

# SEX IN OUR TIME

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*The staff of Beacon Lights felt that the magazine ought to reflect on the moral decay and exploitation of sex which is so rampant today. Dr. Monsma has ably complied with our request. His article should prove helpful to all of us, but especially to our young people to whom these things are so alluring. R.D.D.ed.*

If you followed your initial impulse, this is the first article that you are reading in this April issue of *Beacon Lights*. This fact calls attention to the universal curiosity we have about the subject of sex. Its appeal is used to good advantage by authors, painters, advertisers, radio producers, sportsmen, television producers, manufacturers and a whole list of others...all which profoundly influence our lives.

By way of knowing what we are considering, it is important to give a definition of sex. I am sure that an original attempt on the part of each reader would result in an equal number of definitions. The first, very obvious definition which Webster gives is, "One of the two divisions of organisms formed on the distinction of being male or female; Males or females collectively." Thus, there is a male and a female of each species of created life. He gives a second definition which is more descriptive, "The sum of the peculiarities of structure and function that distinguish a male from a female organism." Webster broadens the field of consideration by his third definition, "The sphere of behavior dominated by the relations between male and female. By extension, the whole sphere of behavior related even indirectly to the sexual functions and embracing all affectionate and pleasure-seeking conduct." Behavior of the two sexes with all its ramifications comes closer to what is implied by the word sex. A fourth definition reiterates this with, "The phenomena of sexual instincts and their manifestations." This latter opens for consideration the whole area of sexual deviations portrayed in thought, conversation, literature and crime. We could attempt to define sex as That gift of God to His creatures which enables the complimentary union of the male and female of each species so that they may generate their own kind. This implies a chemical and physical attraction between them and, in the case of man, a psychological, emotional and spiritual attraction.

As we would expect, throughout history in the minds of sinful men, it is the misuse of this gift of God which is most prominent. This fact alone tends to explain the reluctance of God's people to discuss the subject of sex. Rather, we find ourselves referring to it in general terms of sin or sin against the seventh commandment. The thesis of this short article is, "We are being over-exposed to sex today". Sexual sins have been a problem since the fall of Adam, but we know that our exposure to them is becoming more intense as the world of sin develops. Even early in Genesis, we read that the sons of God were attracted to the daughters of men. In Genesis 19 we are told of the sin of the men of Sodom and the sins of Lot's daughters with their father. When, throughout the early history of the children of Israel, we see the numerous cautions against a great variety of sexual sins, we are prompted to come to the conclusion that these sinful acts have not changed or developed since the law was given. However, the incidence and variety of the temptations to commit these sins are fresh, new and more numerous with each succeeding generation. The uncounted inventions of the last century alone have made it much easier for us to become acquainted with the sinful aspects of sex. Consider only the mass printing of books, magazines and newspapers, radio, modern music, movies, automobiles and television. Every age had its debauchery, crime and filthy literature. Each succeeding age seemed worse to those who

expressed concern over these problems. It is difficult, however, to find reliable statistics which specifically delineate the progress of immorality in relation to the spirit of the age.

Therefore, I sought out the opinions of others who have written on this subject. According to research by the P.T.A. Magazine reported in their April, 1962 issue, 73% of the respondents to a questionnaire felt that children receive their sex information, sex values and subsequent conduct from home influences. If this is true, each parent bears tremendous responsibility in this regard which must be exercised carefully. 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 distinguish its proper use from its depraved deviations.

The responses to the above questionnaire showed a great concern by parents for the external influences on their children's ideas of sex and life. Most frequently mentioned was the tremendous effect of television in the home and disgust over the immoral themes of so many movie and television offerings. Many parents admitted laxness of supervision over the types of popular songs their children listened to and sang. It seems that one group of songs plays up the attraction of love whereas another group speaks only of the thwarting aspects of love...both in misleading ways, to say the least. Although most parents believe their home influences to be beneficial, almost all agreed that the influence of the majority of television programs and advertising was detrimental. Children wonder, for instance, does a woman always kiss a man passionately at their first meeting? Do married people always date outside marriage? The implication of most programs on the subject is that you must be glamorous, romantic and sexy in a sensuous way in order to be a successful person before or after marriage.

Unless we have faith in God and believe that our lives have meaningful purpose, we become as the ungodly who finds no fulfillment in love before or after marriage. Thus sex becomes merely an escape whose aftermath is disillusionment and bitterness. The depraved nature of much that is called sex is a direct result of the attempt of the natural man to live without God.

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, Protestant Reformed homes where Godly love and respect are taught and practiced between mother, father and children, will help mould proper attitudes based upon scriptural principles of godliness and morality.

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