

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)