were literally gouged out that Samson could clearly see what God wanted from him. Once he lost the "lust of the eyes," he could see God. Hopefully, this is a lesson we can learn and do for ourselves without having to undergo the excruciating pain of losing our eyes:

And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.
Matthew 5:29

"But eye man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James 1:14-15)

The Gift of Singleness or Celibacy

Sometimes people, especially single people, get the impression that marriage is the highest or best goal that a person can achieve. Consequently, some single people feel less than whole or complete if they're not married, hanging out there in "social purgatory." On the contrary, singleness is a gift. The Apostle Paul celebrates the gift of singleness -- "every man has his proper gift of God"⁶⁹ -- in 1 Corinthians 7, and among the virtues of being single, he wrote that, "The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.""

⁶⁷ Judges 14:1

⁶⁸ Judges 14:3; 17:6 1

⁶⁹ Corinthians 7:7

⁷⁰ 1 Corinthians 7:34

Paul implies that each of us should remain in the state [marital or single] when we were called.⁷¹ So, instead of being a cross to bear, being single may be the state that God wants us in to better work in His vineyard. In time, if it is our desire to be married, we ought not to forget that what the Psalmist promised: "Delight thyself also in the LORD; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart."⁷²

Unlike animals, we can control our sexual urges and desires through our minds because we alone can reason the appropriateness, consequences and meaning of our sexual behaviour. Animals are driven by biological urges or instincts, humans control them.

People often throw around the term "sexual appetite" inferring that we need sex in the same way that we need to satisfy such physical appetites as eating and drinking. Yet, this is actually a misnomer. People don't die from not indulging in sex like they do if they don't eat or drink:

- according to Masters and Johnson, "Sexual functioning ... has a unique facility that no other natural physiological process ... can imitate. *Sexual responsivity can be delayed indefinitely or functionally denied for a lifetime*"⁷³
- according to Helen Singer Kaplan, a widely renowned sex therapist, "A person can survive indefinitely without any sexual release at all."⁷⁴

Professor Sorokin of Harvard University dispelled the myth that sex is just another physical appetite. He recounted the days early in the Russian Revolution when the new regime intentionally tried to destroy the institution of marriage. Divorces were a dime a dozen. Abortions were legal and easy to obtain. Premarital sex was encouraged, while adultery was declared to be normal. The end result?

Within a few years, hordes of wild, homeless children became a real menace to the Soviet Union itself. Millions of lives, especially of young girls, were wrecked; divorce sky-rocketed, as did abortions. The hatreds and conflicts between polygamous and polyandrous mates rapidly mounted -- and so did psycho-neuroses. Work in the nationalized factories slackened.

The total results were so appalling that the government was forced to reverse its policy. The propaganda of the 'glass of water' theory was declared to be counter-revolutionary, and its place was taken by the official glorification of premarital chastity and of the sanctity of

⁷¹ 1 Corinthians 7:18-24

⁷² Psalm 37:4

⁷³William H. Master and Virginia E. Johnson, *Human Sexual Inadequacy* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Co., 1970)

⁷⁴Helen Singer Kaplan, *The New Sex Therapy* (New York: A Brunner/Mazel Publication, 1974)

marriage.⁷⁵

Self-Control: The Mandate of Singleness

The Bible only provides two solutions to those who "burn with passion":

- marriage
- self-control

The Bible actually exhorts all God's children to exert self-control in their sexual conduct:

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." (Proverbs 16:32)

"All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything." (1 Corinthians 6:12, NASB) "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it unto subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." (1 Corinthians 9:27)

"He will die for lack of discipline, led astray by his own great folly." (Proverbs 5:23) These

solutions to passion are embedded in Paul's recommendations to the Corinth ecclesia:

Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I am. But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

(1 Corinthians 7:8-9)

For those who do not opt for marriage, self-control is the prescribed course of behaviour in all realms of sexual activity.

One particularly effective therapeutic method in treating compulsive sexual behaviour is the Sexual

⁷⁵Norman Vincent Peale, *Sin, Sex and Self-Control* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Ltd., 1965), pp. 78-79.

Impulse Scale (SIS) used by the Burnaby Christian Counselling Group (Burnaby, British Columbia).⁷⁶

The reward for those who control their sexual impulses is great. It far surpasses any short-term pleasure that sin may tempt us with:

"(Moses) ... choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."

Hebrews 11:25-26

"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is the fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

Psalms 16:11

Resources

Randy C. Alcorn, *Christians in the Wake of the Sexual Revolution* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1985)

Sexual Temptation: How Christian Workers Can Win the Battle (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1989)

Concordia Sex Education Series, (3558 S. Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63118-3968, Concordia Publishing House)

This is an excellent 6-book series focusing on the Christian perspective of why sex is a God-given gift. You can order by calling 1-800-325-3040.

Josh McDowell, *The Myths of Sex Education* (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life Publishers, Inc., 1990)

The Dad Difference: Creating an Environment for Your Child's Sexual Wholeness (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life Publishers, Inc., 1989)

What I Wish My Parents Knew About My Sexuality (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life Publishers,

⁷⁶D. Mitchell Whitman, "The Sexual Impulse Scale: A Clinical Tool Toward Client Control of Compulsive Sexual Behaviour," available by writing to The Burnaby Christian Counselling Group, 7325 MacPherson Avenue, Burnaby, B.C., V5J 4N8 or by calling (604) 430-1303.

Inc., 1987)

Why Wait? What You Need to Know About the Teen Sexuality Crisis (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life Publishers, Inc., 1987)

Charles M. Mylander, Running the Red Lights: Putting the Brakes on Sexual Temptation (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1986)

Norman Vincent Peale, Sin, Sex and Self-Control (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Ltd., 1965)

John Schindler, How to Live 365 Days a Year (Greenwich: Fawcett Publications, 1954), see pp. 135-136 for effects of masturbation.

Richard P. Walters, Counselling for Problems of Self-Control (Waco, TX: Word Publishing, 1987)

John White, Eros Defiled: The Christian and Sexual Sin (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1977)

Earl D. Wilson, Sexual Sanity: Breaking Free From Uncontrolled Habits (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984)

ADULTERY

Adultery

"No good Christian man or woman gets up in the morning, looks out the window, and says, 'My, this is a lovely day! I guess I'll go out and commit adultery.' Yet many do it anyway."

Florence Littauer

Adultery can happen to the best of us. After all, if it could happen to King David -- "a man after God's own heart" -- it could happen to any of us.

As we've painfully witnessed in this "adulterous" generation, adultery can literally rock and destroy the foundations of society by eroding the family unit.

The Book of Proverbs, which has much to say about the subject of adultery, counsels God's people to "Drink water from your own cistern, and fresh water from your own well."⁷⁸ In that book, Solomon, who ironically proved the truth of the very words he penned, pointed out how adultery will destroy you:

- sexually (Proverbs 5:9-11)
- spiritually (Proverbs 5:12-13)
- socially (Proverbs 5:14)

Therefore, he aptly summed up by concluding that, "The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense; he who would destroy himself does it."⁷⁹

The Best Defense Against the Offense of Adultery

Robert Bell noted in **Premarital Sex in a Changing Society** that premarital sex increases the probability of adultery occurring after marriage begins. Dr. Alfred Kinsey also discovered this same correlation in his exhaustive studies. So don't get in the practice of being sexually promiscuous before marriage if you want to remain faithful after you say "I do!" After studying 250 couples, psychologist Nena

⁷⁷ Acts 13:22

⁷⁸ Proverbs 5:15, NASB

⁷⁹ Proverbs 6:32, NASB

O'Neill concluded that the most stable marriages are based upon sexual fidelity." Fidelity is based on the presumption of faithfulness to God's commandments.

So, first, your best defense is to build a good marriage and never presume that it couldn't happen to you. Just as happened in Joseph's case, it was Potiphar's wife who "hit on him." That is how it often happens. Frequently, many people don't go out looking for an affair; it either comes looking for them or it just happens.

Adultery Starts in the Mind

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in his customary fashion, taught us that adultery starts in the mind. It is conceived in lust. Lust is a much stronger word than mere physical attraction. Lust is the conscious decision to think about having sex with another person or indulging in sexually fantasy. It is virtually impossible just to stop doing something "cold turkey." Rather, we must replace adulterous or impure thoughts with pure thoughts. Seek a clean and pure heart. Keep it and guard it from the "filth" of this world. Contrary to the opinions of some, the "visual images" of sex are powerful and affect 'is profoundly. Therefore, don't "program" your mind to be a receptacle for adulterous images n television or movie screens.

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." (Matthew 5:27-28)

As one writer put it, Jesus in effect was saying, "To want what is wrong sexually is just as evil as to *do what is wrong sexually.*"⁸¹

Monitor Your Marriage

Research has concluded that couples who are happy with their marital sexual relations are less likely to leave a marriage." Monitor your relationship with both your spouse and God:

⁸⁰Robert C. Tucker and Leota M. Tucker, "Lovers and Other Friends," *Essence*, October 1980, pp. 118.

⁸¹Tim Stafford, "Great Sex: Reclaiming a Christian Sexual Ethic," *Christianity Today*, Vol. 31, October 2, 1987, p. 43.

⁸²Philip Blumstein and Peter Schwartz, *American Couples* (New York: Morrow Publishers, 1983), p. - 201.

- find quiet time to talk together
- enhance your closeness
- keep romance kindling
- think about pleasing your spouse
- don't take your spouse for granted
- don't be naive about someone trying to seduce you -- it happens!
- don't trust yourself -- ever
- don't place yourself in compromising situations
- think about the consequences of adultery if you are tempted

Jewish men were exempt from military service for one year so that the newly wed couple could get to "know" each other:

When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken.⁸³

The Hebrew word for "cheer" ("samach") literally means "to delight, to know, and to discover what would be pleasing to her." Successful marriages come about by spending time together and growing together.

Another key to preventing adultery is to develop your friendship with your spouse on a continual basis. Remember, they'll be by your side long after your kids are gone.

Friendship is the one common ingredient among couples who seem to have it all together. Friends are the people you miss the most when you're lonely -- the ones who warm your life, comfort, applaud, support and forgive you. Friends work out problems, accept differences, have patience and grow together.⁸⁴

Success Story

Joseph and Potiphar's wife

Although he wasn't married himself at the time, Joseph was nevertheless tempted by a very married woman. She literally threw herself at him. Joseph took the prudent course and fled the painted face of temptation. His primary motivation for just saying no was "how then can I do this great

⁸³Deuteronomy 24:5

⁸⁴Ibid, p. 89.

wickedness, and sin against God?"⁸⁵

Adultery Breaks Up Families

There are many detrimental effects that adultery inflicts upon the family unit⁸⁶:

- after divorce, children are twice as likely to live in poverty than they were before the breakup⁸⁷
- about 350,000 children are kidnapped by family members involved in custody battles⁸⁸
- divorce is very stressful on children⁸⁹
- 1988 National Health Interview Survey on Child Health indicates an excess risk of negative health and performance indicators among children who don't live with both biological parents⁹⁰
- some claim that divorce is the main cause of problems that children face today⁹¹

⁸⁵Genesis 39:9

⁸⁶See the recent article in *The Atlantic Monthly* entitled "Dan Quayle Was Right" in the April 1993 issue, Vol. 271, No. 4, pp. 47-84 for an excellent summary on how the deterioration of the family has affected children.

⁸⁷Jason Deparle, "Child Poverty Twice As Likely After Family Split, Study Says," *New York Times*, March 2, 1991, p. A-8.

⁸⁸J.C. Barden, "Bitter Sign of the Times: Children Abducted by Parents," *New York Times*, May 6, 1990, p. A-30.

⁸⁹Paul Taylor, "Therapists Rethink Attitudes on Divorce," *The Washington Post*, January 29, 1991, p. A-1.

⁹⁰Deborah A. Dawson, "Family Structure and Children's Health and Well-Being: Data from the 1988 National Health Interview Survey on Child Health," *Journal of Marriage & the Family*, vol. 53, no. 3, August 1991, pp. 573-34.

⁹¹"Second Thoughts on Divorce," *Economist*, vol. 320, no. 7720, August 17, 1991, pp. 23-24.

- there is a significant correlation between children from broken homes and juvenile delinquency⁹²
- child homicide rates are higher in divorced homes⁹³
- effects of divorce on children are still evident many years afterwards⁹⁴

In his book *Emotions, Can You Trust Them?*, Dr. James Dobson highlights the impact infidelity can have upon a marriage:

Who can deny a society is seriously weakened when the intense sexual urge between men and women becomes an instrument for suspicion and intrigue within millions of individual families; when a woman never knows what her husband is doing when away from home; when a husband can't trust his wife in his absence; when half of the brides are pregnant at the altar; when both newlyweds have slept with numerous partners, losing the exclusive wonder of the marital bed; when everyone is doing his own thing, particularly that which brings him immediate sensual gratification.⁹⁵

Spouses effected by adultery must deal with:

- shock
- anger
- grief
- depression
- guilt
- loneliness

As a counsellor, you must get one or both of the spouses to come to grips with these emotions. Forgiveness from the heart is imperative if the marriage is to be salvaged. Look for these signs and help the family deal with them.

⁹²Edward L. Wells and Joseph H. Rankin, "Families and Delinquency: A Meta-Analysis of the Impact of Broken Homes," *Social Problems*, vol. 38, no. 1, February 1991, pp. 71-93.

⁹³Rosemary Gartner, "Family Structure, Welfare Spending, and Child Homicide in Developed Democracies," *Journal of Marriage & the Family*, vol. 53, no. 1, February 1991, pp. 231-240.

⁹⁴Anastasia Toufexis and Georgia Harbison, "The Lasting Wounds of Divorce," *Time*, vol. 133, no. 6, February 6, 1989, p. 61.

⁹⁵James Dobson, *Emotions -- Can You Trust Them?* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1980), pp. 666-7.

Resources

- Patrick Carnes, *Contrary to Love: Helping the Sexual Addict* (Minneapolis, MN: CompCare Publications, 1989)
- Don't Call It Love: Recovery from Sexual Addiction* (New York: Bantam Books, 1991)
- Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction* (Minneapolis, MN: CompCare Publications, 1983)
- "*The Subtlety of Sexual Sin*," Eternity (February 1977)
- Les Carter, *The Prodigal Spouse: How to Survive Infidelity* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990)
- Dave Corder, *Torn Asunder: Recovering From Extramarital Affairs* (Moody Press/Regeneration Books, P.O. Box 9830, Baltimore, MD 21284-9830)
- Barbara Kantrowitz, "*Breaking The Divorce Cycle*," Newsweek, January 13, 1992, pp. 48-53.
- Roberta Kells Dorr, *David and Bathsheba* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1982)
- Robert and Jeanette Lauer, "*The Long-Term Relational Consequences of Problematic Family Backgrounds*," Family Relations vol. 40, no. 3, July 1991, pp. 286-290.
- Alexander Lowen and Robert J. Levin, "*The Case Against Cheating in Marriage*," Redbook (June 1969)
- Natalie Gittelson, "*Infidelity -- Can You Forgive and Forget*," Redbook (November 1978)
- David Neff, "*The Painless-Divorce Myth*," Christianity Today, vol. 33, no. 8, May 12, 1989, p. 17.
- J. Allan Peterson, *The Myth of the Greener Grass* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1988)
- John L. Sandford, *Why Some Christians Commit Adultery: Causes and Cures* (Victory House, Inc. Publishers, 1989)

HOMOSEXUALITY

Homosexuality

The Problem

The Bible clearly indicates that homosexuality is wrong and sinful. Consider the following verses:

"Do not lie with a male as one lies with a woman; it is an abhorrence." Leviticus 18:22

"God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion."

Romans 1:26-27

"But we know that the Law is, good, if one uses it lawfully, realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted."

1 Timothy 1:8-11

One of the pre-eminent problems facing the homosexual is that continued practice of homosexuality will bar that person from the Kingdom of God:

"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not enter the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the Kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God."

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

The Physical Effects of Homosexual Sex

Eventually, sinful behaviour takes its toll on the human body. This is clearly manifest in the case of the homosexual. Ultimately, the homosexual will be faced with physical ailments including colitis, mucosal ulcers in the rectum, Kobner's phenomenon, fecal incontinence, amebiasis, syphilis, genital herpes, cytomegalovirus, venereal warts, and, of course, AIDS of which there are at least 22 different AIDS contagions. The lifespan of a homosexual is considerably shorter than that of the average heterosexual.

Causes of Homosexuality

Needless to say, there is much dissension in the professional psychological community as to what causes homosexuality. The causes seem to be fall into three categories:

Although there has been a lot of press about the genetic causation of homosexuality, nothing has conclusively been proven to substantiate that homosexuality is "inbred."

1. Physical Explanations
2. Internal Theories
3. Interpersonal Theories

Please contact me for further information on this subject if you so desire.

Another school of thought postulates that homosexuality is caused by fears or inhibitions of asserting one's self; fear of the opposite sex; anxiety over general social contact; and gender-identity confusion.

The interpersonal theories concentrate on tracing the cause(s) of homosexuality back to deficient childparent relationships. For instance, these theories focus on such causes for homosexuality as a domineering mother who smothers her son with too much affection and love and/or a weak or passive father who doesn't show any affection towards his son. On the surface, a common denominator is that the child has experienced or perceived rejection from his father. The rejection may be passive or aggressive, real or supposed:

Studies of father absence report detrimental effects on children's aggression, dependency, degree of adjustment or "psychopathology," delinquency rates, moral behaviour, success in the Peace Corps or military, premarital pregnancy rates, masculinity in males, and intellectual performance.⁹⁶

Dr. Elizabeth Moberly contends that homosexuality arises from difficulties in the parent-child relationship in the earlier years of life. She believes that "deficit" spawns a "drive" to make good on

⁹⁶ Marshall L. Hamilton, *Father's Influence on Children* (Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall, 1977), p. 51.

the "deficit" in the same-sex relationship.⁹⁷ Therefore, she believes homosexuality is "essentially a state of incomplete development."⁹⁸

Here are some of the causes that author Lawrence Hatterer posited in his book *Changing Homosexuality in the Male*:

- mothers distrust or fear women and teach this to their sons
- mothers distrust or fear men and teach this to their daughters
- a son is surrounded by too many females and has limited contact with adult males, thus learning to think and act like a girl
- parents who wanted a daughter but instead have a son, subtly raising the boy to think and act like a girl (vice versa -- wanted a son but got a girl)
- a son is rejected or ignored by his father and feels inadequate as a male and unsure of how males should relate to females
- both parents are afraid to discuss sex with child, leading a child to get a distorted view of sex or have difficulties in adjusting to heterosexual relationships
- a mother or father is so overly indulgent in child that child is overly attached to parent, and becomes convinced that no mate could ever compare with his/her opposite-sex parent

Hope For the Homosexual

Contrary to public belief, not all homosexuals just wake up and decide that they are sexually attracted to their own gender. Some have had these feelings for as long as they can remember. In fact, research seems to indicate that few people deliberately choose the homosexual way of life. Yet, biblical morality isn't determined by our feelings. Rather, we must consciously choose to alter our attitudes and behaviour to obey our Lord Jesus Christ. Needless to say, many of us have heavy crosses to bear. Despite this, however, there is real hope for the homosexual. One writer observed that:

...'changing sexual preference is not particularly difficult for those who make that choice.' Such change is possible even in the so-called 'Kinsey 6' or 'obligatory homosexual' who has

⁹⁷Elizabeth Moberly, *Homosexuality: A New Christian Ethic* (Greenwood, SC: Attic Press, 1982), p. 2.

⁹⁸*Ibid*, p. 28.

never experienced heterosexual relations.⁹⁹

However, many other "converted" homosexuals claim that it is difficult, but not impossible to convert to being heterosexual from homosexual.

Indeed, Masters and Johnson achieved a 71.6 percent success rate in changing homosexuals to heterosexuality -- five years straight -- with a group of 300 homosexuals. One psychiatrist has achieved a 100 percent success rate.¹⁰⁰ Other professional counsellors have reported impressive results with psychoanalytic psychotherapy and behavioral treatments. For instance, Irving Bieber (1962) reported that 31 out of 100 homosexual patients were functioning as heterosexuals within five years of treatment.¹⁰¹ Others have yielded similar results.¹⁰² There are at least 75 agencies and ministries which claim that homosexuality is a reversible condition.¹⁰³ The data definitely supports the contention that homosexuals can change:

"The data provide a substantial body of evidence for the plausibility of change from exclusive homosexuality to exclusive heterosexuality, which is in accordance with the Kinsey statistical probabilities for such change, the Masters and Johnson data, and the clinical or observational anecdotes of such change. Our data demonstrate that such change has occurred through significant longitudinal experiences in 'folk therapy' provided with a supernatural framework and utilizing generic methods of change common to folk therapy. Our data suggest the importance of ideology, expectation, and behavioral experience in producing change. The evidence suggests that cognitive change occurs first, followed by behavioral change, and finally intrapsychic resolution. Finally, the data suggest the importance of our concepts of homosexuality. When homosexuality is defined as an immutable and fixed condition that must be accepted, the potential for change seems slim. In our study, however, when homosexuality was defined as a changeable condition, it appears that change was possible."¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ John Jefferson Davis, *Evangelical Ethics* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1985), p. 112.

¹⁰⁰ William D. Gairdner, *The War Against the Family* (Toronto, ON: Stoddart Publishing Co., Ltd., 1992), pp. 366, 373.

¹⁰¹ Irving Bieber, *Homosexuality* (New York: Basic Books, 1962)

¹⁰² M. MacCullagh and M. Feldman, "Aversion Therapy in the Management of Homosexuals." *British Medical Journal* 12 (1957):594. See also J. Bancroft, *Deviant Sexual Behaviour* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974)

¹⁰³ "The Exodus Story: The Growth of Ex-Gay Ministry," by Robert Davis, in *The Crisis of Homosexuality*, Isamu Yamamoto, ed., (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1990)

¹⁰⁴ E. Mansell and Myrna Loy Pattison, "Ex-Gays': Religiously Mediated Change in Homosexuals," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 137, no. 12 (Dec. 1980): 1553.

Organizations such as Exodus International have proven that through love and compassion, homosexuals can change.¹⁰⁵ The principle point is that you can show love, understanding and compassion without condoning or promoting immoral behaviour.

Jesus died for our sins, all of our sins, regardless of whatever they may be:

"...the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from every sin."¹⁰⁶

Through the grace of God, homosexuals can change. In fact, several in the Corinth church were "reformed" homosexuals:

"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not enter the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the Kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God." [emphasis mine]

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Evidently, some of the Corinthians were homosexuals prior to their conversion in Christ. But through the grace of God, they were "new creations" and became "saints."

British psychiatrist Kenneth McAll has helped 15 homosexual men overcome and change through a combination of prayer and psychotherapy. Apparently, "white knuckling" or pure will power has been ineffective in helping both brethren and homosexuals outside the Christadelphian community from overcoming homosexuality. Many brethren have "back slid" when relying solely on this technique to overcome this practice.

In a most impressive survey, Dr. Roger Mesmer noted that 101 homosexuals were able to stop homosexual activity either completely or substantially.¹⁰⁷ An overwhelming number of respondents indicated that they felt better spiritually, socially and reported psychological improvement after their change.

His questionnaire also revealed some interesting points about the parents of homosexuals¹⁰⁸:

¹⁰⁵Tom Bethell, "Exodus," *The American Spectator*, October 1991, p. 9. He details the story of Bret Lutz who joined the Calvary Chapel which helped him convert from being homosexual to becoming heterosexual.

¹⁰⁶1 John 1:7

¹⁰⁷Roger Mesmer, "Homosexuals Who Change Lifestyles," *The Journal of Christian Healing*, Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 1992, p. 14.

¹⁰⁸Ibid, p. 15.

Fathers of Homosexuals

Alcoholic	18%
Mentally Abusive	28%
Absent, remote, uninvolved	72%
Unaffirming	93%

Mothers of Lesbians

Mentally Abusive	63%
Unaffirming	75%

Fathers of Lesbians

Alcoholic	63%
Sexually/Mentally Abusive	50%
Absent or Uninvolved	63%

The re-occurring denominators in the questionnaire were "mentally abusive," "unaffirming" and "absent" or "uninvolved" parents. This is especially true of men.¹⁰⁹ However, this statistics aren't absolute. Therefore, the parents of every homos exual don't necessarily fit this mold, nor should they be psychoanalysed to fit such a hole. Humans are complex, complicated beings. Usually there is more than one factor or reason which satisfactorily explains our behaviour. However, parents can take some positive, proactive steps in building healthy self-esteem in their children:

1. Build healthy home environment
2. Give accurate information about homosexuality
3. Develop healthy self-concept
4. Maintain proper perspective towards spouse and children

Note: "...children need love, but they should always realize that they are number two in the heart of their parents. If they grow up thinking they are number one, they will have a difficult time adjusting normally to the opposite sex."¹¹⁰

Leanne Payne, *Crisis in Masculinity* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1985) and *The Broken Image* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1987)

Dr. Howard Hendricks quoted in *The Act of Marriage: The Beauty of Sexual Love*, Tim and Beverly LaHaye (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), p. 280.

Practical Help

Counselling the Homosexual

Here are some pragmatic tips to follow when counselling a homosexual:

1. Determine counselling goals
2. Instill realistic hope
3. Share knowledge; break down fallacies and unwarranted fears 4.
Show love and affection
5. Encourage behaviour change
6. Counselling may be complex and time consuming

Resources

If you want to conduct a comprehensive study into ways and means of overcoming homosexuality, write to:

Regeneration Books, P.O. Box 9830, Baltimore, MD 21284-9830

or

Exodus International, P.O. Box 2121, San Rafael, CA 94912

Other resources:

Wendell and Nancy Anderson, *Lessons to Help Wives Deal With Homosexual Issues in Their Husbands*,
(Eagles' Wings, 1700 Highway
96, Arden Hills, MN 55112)

Lessons to Help Families Deal With Homosexual Issues in Their Children (Eagles' Wings, 1700 Highway
96, Arden Hills, MN
55112)

Bradford, Brick, et al., *Healing For the Homosexual* (Presbyterian & Reformed Renewal Ministry, 2245 NW 39th
Street, Oklahoma City, OK
73112)

Roger Mesmer, "Homosexuals Who Change Lifestyles," *The Journal of Christian Healing*, Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 1992: 12-18.

Elizabeth R. Moberly, *Homosexuality: A New Christian Ethic* Greenwood, SC: Attic Press, 1982)

E.M. Pattison and M.L. Pattison, "'Ex-Gays': Religiously Mediated Change in Homosexuals," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 137 (1980): 1553-62.

Leanne Payne, *The Broken Image: Restoring Personal Wholeness through Healing Prayer* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1981)

George Rekers, *Growing Up Straight: What Every Family Should Know About Homosexuality* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1982)

Shaping Your Child's Sexual Identity (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1982)

John Stott, *Homosexual Partnerships: Why Same-Sex Relationships Are Not a Christian Option*, John Stott (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press)

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is one of the three main reasons why children run away from home.¹¹¹ Child sexual abuse has neared epidemic proportions in this country. It's estimated that a child is raped every 45 minutes in the United States.¹¹² Between 100,000 and 200,000 children are sexually abused every year. Sexual abuse or incest is a horrible sin and crime. Here are some of the signs to watch out for in either your child or someone else's.

The Physical and Psychological Effects of Sexual Abuse

Below are some of the common physical and psychological effects of child abuse:

- Confusion
- Loss of Trust
- Anger
- Fear
- Refusal to participate in favourite activity
- Change in School Performance
- Self-Injury/Graphic Play
- Feeling "Bad"
- Loss of Personal Identity
- Precocious Sexuality
- Eating Disorders
- Withdrawal
- Running Away
- Role Reversal
- Dependency
- Self-Abuse
- Acting Out
- Sexual Identity Confusion
- May Not Want to Go to a Certain Place or Visit a Certain Person
- Recurring Genital Infections or Pain in Their Genital Areas
- Sleep Problems such as nightmares, bed wetting or fear of sleeping alone
- Guilt

Studies consistently indicate that the overwhelming majority (99%) of children don't lie about sexual

¹¹¹Adele Mayer, *Sexual Abuse: Causes, Consequences and Treatment of Incestuous and Pedophilic Acts* (Holmes Beach, CA: Learning Publications, Inc., 1985), p. 7.

¹¹²Linda Tschirhart Sanford, *The Silent Children: A Parent's Guide to the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1982), p. 154.

abuse/incest. So believe them if they tell you they have been victimized.

In the event that you become aware of child or sexual abuse, consult your ecclesial arranging board for further advice and steps. Since this is such a particularly difficult crime to pinpoint, you don't want to hastily make false accusations. Conversely, you don't want to delay or dismiss the suspected behaviour. Therefore, the best rule of thumb is to verify your suspicions and consult a member or members of your arranging board for further precautions or action.

Resources

Maxine Hancock and Karen Burton Mains, *Child Sexual Abuse: A Hope For Healing* (Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1987)

Lynn Heitritter and Jeanette Vought, *Helping Victims of Sexual Abuse* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1989)

Alice Huskey, *Stolen Childhood: What You Need to Know About Sexual Abuse* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press)

Adele Mayer, *Sexual Abuse: Causes, Consequences and Treatment of incestuous and Pedophilic Acts* (Holmes Beach, CA: Learning Publications, Inc., 1985)

Susan Patterson, *I Wish The Hitting Would Stop: A Workbook for Children Living In Violent Homes* (1987 Rape and Abuse Crisis Center)

Mary D. Pellauer, Barbara Chester and Jane Boyajian, eds., *Sexual Assault and Abuse: A Handbook for Clergy and Religious Professionals* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1987)

David B. Peters, *A Betrayal of Innocence: What Everyone Should Know About Child Sexual Abuse* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1986)

Paula Sandford, *Healing Victims of Sexual Abuse* (Tulsa, OK: Victory House Publishers, 1988)

Linda Tschirhart Sanford, *The Silent Children: A Parent's Guide to the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1982)

ABORTION

Abortion

One of the consequences of pre-marital sex is pregnancy. On average, 1.6 million American teenage girls get pregnant every year. Many of these pregnancies are terminated through abortion. However, abortion is not an option for a Christian disciple. The sin of fornication need not be compounded with the sin of murder. For further information and conclusive argument and evidence that abortion is murder, please write me. Abortion cannot destroy the guilt and shame of fornication. On the contrary, it actually compounds guilt and shame.

Rather than seeking abortion, we strongly recommend either keeping the child or putting it up for adoption, preferably to a Christadelphian home. Sadly, and ironically, there are more waiting parents than there are children. Depending on the estimates, between four and 20 families are waiting to adopt each available child.¹¹³ Only about 50,000 children become available for adoption each year, although hundreds of thousands of Americans are seeking to adopt children.¹¹⁴

The antithesis of pregnancy and abortion issues is childlessness. Failure to have children can obviously create some severe difficulties and stress for couples. Please refer to the following reference materials for appropriate information dealing with this sensitive issue:

S. Borg and J. Lasker, *When Pregnancy Fails: Families Coping With Miscarriage, Stillbirth, and Infant Death* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1981)

Vicky Love, *Childless is Not Less* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1984) Beth

Spring, *The Infertile Couple* (Elgin, IL: David C. Cook, 1987)

Judith A. Stigger, *Coping With Infertility: A Guide for Couples, Families, and Counsellors* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1983)

Martha Stout, *Without Child: A Compassionate Look at Infertility* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985)

Everett L. Worthington, *Counselling for Unplanned Pregnancy and Infertility* (Waco, TX: Word Publishing, 1987)

¹¹³National Committee for Adoption, *Adoption Factbook: United States Data: Issues, Regulations and Resources* (Washington, D.C.), p. 6; *The New York Times*, December 11, 1990, b-10.

¹¹⁴*Ibid*, pp. 6, 159.

The media has largely been silent on the physiological and psychological effects of abortion. If you know someone who has had an abortion, the following information will be useful in counselling them. Furthermore, this is also excellent information to use to dissuade someone from obtaining an abortion.

Post-Abortion Syndrome

It's not surprising that many women suffer from the emotional and psychological distress of "post abortion syndrome."¹¹⁵ Abortion places a lot of physical stress on the body; it follows that it would also place a lot of psychological stress on a woman, too.

Dr. David Reardon, who has studied the subject of abortion thoroughly, states that these women can experience trauma and severe emotional depression as much as five to 35 years after their abortion was performed.¹¹⁶ Reardon's studies revealed some interesting patterns among women who have undergone an abortion:

1. 62% of women become suicidal following abortion
2. 20% of women attempt suicide
3. 30% of women begin drinking heavily
4. 40% of women experience nightmares
5. 20% of women suffer a "nervous breakdown"¹¹⁷

Some studies indicate that as many as 76 percent of woman suffer some form of postpartum depression after abortion. In addition, 78 percent struggle with low self-esteem. Reardon also observed that many women suppress their feelings of guilt and shame and that they can develop such psychosomatic illnesses as abdominal discomfort, vomiting, pruritus vulvae, dysmenorrhea, frigidity, headaches, fatigue, ulcers in addition to extreme anxiety and paranoia.¹¹⁸

The Report on the Psychological Aftermath of Abortion also reiterated many of Reardon's observations:

The list of psychological abreactions [later responses] to induced abortion is lengthy and worthy of explication [explanation]: guilt, depression, grief, anxiety, sadness, shame, helplessness and hopelessness, lowered self-esteem, distrust, hostility toward self and others, regret, sleep disorders, recurring dreams, nightmares, anniversary, reactions,

¹¹⁵Vincent M. Rue, et. al., A Report on the Psychological Aftermath of Abortion (presented to C. Everett Koop by the National Right to Life Committee) September 15, 1987, (Washington, D.C.: National Right to Life Committee, 1987). Appendix One summarizes 90 studies.

¹¹⁶Reardon, *Aborted Women*, p. 116.

¹¹⁷Reardon, *Aborted Women*, pp.23-24.

¹¹⁸ [ibid, pp. 130-131.

psychophysiological symptoms, suicidal ideation and behaviour, alcohol and/or chemical dependencies, sexual dysfunction, insecurity, numbness, painful re-experiencing of the abortion, relationship disruption, communication impairment and/or restriction, isolation, fetal fantasies, self-condemnation, flashbacks, uncontrollable weeping, eating disorders, preoccupation, confused and/or distorted thinking, bitterness, and a sense of loss and emptiness.¹¹⁹

Several studies indicate that as many as 51 percent of all women have flashbacks of the aborted baby at unexpected times.

Contrary to what many think, there is documented proof that there are both psychological and physical risks involved when a woman undergoes an abortion. Some of the physical risks include:

1. **Infection**

- Endometritis
- PID (Pelvic Inflammatory Disease)

Note: Infections are reported in 30 percent of all abortions.

- Tissue Retention

Bleeding

- Uterine Perforation
- Uterine Atony
- Severe loss of blood and clotting factors called Disseminated Intravascular Coagulation (DIC)
- Retained products of conception
- Bowel Laceration
- Bladder Laceration

2. **Damage To Cervix**

- Tears to tissue
- Bleeding
- Cervical Trauma

4. Missed Ectopic Pregnancy

5. Anaesthesia Complications (convulsions, shock and cardiac arrest resulting from toxic reactions)

¹¹⁹Vincent M. Rue, et. al., A Report on the Psychological Aftermath of Abortion, op. cit., p. 7.

6. Pulmonary Emboli (obstruction of the pulmonary artery)
7. Venous Thrombophlebitis (inflammation of a vein developing before a blood clot) 6. Death

There are also future complications associated with abortion:

1. Infertility or Sterility (3-5%)
2. Bleeding
3. Ectopic Pregnancy (400% increase)
4. Placenta Previa
5. Subsequent Miscarriages (twice as likely after undergoing abortion)
6. Fetal Malpresentations (breech births)
7. Premature Births More Likely (15% compared with usual 5%)
8. Early Infant Death (2-4 times greater chance of occurring after undergoing abortion)
9. Stillbirth
10. Infections
11. Shock
12. Coma
13. Fever/cold sweats
14. Intense Pain
15. Loss of Organs
16. Insomnia
17. Loss of Appetite
18. Constant Swallowing
19. Vomiting
20. Gastro-Intestinal Problems
21. Cervical Stenosis
22. Cervical Incompetence
23. Anaemia
24. Peritonitis
25. Blood Clots
26. Emotional and Psychiatric Stress
27. Depression
28. Psychosis

Note: In one national study, 90 percent of all women who received an abortion experienced moderate to severe emotional and psychiatric stress.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ Reardon, *Aborted Women*, p. xxiv.

About 10 percent of these women require psychiatric hospitalization."

29. Suicide

Psychological Effects Of Abortion

Some comprehensive studies have uncovered the psychological effects that abortion has on women.¹²² The results are noted below:

The Conquerors' Study

Symptom	Percentage of Women Who Experienced This Symptom
1. Feel Guilt	90%
2. Anxiety in General	79%
3. Nervousness	66%
4. Worry That God Will Forgive	62%
5. Drew Close To God	62%
6. Alienation From God	49%
7. Fear of Medical Exams	41
8. Fear of Sexual Intercourse	37%
9. Fear of the Future	32%
10. Feel Anger Towards God	28%
11. Fear of Medical Personnel	24%
12. Fear of People	22%
13. Fear of Sounds of Abortion	21
14. Fear of Crowds	16%
15. Non-Specific Fears	24%

The Speckhard Study

The Speckhard Study revealed many of the same fears that the Conquerors' Study did, plus some others:

¹²¹ Ibid, p. xxv.

Symptom	Percentage of Women Who
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¹²² One of the most comprehensive study was issued by Vincent M. Rue, et al., A Report on the Psychological Aftermath of Abortion (presented to C. Everett Koop by the National Right to Life Committee) September 15, 1987, Washington D.C.: National Right to Life Committee, 1987. Appendix One summarizes 90 studies.

Experienced This Symptom

1.	Fear That Others Will Learn of Your Abortion	89%
2.	Distrust of Men	58%
3.	Feelings of Anxiety	54%
4.	Distrust of Others	50%
5.	Fear of Retributive God	50%
6.	Fear of Future Infertility	46%

Other Symptoms Cited Included:

- Eating Disorders
- Loss of Appetite
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Suicidal Impulses
- Sense of Loss
- Unfulfillment
- Mourning
- Regret and Remorse
- Withdrawal
- Loss of Confidence
- Loss of Self-Esteem
- Preoccupation With Death
- Hostility
- Self-Destructive Behaviour
- Despair
- Helplessness
- Preoccupation with *would be* due date
- Intense Interest in Babies
- Thwarted Maternal Instincts
- Loss of Interest in Sex
- Inability to Forgive Self
- Nightmares
- Frustration
- Child Abuse
- Feel Exploited

Counselling

The steps to overcome these problems include:

- confession of your sin
- seek God's forgiveness and your own forgiveness

Scriptural Wisdom and Practical Help For Surviving Troubled Times

Scriptural Wisdom and Practical Help For Surviving Troubled Times

- compassion and moral support
- physical check-up

- prayer
- meditation
- if necessary, seek counsel of professional who also has Christian perspective and values

Resources

John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *When Does Life Begin? And Another 39 Tough Questions About Abortion* (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, Publishers, Inc., 1989)

Francis J. Beckwith and Norman L. Geisler, *Matters of Life and Death: Calm Answers to Tough Questions About Abortion and Euthanasia* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991)

John Jefferson Davis, *Abortion and the Christian: What Every Believer Should Know* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1984)

Michael Gorman, *Abortion and the Early Church: Christian, Jewish, and Pagan Attitudes in the Greco-Roman World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1982)

George Grant, *Grand Illusions: The Legacy of Planned Parenthood* (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, Publishers, Inc., 1988)

Howard J. Osofsky and Jay D. Osofsky, *The Abortion Experience: Psychological & Medical Impact* (Hagerstown, MD: Harper & Row, 1973)

David C. Reardon, *Aborted Women Silent No More* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1987)

Teri and Paul Reisser, *Help for the Post-abortion Woman* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989)

Anne Speckhard, *Post-Abortion Counselling: A Manual For Christian Counsellors* (Falls Church, VA: Christian Action Council, 1987)

The Psycho-Social Aspects of Stress Following Abortion (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1987)

R. C. Sproul, *Abortion: A Rational Look at an Emotional Issue* (Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1990)

Jeanette Vought, *Post-Abortion Trauma: 9 Steps to Recovery* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991)

SEX IN THE BIBLICAL CONTEXT

The Christian and Problems of Sexuality

"A Christian marriage can never fail, but the people in that marriage can fail. There is a vast difference between the two possibilities. So if the marriage of two Christians seems to fail, it is either that they were ignorant of God's purposes, or unwilling to commit themselves to it."¹²³

Dwight Small, *Design For Christian Marriage*

Why Most Marriages Fail

One of the major problems in dysfunctional marriages is the lack of a deeply satisfying sexual relationship.¹²⁴ In all probability, the lack of a satisfying sexual relationship is, in itself, not the root of the marital problem. Rather it usually is symptomatic of a greater, unresolved problem. Marriage transcends sexual relations. Sex is something which God has created for humans to enjoy in its proper context of marriage.¹²⁵ Yet, sex is not the most important focus of marriage:

This means, on the one hand, that sexual union in marriage is beautiful and honourable (Hebrews 13:4), and on the other hand, that sexual gratification was not designed as an end in itself.¹²⁶

Sex was designed by God to be the bonding element of a lifelong commitment between husbands and wives. Nevertheless, sexual problems can place a heavy strain on a marriage. Conversely, unresolved marital problems and lingering anger, bitterness and jealousy can adversely affect a couple's sex life.

Marriage counsellors state that there are five main reasons or problems why marriages fail:

1. Money

¹²³Dwight Small, *Design For Christian Marriage* (Old Tappan, NJ: F.H. Revell Co., 1959), p. 26.

¹²⁴F. Philip Rice, *Sexual Problems In Marriage: Help From a Christian Counsellor* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1978)

¹²⁵"Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of your youth. As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; be exhilarated always with her love." [emphasis mine] (Proverbs 5:18-19)

¹²⁶Edwin M. Yamauchi, "Cultural Aspects of Marriage in the Ancient World," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July 9, 1978, p. 249.

2. Communication
3. Sex
4. Children
5. Nagging

Some Common Sexual Problems

The following provide a broad overview of the types of sexual problems that can overshadow a marriage which can be common to both husbands and wives:

- fear of failure, demand for performance and fear of rejection are prime causes of sexual anxiety: all stem from lack of trust and noncommitted relationships
- sexual therapists agree that one of the greatest causes of sexual maladjustment is the unwillingness of sexual partners to take time giving pleasure to each other
- low sexual drive among both females and males
- emphasis on orgasm rather than on love, compassion and shared pleasure
- insecurity
- differences in desired frequency of sexual relations

Note: "Why my husband is so oversexed he would insist on making love to me at least twice a month if I'd let him!"

- uncomfotability
- lack of knowledge
- guilt, stemming from participating in pre-marital sex

- fear of physical or emotional injury

Causes of Sexual Problems

The causes of the above problems usually stem from one of the following:

1. Ignorance
2. Inadequate stimulation
3. Psychological blocks
4. Negative feelings towards your partner
5. Physical causes
6. Alcohol and drugs

Multiple, Interrelated Problems

An analysis of 1,412 help-request letters sent to the American Association of Marriage Counsellors revealed that there is a close relationship between sexual adjustment and other aspects of marriage:

1. *Affectional Relations*

Affectional problems manifest themselves through comments such as "cold and unaffectionate," "flirts with other men," "my wife is overly-jealous," and "I have no feelings for my wife."

2. *Sexual Relations*

Marital difficulties stemming from sexual problems manifest themselves in the following comments: "we don't have sex very often," "we have sex too much," "my wife is frigid" or "my husband never hugs me except when he wants sex."

3. *Personality Relations*

Marital personality problems are revealed through expressions such as "my wife nags me," "my husband is so irresponsible," "my husband has a violent temper," "she's so withdrawn and moody," "he's quarrelsome," and "she's domineering."¹²⁷

When counselling someone with sexual problems, determine if there are any relational problems such as:

- anger
- fear
- jealousy
- worry
- guilt
- suspicion
- resentment
- fatigue

Sometimes, sexual problems can cause marital discord; many times, marital difficulties precede sexual problems. As a counsellor, try to pinpoint the perceptions, problems and emotions of each spouse.

Resolving Sexual Problems

The following three-step process can help couples resolve sexual problems.

¹²⁷ James E. DeBurger, "Marital Problems, Help-Seeking and Emotional Orientation as Revealed in Help-Request Letters," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 29 (November 1967):712-721.

1. *Honesty*

Put your problems on the table and discuss the issues rather than focusing on personal attacks on each other.

2. *Gain Insight*

Discover the "root" problem rather than dwelling on "little things" or quirks such as "you never put the cap on the toothpaste." Don't let "the sun go down upon your wrath."¹²⁸ Don't go to bed angry and "stewing" over an unresolved argument or disagreement.

3. *Self-Sacrifice*

Put your pride and ego where it belongs -- out of sight. Be willing to make adjustments, and be self-sacrificing for happiness of your spouse. Love is the overriding principle. The greatest paradox of love is that "it is more blessed to give than it is to receive."¹²⁹

Do Not Deprive Each Other

The Apostle Paul argues that couples can manipulate each other through sex. He categorically states that this type of behaviour is wrong:

"The husband should fulfil his marital duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent for a time, so that they may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of selfcontrol." [emphasis mine]

(1 Corinthians 7:3-5)

The Implications of Paul's Instruction In 1 Corinthians 7:3-5

- Fellowship with God is endangered when you deprive your mate which the Bible describes as a duty or obligation to fulfil each other
- Your relationship can be either damaged or ruined
- You may tempt your mate to adultery through the ensuing anger and frustration of rejecting his/her sexual initiatives

¹²⁸Ephesians 4:26

¹²⁹ Acts 20:35

These are some of the illicit motives couples use for sex:

1. Sex is often permitted as a marital duty.
2. It is offered to repay or secure a favour.
3. It represents conquest or victory.
4. It stands as a substitute for verbal communication.
5. It is used to overcome feelings of inferiority.
6. It is an enticement for emotional love.
7. It is a defense against anxiety and tension.
8. It is provided or withheld to manipulate partner.
9. It is engaged in for purposes of bragging.

Dr. David Hernandez, obstetrician and gynaecologist from the School of Medicine, USC and Loma Linda University

Each spouse must not view their body as their own, but must attend to the sexual needs of each other as part of fulfilling their conjugal duties. This principle is also espoused in the Old Testament:

"If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage [Hebrew "onatah" means conjugal rights], shall he not diminish."

(Exodus 21:10)

Although this passage is given in the context of a slave girl, Jewish rabbis expanded it to include relations between a husband and a wife. In Judaism, regular sex is a woman's right and a man's duty, contrary to the Western mind set that regular sex is a man's right and a woman's duty.¹³⁰

Vulnerability

Jews believed that the Hebrew phrase "uncovering nakedness" ("gilui arayot") was a broad term which applied to a variety of forbidden sexual relations, especially incest, homosexuality and adultery. Sexual intercourse was reserved for their spouses because of the vulnerability and intimacy between two naked people:

Very simply, it means making a person completely vulnerable, and then not taking care of them in their nakedness.

There is, I think, a powerful lesson for us in these words: know that when you have sex, you are uncovering the most private, most fragile part of your body and your soul. Do you trust this person with your soul's soft spot? Do you trust yourself with theirs? If not, our sacred

¹³⁰Rabbi Michael Gold, Does God Belong In the Bedroom? (Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 1992), p. 74.

language tells us, leave it covered.¹³¹

Healthy, Happy Marriages

Obedience to God's ways brings a "blessed" state, and this is certainly true in the realm of marriage. A healthy marriage and sex life can improve your health:

The new evidence linking health to marriage and family life is voluminous. Writing recently in *Social Science and Medicine*, Catherine Riessman and Naomi Gerstel note that one of the most consistent observations in health research is that married people enjoy better health than those of other marital statuses! Drs. Riessman and Gerstel note that compared with married men and women, the divorced, single, and separated suffer much higher rates of disease, morbidity, disability, mental neuroses, and mortality.... [the article then quoted Peggy Thoits of Indiana University] Married persons have significantly lower anxiety and depression scores than unmarried persons, regardless of gender. Dr. Thoits notes that the married appear to enjoy better mental health even when they have experienced more potentially traumatic experiences than the unmarried.

The Saturday Evening Post, January/February 1990

Rabbi David Feldman points out why sex is confined only to married people:

"Marriage is an institution to protect the partners from the uncertainties of changing moods and the lure of competing claims on their affections. Marriage thus prevents the ultimate human relationship from being trivialized; it does the same for sex itself. The holy and essentially human character of the sexual relationship obtains when the sexual is part of an umbrella of relationships -- physical, emotional, social. Being the most intimate, the sexual is reserved for the most total of relationships."¹³²

"One Flesh": "Be Ye Not Unequally Yoked"

In 1975, William Masters and Virginia Johnson revealed the results of their study which indicated that satisfying sex was contingent on a satisfying relationship between each spouse based on common values and interests.¹³³

¹³¹ Sharon Cohen, "Homosexuality and a Jewish Sex Ethic," *Reconstructionist* 56, 8 (July-August 1989):15-16.

¹³² David Feldman, Conservative Rabbi, "Sex and Sexuality," in *The Second Jewish Catalog*, edited by Sharon and Michael Strassfeld (Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 1976), p. 95.

¹³³ William H. Master and Virginia E. Johnson, *The Pleasure Bond* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Co., 1975)

- "Sexual response represents interaction between people.... Sex removed from the positive influence of the total personality can become boring, unstimulating, and possibly immaterial."¹³⁴
- unless couple share outside interests and values and are not linked by emotional bond outside physical relationship, "sexual functioning is not sufficient in itself to establish enduring friendships."¹³⁵

In 1970, *Redbook* conducted one of the most comprehensive sex surveys ever. It published the results of its "Sexual Pleasure" survey of 100,000 women and concluded:

- "sexual satisfaction is related significantly to religious belief. With notable consistency, the greater the intensity of a woman's religious convictions, the likelier she is to be highly satisfied with the sexual pleasures of marriage."

The Law of Family Purity

Once a month, some Jewish women still observe the "mikvah" (lit. "ritual bath"). A Jewish couple will abstain from sexual relations for about 10 days before this, and relate to each other as friends, partners and confidants -- not lovers. During "mikvah," the woman totally immerses herself and cleanses herself -- before which she removes all her make up, washes her hair, trims her nails, and takes off her jewelry. The Jews relate this ritual back to Temple worship preparations (Leviticus 11 - 15) as part of the process of becoming "tahor" ("clean"). A woman was declared "unclean" ("tamei") during her menstrual period, and the period lasted seven days (Leviticus 15:19). Thus, the "mikvah" was considered to be like a second honeymoon for Jewish couples each month.

Men and Women: "We're Different!"

The Apostle Peter states that wives are the "weaker vessel."¹³⁶ The word "weaker" (Greek is "asthenes") denotes weakness or feebleness. The Hebrew word for "woman" comes from a primary root word which means "to be soft".

Women are physically weaker than men. On average, a man's strength is 50 percent greater than a woman's. Generally speaking, women have a lower metabolism than men. In addition, women have 20 percent fewer red blood cells than men, which explains why women tend to fatigue earlier than men.

¹³⁴Henry A. Bowman and Graham B. Spanier, *Modern Marriage* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1978), p. 255.

¹³⁵*Ibid*, p. 255.

¹³⁶1 Peter 3:7

However, women have a greater constitutional vitality, which explains why they outlive men by three to four years on average.

Men and women are different biochemically, anatomically and emotionally. The evidence seems to indicate that the hypothalamic region of the brain (seat of emotions) is "wired" differently for each sex.

For instance, women's sexual desires tend to be more cyclical, and closely correlated with their menstrual cycle, than is the male sexual drive. In most instances in nature, male species tend to have a stronger sex drive. Typically, men tend to be more sexually aggressive during the first 10 years of marriage, but women's sex drive actually increases the older they get while men's sex drive decreases with age. The Apostle Paul implores us to be moderate, and it would seem that this principle would also apply in this area too.

Men and women also differ sexually in the area of arousal:

- Women are stimulated more by touch
- Men are stimulated more by sight

If you are unsure of what is expeditious sex behaviour, follow Paul's advice in Romans.

"And he that doubteth is damned if he eat [participate], because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Romans 14:23)

Translation: If you're not sure that this or any behaviour is acceptable to God, don't do it!

As the Apostle Peter wrote, men should "dwell" with their wives with "knowledge." It's important that both men and women understand the psychological differences between the sexes. As the great poet J.B. Yeats wrote:

"I think a man and a woman should choose each other for life for the simple reason that a long life is barely enough for a man and woman to understand each other; and to understand is to love."

For example, women need a constant dose of self-esteem from their husbands:

"If I could write a prescription for the women of the world, I would provide each with a healthy dose of self-esteem and personal worth (taken three times a day until the symptoms disappear). I have no doubt that this is their greatest need If women felt genuinely respected in their role as wives and mothers, they would not need to abandon it for something better. If they felt *equal* with men in personal worth, they would not need to be equivalent to men in responsibility. If they could only bask in the dignity and status granted them by the Creator, then their femininity would be valued as their greatest asset, rather than scorned as an old garment to be discarded. Without question, the future of a nation depends on how it sees its

women, and I hope we will teach our little girls to be glad they were chosen by God for the special pleasures of womanhood."¹³⁷

Joyce Landorf, *The Fragrance of Beauty*

Menopause: The Change of Life

A husband's understanding of his wife will help him empathize with his wife as she undergoes some biological changes in the later years of her life. A woman's menstruation cycle usually ends between ages 45 and 55. One of the physiological changes is the reduction of estrogen hormones produced by the ovaries. This can effect a woman's sexual drive or desire.

Estrogen hormones are essential for normal female sexual development and for the healthy functioning of the reproductive system. In women, they are produced mainly in the ovaries. Estrogen hormones are also formed in the placenta during pregnancy.

Some women suffer from estrogen deprivation, especially as they get older. The emotional symptoms of estrogen deprivation include:

1. Extreme depression
2. Very low self-esteem
3. Very low frustration tolerance, easily prone to bouts of temper
4. Inappropriate emotional responses, e.g., crying when things aren't sad and depressed when things are pretty good
5. Low tolerance to noise
6. Great need for proof of love
7. Irregular sleep patterns
8. Inability to concentrate and difficulty remembering
9. Loss of interest in sex
10. Anxiety

There are also some physical symptoms of estrogen deprivation which include:

1. Gastrointestinal disorders
2. Periodic "hot flashes" (70% of all women experience these night sweats)
3. Vertigo (dizziness)
4. Constipation
5. Trembling
6. Hands and feet often "go to sleep"
7. Dry skin
8. Dryness of mucous membranes, especially in the vaginal area (20%)
9. Greatly reduced libido

¹³⁷Joyce Landorf, *The Fragrance of Beauty* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1973)

10. Arthritic pain in joints
11. Racing heartbeat
12. Headaches
13. Dark, gloomy circles around the eyes
14. Loss of weight
15. "urethral syndrome" (feel the need to empty her bladder frequently)

Marital Sex: Blessed By God

The writer to the Hebrews, stated that, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled." (Hebrews 13:4) The Greek word for "bed" is "koite" (pronounced koy'tay) meaning "cohabitation by implanting the male sperm." It comes from the root Greek word "keimai" which means "to lie." It's actually from this Greek word that we get the clinical term for sexual intercourse -- "coitus." Therefore, the writer noted that marital sexual intercourse is "undefiled," that is, not sinful nor "dirty." This attitude is perhaps best epitomized in the Old Testament book entitled the Song of Solomon.

The Biblical Love Story: The Song of Solomon

"Love is strong as death, Its flashes are flashes of fire, a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love."

(Song of Solomon 8:6-7)

The Song of Solomon is the Old Testament equivalent of Ephesians 5. It provides the basis for Paul's allegory. Like all allegories, the "figurative" is based on the literal or the natural.

This story ranks as one of the most passionate love stories of all-time. We shy away from this book because it appears to be too "erotic." Or else we completely allegorize the book. The Song of Solomon has some very good tips on resolving marital or sexual problems as well as strengthening marriages.

The women mentioned in the Song of Solomon is Shulamith. It's the feminine form of Solomon, i.e., Mrs. Solomon.

Setting

Shulamith was a country girl who was chastely brought up. She was required by her step-brothers to work in the vineyards to darken her skin. Because of her rank and occupation and physical appearance, she felt inferior.

Their love began under a tree. It's here that Solomon woos her and wins her. She says of Solomon, "My beloved is mine and I am his." (Song of Solomon 2:16)

How To Build Your Wife Up

Solomon makes her his queen, and builds up her self-image in the meantime. Interestingly, Solomon

praises her, especially in the areas where she felt most insecure.

Solomon desires her company and opinion -- a good model for a successful marriage -- "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is lovely." (Song of Solomon 2:14)

Solomon complimented her physical beauty; in addition, he complimented her character in specific areas. He compared her to all other women to assure that she was better than the rest.

The Model For Overcoming Marital Sexual Difficulties

What transpires in the book provides a good case study of how to overcome marital problems: Chapter 3:

wedding procession

Chapter 4: wedding night of the bride and groom

Chapter 5: joyous words of groom after consummating their marriage

It's here in chapter 5, after their marriage has been consummated, that a third voice interjects:

"Eat, O loved ones; drink and be drunk, O lovers" (Song of Solomon 5:1)

Presumably, this voice is God's. It is He who sanctions and blesses their marriage in its totality, as the writer to the Hebrews put it, "Marriage is honourable and the bed undefiled."

The language in the book indicates that they took great pleasure in their physical love one for another:

- "For your love is better than wine." (Song of Solomon 1:2) Note: Hebrew for "love" is "dodem" and often refers to sexual love.¹³⁸
- "To me, my darling, you are like my mare among the chariots of Pharaoh." (Song of Solomon 1:9)

Note: Hebrew for "my darling" is "vaghah" and has twofold meaning: (1) "to guard, to care for" and (2) "to take delight in having sexual intercourse with."¹³⁹

¹³⁸ Franz Delitzsch, *The Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, n.d.), p. 20.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 32.

- "Let his left hand be under my head and his right hand embrace me." (Song of Solomon 2:6)

Note: Hebrew for "embrace" means "stimulate sexually, or fondle."¹⁴⁰

Solomon never criticized Shulamith, and publicly showed his adoration to her before everyone by way of a royal banquet. He proudly states of Shulamith: "This is my lover, this my friend."¹⁴¹ Later in *their relationship, she says, "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine."*¹⁴² Notice the reversal of order between this and Song of Solomon 2:16. She seems to be saying that his possession of her was more important than anything.

As the book progresses, they experience marriage difficulties; namely, Solomon didn't get home on time. She wouldn't open her bedroom door to let him in nor was she ready to see him. His response is atypical. He doesn't confront the situation, but lets her "cool off." Rather, he left a gift at her door -- a gift of rare perfume.

After she cools off, she realizes that she acted incorrectly, and she goes out to look for him. They make up, and they embrace as he repeats the same words from their wedding night to the effect, "I love you just as much as ever."

Shulamith learned to adjust to her husband's occupation. She states that, "I am my beloved's and his desire is toward me" (Song of Solomon 7:10). This is the same word for "desire" as is used in Genesis 3:16. Their desire is mutual.

As the story continues, she lost herself in the greatness of his love. Their romance increased throughout their marriage. Not surprisingly, their physical relationship became better, nourishing their entire relationship. This book epitomizes biblical sexuality – it is love in arena of safety, security and *significance. Solomon's last words were "Let me hear your voice."*¹⁴³

Resources

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¹⁴⁰Ibid, p. 49.

¹⁴¹Song of

Solomon 5:16

¹⁴²Song of

Solomon 6:3

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