THE SEXUAL PROBLEMS OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY

* By Dave Gosse

Multitudinous – yes, multitudinous are the problems of sex which confront the youths today. These problems are deeply entrenched in the West Indian society and can only be satisfactorily overcome by a Christian understanding of the fundamental principles of living found in the Bible Many youths including Christians, often question the rationale for reserving sexual intercourse for marriage. Some youths view the issue of celibacy as God not wanting them to have fun. Others view it as difficult to see how they love God by abstaining from intercourse. However, God’s concern for us is expressed in the limits he sets In the Bible. God answers that the problem isn't that we think too highly about sex, but not highly enough. Sexual Intercourse is reserved for marriage because it's so special that it can be best developed only in a protected environment. Sex outside of marriage loses the focus for which God planned it, to weld two people together on all levels, not just the physical! God says that intercourse goes far beyond physical coupling, so we degrade and damage it when we limit ourselves to"just sex."

God shows that there are practical reasons, too, for committing yourself to only one person sexually. Let me share four:

1. At its best, sex involves tremendous vulnerability and intimacy that develops a *bond of trust* between people. Sexual experience outside marriage weakens that trust. If we find that our partner sees sex as something that can be done with others, the trust is shaken. Even when the sexual experience takes place before marriage, the seed of mistrust is planted. If this person played around before, how do we know that it won't happen again?

2. Sexual intercourse outside of marriage brings the threat of *comparison* for both partners. Memories of past sexual experiences can make full enjoyment of the present more difficult. The faithful partner is left with the wonder of how he or she compares, or if the spouse is fully satisfied. At its best, sex give? us a boost to our self-image, but past experience can assail their confidence.

3. Sex outside of marriage *warps our view of sex* itself. We begin to see sex as love, instead of being an expression of love itself. When we limit sex to the purely sensual, we find ourselves unable to enjoy relationships to the full without its "charge."

4. Sex outside of marriage as a practice helps to erode our spiritual growth. The important virtues of patience, self-control and other important qualities of the fruit of the spirit witnessed in Galatians 5:22, will not be properly developed if we continue to yield to the flesh. Just as Adam and Eve failed to follow God’s commands and plunged the world in the darkness of sin so we too will pay the price four our disobedience. Most important the important inner qualities we need to live a Godly life and to become men and women of character and integrity will not be evident in our lives as we will be ruled by the flesh.

God's command to confine sex within marriage is intended (as are all his commands) for our own good. As we explore the reality of God's gift of sex and compare it with the myths and lies of our culture, fidelity comes to light as a force that strengthens our deepest relationships. Sex is a wonderful expression of love, but a poor substitute for the real thing.

#### Sexual Sin and Christian Growth

One of the most amazing statements in the Bible relates directly to sexual sin. After warning us to "flee from sexual immorality," Paul concluded that "he who sins sexually sins against his own body" (1 Corinthians 6:18). In other words, he hurts not only others, but also himself. I understand this to mean that inappropriate use of God's gift of sex may  
result in physical illnesses such as socially transmitted diseases, social problems such as unwanted pregnancy, and mental problems such as guilt and sexual obsession. These problems are very real, and it is because God loves us that he has warned us against them.

Biblically, it is clear that we will not grow as Christians when we are spending most of our physical, emotional, and spiritual resources dealing with the consequences of sexual sin. If this is our situation, Satan doesn't need to worry about sidetracking us, since we have already sidetracked ourselves.  
In Galatians 5: 16-21 Paul advised the Galatians Christians to “Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.” The New Testament word for lust in this passage is the ‘epithumia’, which means a desire or passionate longing for forbidden things. These forbidden things are listed in verse 19 of the same chapter and include many different sins in addition to the sin related to sex, such as adultery, fornication. licentiousness and uncleanliness.

In Cor. 6:8, we are told, “Flee from sexual immortality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sexually sins against his own body.” Sexually immorality is so common in our society today that our society gives an impression that sexual immorality is a right way to live. The media, the radio and the television make so light of this sin that our young people do not know what to believe and they, they consider what the Bible says as being out of date. In today’s society the opposite sex is being regarded merely as objects for sexual activity. This is where most friendships across the sexes have failed and are failing for when people are regarded as merely as objects which satisfy sexual hunger, the friendship is doomed to fail eventually. Friendship that is based primarily on sex causes distress when pregnancy occurs, as well as the proliferation of abortion and the continued problem illegitimacy where many children are abandoned as soon as their fathers learn that the girls with whom they are friendly are pregnant.

Let's be specific about how Christian growth is impeded by sexual sin. First, and foremost, when you are giving all your attention to sex you don't have the energy or inclination to worship God. You can't worship both the God of heaven and the god of this world, sex. Second, sexual sin hinders our growth by locking us to our guilt. Guilt is not something to toy with. It is a major mental health problem. Avoiding sexual sin is a major way to avoid guilt. The freer of guilt we become the better we are to grow. Third, sexual sin tends to reduce us to merely physical beings. It's pretty hard to think of ourselves as body, soul, and spirit when all we hunger and thirst about is satisfying the lust of our bodies. I'm afraid I have reduced myself to a phallic symbol."

Fourth, preoccupation with sex hinders growth by making us believe that every high has to be sexual or erotic. We somehow come to believe that things are not out of this world in terms of physical sensation, they can't be worthwhile. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the Scripture talks about the temporary nature of physical pleasures. The delights of God contrast, are forever (see Hebrews 1124-28). Last, sexual sin hinders spiritual growth because it results in a lack of desire for God. You cant serve both God and the flesh because when you spend all your energies serving the flesh you have no energy or desire for left for God (Matthew 6:24). Similarly, you cannot serve both God and sexual sin. They work at cross-purposes.

### CHAPTER TWO

### HOW SEXUAL FUNCTION DEVELOPS

Let us examine for a while how sexual function develop in the human body. Puberty is that period of adolescence (that period of teens) – a seven year period of person’s immaturity in which in which the human being first become capable of reproducing the species, this age varies with the climate, with race, with intelligence and possibility with other conditions.

Among girls menstruation is regarded as a token of puberty. It occurs in the Caribbean at the age of twelve, sometimes later, sometimes earlier. In the case of boys, the signs of reproductive capacity are not so definitely established but it is considered to be the time when spermatozoa (male reproductive cells) begin to appear around approximately 14 years old. Menstruation and the production of sperm cells are primary characteristics.

Secondary sexual characteristics are used to determine puberty in males – characteristics such as the growth of pubic hair on the genitals, face and armpits as well as the change of voice. Judging by these it appears that on the average puberty begins in the male about one year later than girls. The intellectually gifted tend to attain puberty earlier while the feeble – minded mature relatively later.

##### Serious Sexual Temptations

If you are either struggling with sexual temptations or sometimes yielding to the sexual sins one has to turn to God for help and advise. However if by seeking God’s assistance and you find yourself still struggling and yielding to sexual temptations, the answer is to go beyond yourself as it is possible that you might have become a sexual addict or what counselors label as “compulsive behavior pattern”. In such a scenario you have to allow God to work through others. Here are some steps you need to take to break the cycle:

1. Admit your behavior is compulsive and you are powerless to change it.
2. Consider the dangers: your behavior (a) is harmful to you, (b) may be harmful to others, or (c) is nor condoned by society and may lead into trouble with the law.
3. Realize that the temptation will not disappear overnight and you will need to find a different way to deal with the problem.
4. Serious problems need to be taken seriously: get help. You can't do it by yourself. "The key step is talking to persons who can help and who can be confidential and non-judgmental. With such action then it's no longer my little secret. When you acknowledge such a problem to persons who can help you feel more accountable.

### Developing a Healthy View of Sex:

How should Christian youths develop a healthy and biblical view of sexuality:

First, we must realize that sexual intercourse is *good.* God created male and female perfect and before the. Fall God declared that "for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). It was God and not man who invented sex, and he made human beings sexual on purpose.

The second principle is that to be fully enjoyed and used, sex *must be practiced within the rules and guidelines given by God.* He wants us to enjoy life and each other—this can only happen as we follow his "sex manual." This of course, is true for all of life, not just sex.

Third, we must understand that in *our culture sex has been overrated and undervalued.* Sex is not the “ultimate” in any sense of the word, but because of the continual media bombardment, we can begin to believe this myth. Many Christian young people, saving themselves for marriage, have expected far too much from sex; so marriage becomes a letdown and they harbor doubts about themselves or their spouses. Having said this, it is important to add, however, that sex is an important part of marriage. Through this physical union, a husband and wife can discover, explore, and *know* each other in the fullest sense. It is a beautiful way to express love, voluntarily submitting to your spouse and trying to meet his or her needs. And we must not forget the most basic purpose of sex: to propagate the species, to form human life, new beings bearing the image of God. When this is forgotten or ignored, with pleasure the only concern, babies becomes "fetuses" to be expelled (killed) as inconveniences to self-centered life-styles.

Sex must not be overrated, even in marriage, but it must not be undervalued. This is such an important consideration in Scripture that Paul spent two chapters chiding and instructing the Corinthians about their sexual practices (1 Corinthians 6-7). The key verse in his discussion was 6:13: “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food”—but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body." And verses 18 and 19 state, "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own." Within marriage, then, sex is to be enjoyed as pleasure, as a way to express  
love, and as the way to bring children into the world.

*Fourthly, Tthe marriage bed should not be” undefiled” (*Hebrews 13:4). This means that sex is good within marriage; but it does not teach that "anything goes." Too often our sexual appetites are whetted by the world and we try to copy every new position and experience. Remember, sex is not an end in itself; it is the means to an end. Don't try to keep up with some imagined ideal of sexual prowess.

Fifthly, *everything we do must be motivated by love.* In 1 Corinthians 13 we find God's description of love. "Love is patient, love is kind, ... it is not self-seeking" (verses 4,5). Love is not something we "make," by "making" some-one else give us pleasure. Love is acting toward another person with his or her highest good in mind.

Sixthly, sex *must not be used as a weapon.* When a person wants something, the other can withhold whatever it is he wants to punish him. This attitude of punishment or retaliation is often used with sex. Love and sex must never be used this way. Consider again 1 Corinthians 13 and all of Jesus' statements about giving and serving. At the same time, however, this does not mean we should give in and turn over our bodies to the other person, regardless of the animosity between us. It means first resolving those problems and removing those barriers that keep us from each other. According to Paul, sex must only be withheld for the purposes of prayer and fasting, and then only by mutual consent (1 Corinthians 7:5).

Seventhly, *sex is not a "right" to demand.* You cannot be responsible for how your mate acts or reacts. You can only control yourself and your relationship with God; therefore, don't attempt to force him or her to submit to your amorous desires, physically, emotionally, or with a barrage of Bible verses. Again, love is the key. Sexual foreplay begins long before you hop into bed. How you treat each other all day will, to a great extent, determine how you treat each other at night. If your partner has a real problem in this area, pray for him or her and for yourself. Perhaps counseling is needed with a Christian therapist trained in this field.

# Masturbation:

In the church today you can find extremely varied views on masturbation, ranging from those who think it is always sinful to those who say it is a gift from God, a wise provision for young people. One reason the views vary so widely is that there is no clear, direct word on masturbation anywhere in Scripture. A couple of generations ago. Genesis 38:8-11 and 1 Corinthians 65,10 were used to condemn masturbation. The first is the story of Onan’s failure to obey the ancient Hebrew law requiring a man to father children by his dead brother's widow. The second, in the King James Version, refers to abusers of themselves, a passage correctly translated nowadays as “homosexuals”. Both onamism and self-abuse were formerly used to mean masturbation, but neither of these texts is actually talking about that practice.

Some people argue from Scripture's silence that masturbation cannot be wrong. Arguments from silence can be dangerous; lots of temptations we face today are never mentioned in Scripture. Nevertheless, we know that masturbation is both ancient and universal—the earliest mention of it is in the Egyptian Book of the Dead, dated somewhere around 1500 b.c. We can observe that Scripture covers just about every other sexual activity—fornication, adultery, homosexuality, bestiality. You name it and it is there, mentioned quite explicitly. I think we have a right to ask why, since masturbation is so universal and so ancient a sexual practice, it is nowhere mentioned in the Bible if it is always a sin.

From a scientific, medical standpoint, we now know that masturbation causes no mental or physical harm. There are no moral arguments against it for health reasons, like the anti-smoking arguments based on the dangers of cancer, emphysema, and heart disease.

Since there is no direct word from Scripture, and since there are no moral arguments based on dangers to physical health, we will have to use other Christian principles to determine whether masturbation is right or wrong. I have personally concluded that masturbation in itself is neither good nor evil. To determine whether it is right or wrong, other questions have to be asked.

1. Is the thought life pure? In Matthew 5:27,28 Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said, Do not commit adultery.' But 1 tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Mental fornication or adultery is wrong, and it is a definite deterrent to spiritual growth. Fantasies about actions that would be immoral to carry out  
in real life are wrong.

But this does not mean all fantasies are wrong. 1 know of married couple; who, when separated, masturbate and think of each other. This is within the context of their married life and can't be classed as mental adultery.

What is more, not all masturbation is accompanied by fantasies. Studies indicate that about one-fourth of males and one-half of females do not fantasize when they masturbate. With them, masturbation is simply a physical release from sexual tension.

Obviously one cannot have a pure thought life while using pornography to stimulate erotic fantasies about illicit acts. But some people are able to masturbate without thinking impure thoughts.

2. Is the social and relational life healthy? Some people use masturbation an escape from social life. When masturbation becomes a substitute for proper interpersonal relationships, when it is used as a means of escaping the pressures of loneliness, frustration, and depression, it harms the personality and stunts spiritual growth.

Through many years of counseling I have come to distinguish between masturbation as a temporary and occasional means of relieving normal. Sexual build-up, and masturbation as a compulsive habit that feeds and is fed by deeper emotional hang-ups. Occasional masturbation is almost an inevitable part of normal growing up, particularly for teenage boys. Compulsive masturbation, by contrast, is fueled by serious problems: inability to relate to people, especially those of the opposite sex; depression, deep-seated resentment. In situations like these, masturbation is just a symptom of the deeper problem.

Parents, pastors, and Christian counselors must learn to discern the difference between various types of masturbation. For many Christians, masturbation is a peg on which to hang their guilt, and yet the real problem may not be masturbation at all.

If a young person is concerned about masturbation, how should he/she handle it?

It is usually futile to try a direct, frontal, spiritual attack on it. Instead of lessening the problem, this tends to make it worse. Nothing provokes masturbation more than creating a lot of anxiety about it. In fact, the frontal attack often creates a downward spiral: the person tries prayer and Scripture reading and promise making, only to break those promises and feel simply terrible and  
try the same approach all over again.

Prayer can be helpful—or it can be damaging. Damaging prayers are negative. They tell God how bad we are, and they create even more guilt and anxiety and depression. Helpful prayers offer words of assurance about God's accepting love. They point to his faithfulness even when we fail: "Thank you, Lord, for loving me, for healing me, for helping me with all my problems."  
Positive praying helps break the vicious circle of guilt and despair.

No one is sure whether masturbation produces guilt or whether guilt produces masturbation. Whichever the case, a direct frontal attack only makes the situation worse. Far better to help people get their minds off the guilt and anxiety by explaining that this is a gray area where lightness and wrongness depends on other factors.

How then should a person deal with masturbation? Indirectly. Pay attention **to** social life, to interpersonal relationships. Socialize, don't fantasize. Get out **of** the house and do things with real people. Make friends, particularly of the opposite **sex**—real flesh and blood people that you can enjoy as persons without fantasizing about them sexually at all.

When a person does these things, sometimes a compulsive habit can be broken in only a few weeks or months. Masturbation is reduced from being the focus of the person's existence to being only a minor, occasional means of relieving sexual tension. In fact, the person may eventually abandon it altogether.

The true joys of making friends and finding companionship through healthy dating relationships can fill the need that was formerly filled by a poor substitute. The person doesn’t need to masturbate anymore. He has grown up, matured and put away childish things.

Pornography:

The sex drive is a gift from God, and sex should be seen as good, valuable, and part of what it means to be fully human, made in the image of God. In our culture, however, sex has been twisted and degraded. Lust, displacing love, motivates men and women to use and discard each other—"no deposit, no return." Pornography has become a billion-dollar business, feeding off this twisted urge with bookstands and video stores peddling flesh like so much hamburger—and customers pay and consume.

Christian youths are not immune to this sensual onslaught. We are "sinners saved by grace," but we are still sinners. And, if we're normal, our hormones push the sex drive into full gear in typical lust-producing situations. To be unaffected by society's sex obsession, we would have to be emasculated or isolated. Serious Christians attempting, through the Holy Spirit's power, to live "pure and holy lives" wonder how to respond. Without retreating or wearing blinders, we can take action to stem the tide of personal lust. Let me suggest that we do the following:

*1. Recognize our weaknesses.* It is foolish to pretend that we are strong enough to resist. Sexual problems are not reserved for terrible persons or perverts. Normal people have sexual thoughts and urges. And the sin nature and society's obsession, and the mix can be volatile. Satan will attack us where we are most vulnerable.

2. *Avoid lust-producing situations.* Just as an alcoholic should not hang around a bar to prove he can resist, we should not meet lust head-on to prove our strength. We are weak; therefore, when we see a difficult situation approaching we should avoid it. This relates especially to our reading and viewing habits. We can be sure that R-and X-rated films will cause problems.

3. Rely *on the Holy Spirit's power.* Only God can defeat sin. When faced with temptation, therefore, we must ask him for the power to resist. Ephesians 6:18 says, "Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests."

4. *Control the media.* Television and radio are almost inseparable parts of our lives, but we can control, to a great extent, what we see and hear. If for example, the temptation to watch an X-rated movie in the privacy of your own home would be too great, don't subscribe to the movie channel on cable. And if you know that certain programs are "dirty," turn the television off or change stations. We are not helpless pawns; we can exercise some discipline and control.

By taking these steps we will not feed the sinful desires that come into our lives, and we will reflect the principle of Phillipians 4:8: "Whatever is true. whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." It is true that we do and become what we think, so guard your thoughts!

There is a great difference, however, between responding to pornography that finds us and trying to find pornography. Even Christians can fall prey to the twisting and become obsessed with sex. If these persons really want to change, beyond taking the steps outlined above, they should seek out a trained  
professional. Often there is an underlying emotional reason for the behavior, and their obsession is the symptom. Through sensitive, Christ-centered counseling, these people can be helped.

Lust need not saturate our thoughts and control our actions. We can *choose to* focus on Christ, to ask for God's strength, and to take practical steps to minimize the problems. Remember, "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

**HOMOSEXUALITY & LESBIANISM**

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**CAN WE FIND SOLUTIONS TO THOSE PROBLEMS?**

Because we are all sexual beings, the problem which sex presents in our society will confront each of us from childhood to old age. Apart from the physical and social problems which our sexuality presents, the spiritual aspects can be most disturbing. (Sometimes) young people feel that because there seems to be real pleasure to be derived from our sexuality, they should have nothing to do with Christianity presents us having real enjoyment. But this kind of belief or opinion is far from the truth.

God our Creator, created us with infinite wisdom. If He had not made us sexuall creatures generation would not succeed generation. Mankind would have been extinct long ago. It is important for us to recognize that the Bible, God’s Word, gives supreme guidance on the way we ought to live. His Word advises us to “Walk in the Spirit”, and you shall fulfill the lust of the flesh.” This implies that when we recognize that the Holy Spirit is the One who has been sent by the Father to sanctify our lives. He will guides us and give us power to overcome sin and temptation. In other words, if we willingly submit our thoughts, and desires, He will not cause us to sin against God. When we submit ourselves to God as Paul ask Christians to do in Romans 12:1-2, the Spirit of God will control us, guide us and sustain us with His power, in order that we may overcome temptations.

When we willing hand over our lives to God, the Spirit will give us victory over sin including the sins related to sex such as uncleanliness. You will never be a slave to the sins of sex if God’s Spirit controls your heart.

In connection with the sins of sex God’s word gives us a message of Warning. It says “Flee fornication” (The King James Version). The Revised Standard Version translated it as **“SHUN IMMORALITY”** the Greek word for immorality does not apply only to illicit sexual intercourse between unmarried persons but it applies also to adultery by those who are married. When a person’s body is involved in immorality the Spirit of God cannot dwell in it as His Temple and perform His wonderful ministry of warding off sin. Because of this sexual sins with its strong emotional urge can make us slaves. It is important, to observe this warning.

The Guidelines for relationship between the sexes in chapter three above outline important principles of friendship which should be carefully observed and when people plan to get married it is important to see that sound premarital counseling is received.

Finally, when marriage comes both parties need to work hard to achieve success. Again Christianity offer the most important fundamental principles which can ensure success. For instance the Bible challenges the partners to exercise the finest example of love. It says, “Husbands, love your wives, Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it.” Love at this remarkable level is full of self – sacrifice and self - giving, in the interest of the partner. In the book of Titus read where Paul, who had left Titus to minister in Crete, urged him to persuade the aged women to teach the young women to love their husbands and their children. The older women because of their husbands and their deeper experience of love in the marriage experience were able to pass useful hints concerning this vital experience.

The word of God and Christianity offer counsel and practical help to ensure success to men and women. Those who remain unmarried do not need to be distressed because they remain unmarried. Many persons remained unmarried according to the will of God for their lives and there is always a good reason why. Some like Jeremiah can fulfill God’s purpose in their lives.

### CHAPTER THREE

**EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

It is interesting to observe the emotional experience of people in their early teens. The teenager may experience ‘calf’ or ‘puppy’ love – an immature type of emotional love in which their thoughts are centered around some young person of the opposite sex of their acquaintance. They may also experience what is called a ‘crush’, that is love for a member of the same sex. The object may be another girl or possibly a teacher especially in segregated schools. These crushes involve jealousy and demand the exclusive response of the object of attachment. No specific sexual activity is involved in the vast majority of cease, but kissing, embracing, superlative terms of endearment and jealousy are evident. The crush is less healthy than the heterosexual relationship.

These early teenage experience usually vanish quickly. The boy or girl recovers and reverts to the opposite sex in the normal manner. If the objects of teenage crushes are healthy – minded and kindly, persons gifted with tact, who will use careful methods of discouraging sentimentality, the crush ill eventually cease.

Hetero-sexuality is the psychological condition normally attained in which the primary interest of the individual focuses on members of the opposite sex. This is only direction in which sexual development may proceed with ultimate integrity and happiness. For normal adjustment to life during and after the maturation of the sex organs, it is absolutely essentially important for both sexes that is heterosexual attitude be achieved. Psychologists feel that this is achieved during the four or five years following the onset of puberty (say 12-17 years old) when the heterosexual attitude can develop normally. This attitude can best be developed if.

1. Parents set an example of harmonious relationship between the sexes in their own lives.
2. Young people have opportunity to relate to members of the opposite sex, not too young or too old. Social contact and actual acquaintance across the sexes is important.
3. Guidelines for relationship between the sexes are made available to young people at this stage so as to enable them to emerge from their adolescent experience creditably.

**GUIDELINES FOR RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SEXES:** The following set of guidelines for relationship between the sexes are considered helpful to young people who are exposed to them: -

* 1. Men and women are made to enjoy and profit from comradeship. A fine comradeship is not necessarily an easy to achieve and can be rapidly spoiled by silly, inconsiderate action. Teenagers should established worthwhile friendships with girls and fellows of good character.
  2. The responsibility of regulating and keeping comradeship pure must be shared equally between men and women. It is cruel and dishonest for men to pretend that their expectations and desires have no influence on girls, for girls will tend to give what men in general persist in asking for because they are just as human as men are.
  3. Teenagers should share physical, recreational, academic and religious interests with their peers in their mixed groups. Churches should provide opportunities for the social intermingling of the sexes which assists male and female to grow in respect for and understanding of each other.
  4. Allow friendships to mature through respect, understanding, appreciation and admiration. Mere physical attraction, no matter how impressive should not be allowed to force a friendship while other worthwhile elements are disregarded. Most worthwhile grow through the stages of casual acquaintance, a growing enjoyment of relationship, serious concern and inward questioning, going steady - a discovery of romantic history to the exclusion of others. At this point a period of special friendship begins, followed by engagement and marriage, in many instance.
  5. ‘I LOVE YOU’ are solemn words of commitment to one person above all others. They should not be said until the person is certain that this is true. They are words to be said to a good prospect for marriage whose character, temperament, disposition and other factors have won a person’s love, admiration and respect.
  6. A person should find out God’s will concerning one’s friendship and intention to marry.
  7. Do not be free with kisses. Keep them for the person who is the really loved one whom a person expects to marry. Dr. Albert Gray, author of the book, “Men, Women and God” says “kissing is a mistake, partly, to put it bluntly, because kissing sometimes arouses desires which kissing cannot satisfy; and partly because it is, I believe, a fine instinct which suggests to both men and women, that they should keep their kisses for the one person who will or may some day have love’s right to them.” This may sound old fashioned but think about it.
  8. Keep your parents informed of your serious major decisions regarding your relationships. Parents have a just basis for being concerned in their children’s future. Give respectful consideration to the counsel of godly parents the choice of special friends.
  9. Premarital and extra-marital sex are sins against God and against one’s own body. These sins should be shunned. The Bible says, “Shun immorality”. (RSV). Other reasons for shunning immorality are as follows:
     + 1. Immorality causes many persons to experience serious guilt feelings.
       2. There is usually fear of discovery which can hurt both parties.
       3. Sexual freedom is expensive and most of the bill is paid by the women.
       4. A girl in premarital sex throws away her natural sex appeal which is a primary source of bargaining in the game of Life. In exchange for feminine affection and love a man will accept a girl as his life-time responsibility. When a girl throws this away she has nothing else with which to bargain and ends up becoming a slave either to her own passions or to the passions of a number of men.
       5. There are other penalties such as unwanted pregnancies, fatherless children, sexually transmitted diseases including Aids, etc.
  10. Control your sex urge through the consecration of your body to God, by maintaining a clean and healthy body, and by engaging in wholesome recreative activities and by being involved in creative hobbies.
  11. Fellows should treat girls with respect and not pressure them into any action which they (the boys) are not willing to accept full responsibility for. Girls should respect themselves and should remind the fellow who tends to exceed the limits the Bible and society have set, that in the interest of both parties he should exercise self-control.
  12. Petting (embracing and pressing bodies together) is a preparation to go all the way. If you pet you will go, therefore don’t pet. Marriage is the only time to go all the way, for then the wife is well protected and the children will have a prepared home in which to be born.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**IMMORALITY IN THE SOCIETY TODAY**

If young people are to live in an upright and decent way it is necessary for them to know what is right and what is wrong, so that they will embrace the right and shun the wrong. Young people are deeply involved these days in all the immorality evident in our society. In the 1970’s over 25% of babies born in the Victoria Jubilee Hospital in Kingston were born to teenage mothers outside of marriage. Today the percentage is greater. Teenage girls of many of our schools are living in concubinage and they do this very often with the knowledge of their mothers. Young people under twenty have sexually transmitted diseases.

Immorality assumes a wide spectrum of illicit sexual relationships, the chief forms of which are the following:-

1. The boy friend – girl friend relationships with sex as the main feature, but in which there is no co-habitation (living together). The individuals may be involved with one or more sexual partners.
2. Promiscuity may be indulged in at a very early stage. By promiscuity is meant the indiscriminate acceptance of sexual partners of many kind. The individuals indulging have been influenced by the thrills of sexual intercourse and had as his or her main intention the enjoyment of sex without any acceptance of responsibility for its consequence. Promiscuous persons regard man and woman merely as sex objects. Hence they try to excite young people’s interest in the sexual act by frequent talks on sex as they watch the sexual behaviour of animals, read pornographic literature and by aggressive acts of persuasion.

Often older men and women in the society indulge in ‘breaking in’ young persons. Male relatives, including fathers and stepfathers and others who have access to young girls and young women, introduce them to the sex act for their own purposes. Sometimes adolescent girls who have already been introduced to the delights of the sexual experience, ‘break in’ their younger brothers and male relatives. Teachers in schools sometimes, and even pastors in churches are including among this type of promiscuous persons married men and other who live in concubinage also indulge in these immoral practices.

1. Prostitution follows easily from promiscuity, when people are willing to give or accept favours or cash for submission to the sex advances of others. This practice has invaded the workplace where the bosses and superior officers make sexual demands in exchange for their favours or as a condition of employment. Sometimes students at colleges and universities sell themselves in order to pay their expenses of schooling. Some entertain their professors in exchange for their favours. These evils are, ingrained in our decadent society and may not be evident to the casual looker. Of course there is the more over type of prostitution that flourishes in our towns and cities. It is because of this kind of practice why the condom is now being popularized in all areas of the society as a precaution against the dreaded disease Aids.
2. Concubinage exists in two main forms:

(a) Single union with a married or unmarried boyfriend. In this case

the woman livesalone.

1. The ‘Common Law’ union in which there are varying extents of

stability and permanence.

Immorality of all forms present serious problems to the influence and growth of the Church. It hardens our young people resist the power of the Gospel. Those given to prostitution desire to accept Christ often but find the love of sex as their greatest barrier. Christian young people who taste sex and indulge in fornication form a habit difficult to break. Married people sometimes, disillusioned with their partners sometimes separate, fall into concubinage, bear children and get do entangled that they find it difficult to be loosened from their sad condition.

People who live in concubinage sometimes find it most difficult to decide for Christ. This is especially so when they have children. When they do make decisions many problems have to be solved before they can completely disentangled.