

ABSTINENCE: SACRIFICE OR SACRAMENT?

Many people I know, including the "old" me, would automatically rule out true Christianity because of one law. Abstinence before marriage and fidelity after marriage is the Christian way to live. This would seem to be an enormous sacrifice to non-believers for they can't believe it can be done. Believers, on the other hand, know that through Christ all can be accomplished. The ability to *want* to abstain, especially in this day and age, is a true miracle. Only Jesus can take a man's lusts and turn them into desire for what is good. Money, sex, and power are not evil. God made these things good and useful to us, while Satan, through man, corrupted them. God created and Satan counterfeited. Counterfeiting is an art because it takes the truth and adds an undetected lie to it. This makes it difficult to distinguish between the original and the parody. Satan, through man, takes what God made to be good *for* us and makes them addicting *to* us. False Gods are being praised due to the influencing of man, by Satan, to lust after these otherwise good things.

Sex is supposed to be a sign of *love* between two married people. *Love* is the desire to satisfy someone else at your own expense. Sex outside of marriage is a sign of *lust*. *Lust* is the desire to satisfy yourself, at someone else's expense. Society lies to the young people in the world, who are being directly affected by pre-marital sex. The age of M.T.V. stands for Man Targeting the Vulnerable. Sexually explicit movies, videos, music, television shows and commercials, are loaded with lies. These are all vehicles carrying the wrong message to our youth. It would be bad enough if the message they were portraying was that "any sex is O.K.", but the message they are sending is "you're not O.K. if you are not sexually active". Every conceivable product on the market is advertised to the youth as to somehow increase their attractiveness to the opposite sex. Pornography is directly marketed towards eleven year olds. Why do you think that the Playboy Channel is now on 24 hours a day? I feel that it *MIGHT* be so that kids can watch it while mom and dad are not around during the day. They are trying to "hook" these kids in to the lusting of sex, early on in life, so that when they do have money to spend, guess what? The pornography and prostitution industries are extremely profitable. We live in a society where the prostitutes can live in Penthouses, while our teachers live in shacks. Sex makes money because it is so addictive. People are hooked on watching, participating, fantasizing.. all of it! It's all about money. Sex sells in advertising and in marketing. Sexual disease and abortion clinics make a fortune. Parents don't even know that their kids have diseases or abortions. In our society, the parent doesn't even have the right to know if their kid is having an abortion or going to the "free clinic". Please remember that these "free" clinics are paid for with our tax dollars. The cost to the people is staggering. This money could be used in much better ways, if we didn't have these *problems*. The real word to use here is *sin*.

Society would have us believe that the youth is going to practice sex, regardless of what we teach them, so we should at least make it safe. So we hand out condoms to teen-agers, like they should already be addicted to sex. This is not like giving clean needles to heroine addicts, it's like giving clean needles to everyone and expecting them to be used. First of all, there is no such thing as "safe sex". The aids virus is 80% smaller than the microscopic holes found in the latex used to make the "safest" condoms available. And condoms can't possibly stop the diseases or viruses that spread from the outside. Herpes, syphilis and crabs are just a few that we know of so far. One out of every four in America will get a sexually transmitted disease this year, and of those, 66% will be 25 years old or younger. As far as unwanted pregnancies are concerned, condoms have failed over 30% of the time for the people who relied on them the most, young men and women under the age of 25. I know of many people who got pregnant while using a condom and a diaphragm at the same time. If pregnancies could be stopped by man, it would have been done already. But since abortions are at an all time high, well over a million a year, it is safe to say that it can't be done. All of these statistics were gathered by the A.C. Green foundation for Youth and the Center for Disease Control. The only statistics that we couldn't acquire were the hazards that pre-marital sex has that were not physical. Broken hearts and shattered dreams were not counted in this data. The countless number of young ladies who quit school to support a child alone, were not recorded. The pain or regret that these people feel can't be measured by numbers. These, figures and non-figures, plainly show that abstinence is the only method that should be used to control unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

I know of "good" people who believe in God and want to know why their prayers haven't been answered. I am always wondering how we know that God hears our prayers. God hears all prayers and

answers the prayers of His people. I feel that if God is going to help us, we have to be willing to help ourselves. We help ourselves by praying, reading His Word, and trying to keep His commandments. I can't see God answering the prayers of someone who is living in sin and does not repent. How can God make life easier for us if we make it harder on ourselves. I always ask these "good" people if they are keeping God's laws. The response is almost always, "Yeah, except for one little thing". They always have a girlfriend or boyfriend that they *love*, or once in a while they bring a person home, or maybe they like the Playboy channel. To put it bluntly, they are engaging in sexual affairs with other people outside of marriage or with themselves. This is not a "little thing". It causes nations to crumble (1 Corinthians 10:8), and angers God (Numbers 25:3). The sin of sexual immorality is always the first sin mentioned on the lists of sins in the Bible that God looks bad upon (Romans 1:24). How can this be a "little thing" when you look at all of the huge problems it causes. Teen-age pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and *lust*.

Teen-age pregnancies lead to abortion, or murder, whichever you prefer to call it. It also leads to fatherless families, whose children are responsible for 70% of the crime in America today. There is also a monetary cost to the people of this country for providing care for these families. The value of human life and the value of life itself has been reduced dramatically. From the irresponsibility of young America's *lust* for pre-marital sex, we get poverty, crime, murder, pain, regret, alienation, suffering, and suicide. What do you think we would get if the young American's *loved* God, instead. Sexually transmitted diseases lead to death for the infected, sadness and suffering for the friends and families of the infected, and another big bill to society. Among the costs are pain, regret, alienation, suffering, suicide.....sound familiar. There is also an added hazard of the diseases that sex may cause; the spreading to innocent people. Lust leads to the downfall of mankind. Sex becomes our God. We worship pornography, masturbation and sex become our prayers, rape, homosexuality, and prostitution become our good deeds. They all go hand in hand and are started by "one little thing". Just as our immoral body's are controlled, so is our world controlled, by "one little thing".

One of my "intellectual" friends explained to me that the Bible was written for the times. "Back then", he said "they had no ways of preventing pregnancies or diseases. They weren't as technologically advanced as we are". He went on to say, "They had a fear in God because they felt that God would punish them greatly when they sinned. Sex before marriage was against the law, back then, and sometimes punishable by death. Society didn't permit sexually immorality for they thought the whole town would suffer from the wrath of God". So after I woke him up from his apparent "dream", I informed him that it is still against the law. God's law has not been changed, and His law is the only one that counts. We have no cure for AIDS and the cure we thought we had for syphilis is not potent enough anymore. It seems that the more immoral we become as society, the more powerful the diseases become. The diseases of today are laughing at penicillin and all of our so called "cures". The farther we stray from God, the more trouble we get ourselves into. As for preventing pregnancies and diseases, I gave him the facts from the first page of this writing. Bottom line: We have no protection against, or cure for, our own stupidity. I look at sex like it is a fire. God gave us fire to cook our food, heat our homes, melt our resources to form useful tools, and kill germs by sterilization. God also gave us sex to enjoy and find pleasure in one another and to reproduce. God gave us laws to follow when using sex just like God, through nature, gave us laws to follow when using fire. Sex and fire, when used outside His laws, are deadly. Fire produces deadly gases when it burns, so we must use proper ventilation when we heat our homes. Sex produces deadly reactions throughout society when it burns immorally. God gave us the proper way to "ventilate" this "fire". Abstain from sex until you are married, and be faithful once you are married. When we try to edit God's laws, to suit our "needs", we suffer greatly, just like back then. BACK THEN is NOW.

In light of all of this, is abstinence really a sacrifice? Whether or not abstinence is for you is not the question. Abstinence *is* for everyone. The question is, "Will you choose it"? This is the toughest and the most important decision that we, as young people, can make. It means "giving up" something that we enjoy. It may also cost us our relationships with people that we have grown to like or "love". It is saying "No" to a major part of our life that we liked saying "Yes" to. This decision can make a tremendous impact on the world as we know it and, at the same time, can alienate us from our friends. Not everyone is going to understand or accept it. You will constantly be tempted. It was hard for me. I own a nightclub and am surrounded by temptation all the time. I sometimes run from the temptation and sometimes I stand firm with faith in God and with knowledge that I am doing what He wants me ~~to do~~.

This gives me all the courage I need to stand "alone", if I have to. Think about all the times we go with the crowd and do something that we really don't want to do. The real heroes of the world are the ones who say "No" to what they know to be wrong in God's eyes. I had my problems with being promiscuous. I've done many things that I wish I never did. I woke up before it was too late. The truth of the matter is that it is never too late and it is always the right time to change. The decision will be easy and the road will be a little difficult. We will probably start out on the road alone. The greatest people in American history started alone. They all started with a major decision in their lives that went against popular opinion. Lincoln against slavery, King against segregation, Jefferson against the improper taxing by mother England. These people started out alone and ended up causing major revolutions with the victorious results of improvement in the way America lives and thinks. These heroes weren't really alone, they had God on their side. This country was founded on a trust in God. If we truly trust God, we can live right in a world living wrong. We can start off alone and change the way America thinks. Through faith in God nations can crumble and souls can be saved. Your small decision can change the entire world. Abstinence is NOT a sacrifice. It is the choice you make to receive a blessing from God instead of a judgment. Either you are a slave to sin or a slave to righteousness. Either you serve yourself or you serve God. Don't you think we have been serving ourselves long enough?