Looking For Love?
DON'T MISS HEAVEN ON EARTH

There is a story about a warrior who was captured in battle. He and his wife and two sons were taken before the king. In those days the wife was the special prize of the conqueror. In the dazzling elegance of the throne room the captive was questioned as to what he would do if allowed to go free. He assured the king that he would serve him faithfully. In exchange for the lives of his sons he would raise an army and fight for the king. But when asked what he would do if his wife were released to him, he replied, “I would die for you.” The king was impressed by the young man and allowed him and his family to return home.

The man had noted well the gold and marble and tapestries of the king’s court. But as they talked about it the wife had seen none of it. She said, “I saw only the lace of the one who said he would die for me.”

Take time right now to sit down and consider what you want in your life. Most young people hope to marry and have homes of their own. Have you considered what kind of home you want? Do you dare hope that you will find a mate who will love you with utter abandonment of self? Are you prepared yourself to abandon selfish interests, even life itself, for the one with whom you hope to share your life and your home?

Why do so many people run headlong into situations which will mar their chances of having a happy stable married life? Shall we look at some of these reasons?

1. For some people this is a way of life. This is the pattern in their parents, grandparents and other relatives. They seem to take it for granted that this is the way to go. On the other hand are some in the same culture who have a vision and a desire for something better and are striving for it.

2. The mass media would have us think sex is an end in itself and everyone is doing it. Yet some sociological studies reported in the Journal of the AMA from a number of liberal colleges, would indicate otherwise.

3. Education has not stemmed the tide but rather swept it along. Many years ago a physician stated it did not take sex education to teach a student to be modest. The sex educators with their very graphic and explicit demonstrations of how it is done, plus their sensitivity groups, must bear some blame. Further, morality cannot be separated from religion and the lawyers and educators have sought to remove religion from the schools. In so doing they have...
removed the idea of any ultimate authority to whom they must answer. So, they say, why not do their "thing," even if it kills them.

4. Peer pressure and the drug scene have contributed. Drugs and alcohol are accompanied by loss of judgment, irresponsibility, and a search for sexual fulfillment through the drug use. Ironically they often find they are unable to accomplish the act because of the drug or use of alcohol.

5. It is reasonable to see how social maladjustment contributes to the problem. Some people, young and old, feel that sexual intimacies might satisfy a hunger for love and affection. Perhaps this is a major reason why anyone starts down the road. If they have no home where they receive love and affection, this offer of "love," however shallow, may look better than what they have.

6. Some girls use sex to trap a fellow or to force a marriage through pregnancy in order to get away from the parental roof. A very high percentage of these marriages ends in divorce.

7. Permissive society and the lack of self-denial and discipline several decades ago produced the "I want what I want when I want it" generation. When they want sex, they go after it and get it. Why deny self? But this was never love.

8. A queer lethargy has taken over many young people. They will not respond to the warnings of parents in particular or society in general; nothing scares them. They do not listen to the warnings from Scripture or from their elders, in regard to sexual sins.

I would like to hold out to thinking young people a very personal reward that comes from restraint. The reward is that restraint leads to intensity of the experience in marriage. There the self-giving and glad abandonment, which really unites the body and emotions, is reinforced, strengthened, deepened, and sustained by repeated acts of unity which are an expression of the love which the couple shares. There then is where the dreams come true, the needs are met and living comes alive through the years. This is a very strong plus in place of so many minuses.

Every manufacturer supplies with his product a manual. The owner, following the manual, hopes for good performances and pleasure in the use of the product. People are created in the image of God and He has given us a Book to follow, for our good always. If we flout the rules we cannot expect to have the life that is meant for us. If you really want the most and best out of life, you start by fol-
lowing the rules day by day so that when you are ready to establish a home, you come as a strong, loving, tender, upright person with nothing in your past to mar the heaven on earth that marriage can be. I am not talking only about your courtship, or your wedding night, or your first anniversary, but also about your twenty-fifth and your fiftieth anniversary and all the living in the years between. If this sounds dull and boring, consider the alternative and its results.

The alternative to premarital chastity will be discussed under four headings: Medical, Psychological, Sociological, and Spiritual.

A. MEDICAL

1. Pregnancy. There is no safe contraceptive outside of abstinence. The rate of illegitimate births is rising three times as fast as the general birth rate. Dr. Marion Powell labels pregnancy as the leading reason that teenage girls drop out of school. In 1972 in New York City alone, from the seventh and eighth grades, 3000 girls dropped out of school because of pregnancy. These girls were not all from the ghetto. It is amazing how little is done by teenagers to prevent pregnancy, though half of them feel it is immoral to bring unwanted babies into the world. The result is a great number of abortions. Estimates range from 200,000 to 1 million abortions annually, with devastating damage to the mind, heart, body, and emotions of a young girl-mother.

It is estimated that one bride in six is already pregnant on her wedding day. The prospects for happiness under these circumstances are statistically rather dim. The new life deserves a father, a mother, a home, lifelong security, love and affection, and direction which will make him or her a decent, stable member of the human race. Yet of marriages motivated primarily by pregnancy a high percentage end in divorce in four years. Pregnancy in college is usually a seriously if not disastrously disruptive event. Education frequently is curtailed, income limited, bright hopes for the future drastically altered.

I am amazed at some of the answers I receive when I ask a pregnant girl why she exposed herself. "I thought it would never happen to me." "I was just curious." "I thought just once wouldn't hurt." "He said I could trust him." "It is only human to experiment." "I wanted to get back at my father." These answers come from girls who were pregnant, who had come for marriage counseling, who were divorced, etc. I do not doubt there are those who do experiment and get along but I can see a lot of seamy sides.

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2. Venereal Disease. While the pill may prevent pregnancy, it does not prevent venereal disease, the second deterrent to promiscuity. Yet many who are engaged in premarital sex deny promiscuity. "I've not been sleeping with anyone else while I've been sleeping with him, the past six months." The Public Health Service, which investigates reported cases of VD and the contacts, reported one case in which the girl thought she was sleeping with only one partner. However, that one was sleeping with one other who in turn had five sexual partners and through them there were 19 contacts. Eventually it reached 92 people! So VD has become epidemic in spite of our advanced skills and knowledge. Gonorrhea and syphilis rank second and third among communicable diseases in U.S. Over 4000 die every year from venereal disease.

Another frightening fact is that gonorrhea and syphilis have become resistant to our usual forms of treatment. The Vietnamese strain of gonorrhea is very devastating to both male and female and almost impossible to cure, even with multiple drugs. Further, one infection does not confer immunity against future infections and as yet there is no vaccine available.

The only way VD is contracted is through sexual intercourse. The symptoms of gonorrhea in the male are a burning on urination and pus from the genital organ. In the female there is often very little discomfort so she can readily pass it on unknowingly. Later the infection results in damage to the glands and sex organs with resulting sterility. Pain in the joints is also a late symptom. Many babies are blinded at birth in nations where routine treatment of all newborn eyes is not a law.

Syphilis produces an ulcer on the cervix or in the rectum or mouth. If on the cervix, it may go undetected for some time. A secondary rash sometimes appears, which means the bloodstream is full of spirochetes. The hair may fall out in patches. Much later symptoms may be blindness, insanity, heart disease, bone disease, and death. If caught in time, the disease can be cured but the damage to the body can never be repaired. Among the untreated, 1 in 200 goes blind, 1 in 50 goes insane, 1 in 25 becomes crippled and 1 in 15 has heart trouble.

The destruction of brain cells can occur from eight to ten years after the original disease. The American Social Health Association estimates that close to one million people in the U.S. are walking around with latent syphilis. These are the ones who turn up with the symptoms years later.

There is a mistaken notion that restraint is not healthy. An Army chaplain giving a talk to soldiers stated that it was the educated
opinion of 300 doctors: "Continen ce has not been shown to be detrimental to health or inconsistent with the highest physical, mental, and moral efficiency." C. S. Lewis writes: "Surrender to all our desires leads to impotence, diseases, jealousy, lies, concealment, and every thing the reverse of health, good humor, and frankness."

B. PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS

Dr. Hornell Hart working in sociological re- search sums up the alternative in this area. He states, "There is evidence that premarital and extra marital sex experience bring heavy risks of broken friendships, unforgettable regrets, shattered careers, unsatisfied restlessness, hideous disease, racial contempt, disintegrating personalities and loss of deepest and finest love values." The physiological aspect of love cannot be separated from the emotional and psychological concomitants without reducing it to meaninglessness. Sexual intercourse is not like other body functions such as eating because there is another person involved and thus there is an emotional attachment as well as the physical. Girls need to ask themselves, Why am I doing this? What do I want from him? What does he want from me? Am I doing this to express myself and my feelings or am I betray- ing myself to buy popularity, future dates, etc.?

Betraying oneself always leads away from per- sonal integration and this comes at a price.

Not only is there a loss of true love values but there are inherent in our make-up guilt feel- ings, apart from religious convictions. The sense of guilt is as necessary as pain to keep us from getting hurt. These guilt feelings carry into later life. They affect the attitude toward self, the prospects for future marriage and the sub- sequent relations between husband and wife. If there is a child involved, he is apt to face a life of rejection, and this may add to the mother's or father's guilt feelings. What can a girl possibly gain by giving herself before mar- riage? She may not get pregnant, she may not get a venereal disease. But also she does not gain popularity; she does not enhance her own personality; she does not gain the respect of the boy, or love or security. Nor can she hope for greater happiness. Mental happiness pro- duces good sexual adjustment, not the reverse. In a report in the AMA JOURNAL, 40 psyc hia- trists were polled. Of the sick and insecure co- eds treated, 80% were non-virgins, 75% with multiple partners. They found the neurotic per- sonalities more apt to be promiscuous. Among the more stable patients, a premarital sexual experience was enough trauma to bring them to a psychiatrist. Some studies done at Har- vard showed those who practiced pre-marital
sex, to have less self-esteem than those who did not. There is more and more scientific evidence that those who are least intimate before marriage have the best chance of happiness in marriage.

We must also consider the trauma to the psyche of the pregnant girl. Giving up a child is not easy; abortion has its special emotional conflicts; and being thrust suddenly from childhood to adulthood when she is not psychologically ready is fearful. I cannot forget a 19 year old girl who was on her third marriage. She was rebelling against her parents but was not mature enough to establish any meaningful relationship with one individual. With each divorce she was becoming more disillusioned, more resentful, more bitter, and more immature.

C. SOCIOLOGICAL

All societies have rules for sexual behavior. Only within the family, within a body of recognized and accepted rules, can the duties of parents to children be regulated from one generation to the next. If reproduction as a mere biological event were sanctioned, society could not be maintained. Sex outside of marriage involves exploitation and when we destroy another for the sake of self-gratification which lasts for a moment, we destroy ourselves. Each time we violate the rules laid down by our Creator, our community and our nation deteriorate.

The Rt. Rev. Msgr. Jn. J. Cleary, in SEX AND CULTURE, concludes that “Any human society is free to choose to display great energy or to enjoy sexual freedom. The evidence is that it cannot do both for more than one generation.” A woman’s inhibition is inborn and part of culture’s stability.

Many argue that premarital sex is all right as long as no one gets hurt. But who is to judge the depth and extent of the hurt? Certainly not those swept away by a momentary emotion. Irresponsible behavior does hurt society. It hurts the parties involved, the child, the parents, friends and relatives, and all those make up society. You are society. Free sex is not free but is destructive of self, of family, and of the nation. You cannot marry another in a motel room alone. It is not a private affair but requires responsibility, public registration, and for society’s sake, matters of health and property rights must be considered.

D. THE SPIRITUAL

The Ten Commandments are the very best mental hygiene code. Right between the injunctions, “You must not kill” and “You must not steal” is the one, “You must not engage in sexual activity outside of the marriage rela-
tionship.” The restraints of God’s Guide Book are meant for man’s maximum pleasure. They teach us what we are like and guide us in spiritual habits. More important, they teach us to depend on our Creator. Sexual experience outside of marriage separates us from God. God is love and He is able to teach us about it. God so loved that He gave. Mature love gives within God’s bounds. Marital love is to reflect the mysterious union of Christ, Almighty God, with the church, His people. “Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.” “Wives, see that you reverence your husbands.” (Eph. 5:25, 33) Together they pledge mutual love and faithfulness and look forward to continuing delight and companionship.

We are specifically warned that “Every other sin that a man commits is done outside his own body but this is an offense against his own body.” (1 Cor. 6:18, Phillips) “Sexual sin is never right; our bodies were not made for that but for the Lord, and the Lord wants to fill our bodies with Himself. And God is going to raise our bodies from the dead by His power just as He raised up the Lord Jesus Christ . . . . Your body is the home of the Holy Spirit God gave you, and He lives within you. Your own body does not belong to you. For God has bought you with a great price. So use every part of your body to give glory back to God, because He owns it.” (1 Cor. 6:13, 14, 19, 20.) “If anyone defiles and spoils God’s home, God will destroy him.” (1 Cor. 3:17) (The Living Bible) “Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers . . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God.” (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and the immoral . . . . shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone which is the second death.” (Rev. 21:8) So there is a possibility of hell on earth, but this verse indicates that hell is assured in the world to come, unless there is repentance and a turning away from sin. This then is the most awesome alternative to premarital chastity.

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

Some guidelines are then in order: Man is made in the image of God and therefore capable of great ecstasy. The joys of married love are so great that the Maker has carefully protected it. The reader would do well to consider carefully his conduct, lest he mess up his life and compromise the future before he gets started. A Christian has certain priorities. Everything he does must be (a) for the glory of God, (b) for the good of others, and (c) for his own good. Our personal relation to Christ is expressed by obedience to God, and service to others, which means self-discipline. A Chris-
1. You must be aware of the pitfalls and determine your rules of conduct beforehand. You cannot make a reasonable decision in the midst of a bombardment. As Dear Abby says, “Quick er than a penguin sliding down an icicle, a pet ting session ends in a jam session and you’re in a jam.” All wisdom, education, intelligence, maturity, principles, can be completely over ridden in a moment of passion. Another person possesses you.

2. Avoid compromising circumstances. Keep your senses about you and refuse alcohol and drugs. Many unmarried mothers have told me, “He started urging me to take one drink after another, and that is the last I remember.” Girls should be told there is no such thing as an unstimulating kiss or embrace. Boys should know that breast petting is out because that is how a girl is aroused. Girls should be told what tight sweaters, short skirts, tight pants, warm embraces do to boys. Petting and necking may lead to new emotions that the couple are not prepared to handle. When disrobing starts, you’ve gone too far.

Avoid long engagements. Avoid being alone together for long periods of time. Make plans for group activities. Keep on the move. Maintain your own devotional fellowship with Christ.

3. Be knowledgeable concerning the answer to some popular arguments. 1) How else can we know if we are compatible? A test run in surroundings where there is fear of discovery, fear of pregnancy, fear of VD, and uncertainty of the permanence of the relation, is no way to determine compatibility. The vagina is very elastic. A girl is apt to tighten up and think herself very incompatible when she would be relaxed and very compatible in the security of marriage. The first night of married life may be embarrassing and clumsy but it is something husband and wife learn together. If practice makes perfect, a prostitute ought to be your best sex partner.

2) Some modern psychiatrists are encouraging the use of sex as a means of self expression. These men would not recommend hitting some one as a means of expression yet most of us have moments when we would like very much to do just that. But we restrain ourselves.

Self expression can be very selfish and if it is the end in itself, the question arises as to its effect on the partner.

Sex is a means of communication. Either it says, “I love you, you’re wonderful, I know you can make it, I’ll stand by you, tomorrow will be better”, or it says, “I’ll use you.” Or it may say, “I hate you, I’ll destroy you.”
3) We are going to get married anyway. What difference does a piece of paper make? This apparently is a very popular argument. One young man wrote, "I wish she had said No. Somehow something beautiful has been lost." Dr. J. C. Wilke, author and lecturer says, "He who strays before marriage finds it fantastically easy to stray after marriage." Engagements have been broken after they thought they couldn't wait. Also, once you break over, a student confesses, it might become a habit, very difficult to stop. Return to virginity after sexual indulgence is as impossible as the return to life after suicide. Once you have deviated, you are in no position to know how it might have been.

4) The seventh commandment applies only to married people. Technically adultery does refer to married people. Fornication is the word for unmarried people. The Westminster Bible Dictionary defines fornication as "illicit sexual intercourse on the part of an individual. It clearly violates the seventh commandment, set up to protect the permanency and sacredness of the family." The problem with the ones who use this argument is in their priorities. If their first commitment is to the Lord Jesus Christ and they have a desire to please Him, they will not stumble at this.

5) Lastly, I have grouped together some arguments which have a single answer. Nobody understands me. Or, I understand you and want to help you. Let me make a woman of you. You are being selfish and not meeting my needs. Sex is the highest physical expression of love. If you love me, prove it. You are obviously rigid. Don't be a Puritan. You don't want to be alone all your life. Live a little. We want our honeymoon to be perfect and not awkward so lets get experience ahead of time.

When these arguments are presented, then is the time for real understanding. This is not the time for a woman to discover her own identity or to prove to herself that she is not selfish. This is the time for her to decide what the man's real need is. Wouldn't it be sad if his real need was for strength which she could help him develop by encouraging him in restraint, but instead she weakened him by saying, Yes?

These arguments in the end place the woman in the position of being used. This is not the purpose for which she was created. Men acknowledge they experience their greatest enjoyment when the woman also enjoys it. Sex says anyone will do. Love says no one else will do. A man will give love to get sex and a woman will give sex to get love. Sex does not teach love and it is possible that sex will kill love. To quote Charles Shedd, "All the way is not 1/32 of the way." "All the way" can only be learned
through the years of suffering, struggling, working together. Sex is only a part of marital love. It is an expression of your loving one another all day long in the many remembered acts of kindness and of love.

Phillips translates 1 Cor. 6:18, "Avoid sexual looseness like the plague." The right one at the right time, in the right place, under the right circumstances is your gateway to heaven on earth. Be a strong, self-disciplined, loving, giving person so you will be ready to share a great life with that certain someone.