

# Sex Education in the Schools

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One of the controversies raging in the country today is the controversy concerning the teaching of sex in the schools. Many public schools have already introduced courses in sex education and others are planning to do so. Organizations are being formed, some in support of the thing, some violently opposed to it. Those that support such programs argue that parents and churches have failed to provide the needed education and that schools must do what they have failed to do.

What shall determine our attitude toward this subject when it is taught in the public school system? We should see immediately the danger present when sex education is offered apart from God's Word and will. Disregard for God's instructions always brings tragic consequences. How can they teach any kind of wholesome and holy attitude towards sex which is according to the principle of God's law when they have already banned any mention of religion from the classroom? Do we want the world's standards and attitudes to be the guides in the lives of our children in this matter? Romans 12:2 says, "Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good, and acceptable and perfect will of God." The purpose is that we "may present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God"

Some will probably say that this is no concern for us since our children go to our Christian schools. What about sex education in OUR Christian schools? What about sex education when the Bible is used to determine standards and attitudes? It is conceivable that in some not too distant future, we may have to face the question. This may come through some kind of requirement which the government makes mandatory for our schools to retain their accreditation.

Now then, is this the business of the schools? Of OUR schools? I think not. Primarily it suggests that parents are very neglectful in teaching their children about these things. Parents often find it difficult to provide the kind of information which is needed and look to the schools for assistance. But this does not alter the fact that the responsibility belongs to the parents and to them alone. That the instruction of the child is the responsibility and obligation of its parents is a precept which every Christian should immediately know. This is plain from the fact that parents have built and maintained their own schools to teach their children according to their convictions. We erect schools and hire teachers in order to provide instruction for our children which we cannot give them. But, we may not hand over to our teachers the work of instruction which we are able to do ourselves. We must assume this responsibility willingly and cheerfully and not push off on teachers tasks which we ought to be doing ourselves. Proverbs state, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." In Israel the fathers were to make known to their children the works of God. Deut. 4:9 and 6:7. The Lord visited the house of Eli with judgments "because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." Certainly, when parents are duty bound to instruct their children in the laws of the Lord, does it not follow that they shall instruct their children concerning sex relations also?

I believe that sex education is a private and not a public matter. I do not believe that sex education can be put on the same level as, for example, arithmetic. Arithmetic is public, and can be used by and with anybody. Sex is not in that category. There are proper places and ways for

discussions of matters pertaining to sex, but I do not believe that the proper way and place for detailed presentations of such private matters is in the school. This does not mean that we cannot instruct them in Biblical principles when occasions arise, especially in religion, science, and physiology classes. The teachers will then, for example, have opportunity to call attention to God's wonderful arrangement for the good Christian judgment, wisdom and tact, based on God's Word must be used at all times. The Word of God will be the one standard to guide the children in the way that they should go.

Then there is the danger of presenting certain matters too early when children are not yet ready for them. Would we want to teach our children things about sex for which they are not yet ready? Might this not just arouse their curiosity and lead to experimentation? The home is the proper place for such instruction because the parents best know when a child is ready to be taught certain things and can gear this instruction in this area of life to the mental, emotional, physical and social development of the child.

Another danger of sex education in the schools concerns the determination of course content. Who will determine the content of the courses of the various classes? The faculty? The school board? The community? Lack of control could be dangerous when teaching sex in our schools.

Then who will teach the courses? Are the teachers willing and able to teach the various aspects of this difficult subject in the proper manner and in the light of Scripture? Will parents have any real control over when, how much, and what is taught their children?

Christian parents should be reminded that the best sex education they can give their children is the example of Christian faithfulness and love on the part of the husband and wife. The love and respect which children note between their father and mother will foster similar attitudes in the children. Homes where sex is honored as a gift of God which has an accepted place in our lives, will generate attitudes in the children which will help them to distinguish its proper use from its depraved deviations.

Parents can teach their children within the context of the home where the family is all together, where babies are born and enter the life of the family, where brothers and sisters date, where family love prevails, where the Scriptures are read and studied, where such instruction in such holy matters can be given naturally and "matter-of-factly" and where it need not be a forced education in the abnormal circumstances of the classroom. This "forced" sex education can easily leave the impression with the child that sex is of towering importance and more important than anything else. In our present day culture, sex has been so idolized and emphasized that it appears to be the most important thing in our lives and in the lives of our children. The result is that we and our children are constantly being bombarded with the perversions of the world. The devil forces us into a position where we have to deal openly and forcibly with such sacred and holy things. So we must tell our children what God's Word says about all this evil. We must tell them what is holy and righteous in the sight of God. We must teach them that sex is but a small part of life; significant, but small nonetheless. Children must be instructed in these things and not be left to grope about, picking up half-truths and distorted facts or be left to gather venomous ideas from corrupted playmates, vile literature, obscene pictures, TV, and vulgar novels. It is by all means important for our lives that in the days of our youth we do not remain ignorant of the wonderful "mechanics" of our own bodies, with which we were endowed by our Creator. He has made men and women. He has thus made the sexual organs, and the organs must be used aright to the glory of God and not to fulfill our lust and carnal desires. I Cor. 6:19, "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God and ye are

not your own?" For this cause shall man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh. The marriage-relationship is perhaps the greatest relationship upon earth, amongst men. For through the family, life comes to existence, and family life is the heart of society. The rearing and training of children is the highest and most responsible calling ever given and therefore not only highly desirable but highly necessary. While it is a fact well known to all that the majority of parents find it difficult to talk to their children about sexual matters, yet that in no way lessens their responsibility. The question of sex is not unclean, shameful, or sinful. The sexual instincts are divine commands of God but are made sinful when turned into lusts, that is, unlawful desires. Paul made this plain in his letter to Titus, "Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their minds and conscience is defiled." Titus 1:15.

We may conclude then, that children get their basic ideas of love and marriage from living with their parents and observing the way of life their family represents. Ideally then, our homes where God's love and respect are taught and practiced between mother, father, and children will help mold proper attitudes based on scriptural principles of Godliness and morality. It is a God-given duty of the parents to admonish and instruct their children in the truths of God's Word in the way of life.

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