

# “The Family Under Attack”

12th Annual Central Oklahoma Lectureship



McLoud Church of Christ  
McLoud, Oklahoma

Editor  
Wayne Price



# “The Family Under Attack”

12th Annual Central Oklahoma Lectureship



McLoud Church of Christ  
McLoud, Oklahoma

Editor  
Wayne Price

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### THEME: "The Family Under Attack."

Parents Must Teach Their Children Johnie Scaggs, Jr. ....	1
Abortion Vs. The Family Tony Pulliam .....	11
Homosexuality Vs. The Family Ron Cosby .....	26
Materialism Vs. The Family Ryan Kepke .....	36
Immorality Vs. The Family Josh Haley .....	48
Pornography Vs. The Family Nathan Brewer .....	58
Alcohol Vs. The Family Ben Bailey .....	69
The Judiciary Vs. The Family James Cudd .....	79
Educational System Vs. The Family Keith Mosher, St. ....	92
Divorce Vs. The Family David Ray .....	106
Gambling Vs. The Family Johnny Hinton .....	123





# **PARENTS MUST TEACH THEIR CHILDREN**

**Johnie Scaggs, Jr.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The family has been under attack for years. It is not a new thing. But because many have refused to deal with the problems of the past as they relate to the attacks on the family, the family unit as you and I have understood it to be is slowly becoming obsolete in the minds of many in this country and beyond. Because many have refused to deal with the problem, the home as God would have it is not what it should be today. Today it seems that Moms and Dads care more about their careers than they do about making a home where children feel safe and where God is in the center of the home.

If we do not turn the tide, in the years to come the family and the values that once was attached to the family will be a thing of history. Our grandchildren will read about the family unit in history books and even then the history will be written with a distorted view.

Society as a whole does not understand how serious it really is to not have a clear understanding of the influence which the family has upon civilization. It has often been stated, "So goes the family, (home) so goes the nation." I believe that this is a true statement. If the family is not taught strong values, and such like, then the nation will not have any sense of strong values and they will give way to who ever may be in power.

Today if a woman decides that for her career she wants to be a homemaker and use our abilities to raise God fearing children, she is looked down upon and others wonder what is wrong with her. What a shame that life has no more meaning than this to so many in the world today!

Sadly many Christians have allowed this type of attitude to infiltrate their home and the church to the point that God

is no longer the number one priority in His children's lives. I spoke with a Mother about her daughter's choices in life and what she wanted to do. The Mother was outraged that her daughter did not want to go to college, but rather wanted just to marry the man she was in love with and be a good house wife and start a family.

It is time that we start making some good decisions in our life. We need to choose who we are going to serve, as was said of old, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15).

God has divinely appointed three great institutions: (1) the home; (2) civil government; (3) the church. To each He has given authority which they need in order to govern or rule over said institution. To the church God has ordained that Christ is to be the head. Paul wrote; "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body" (Eph. 5:23). "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18). Through a study of the Old Testament we understand that God gave nations the power to govern their people. Paul reminds us that we are to obey the powers that be. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.



Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour" (Rom. 13:1-7).

To Parents, God has given the authority to govern the home. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right" (Eph. 6:1). It is the responsibility of each and every parent to teach and train their children in every area of life. God has not given this authority to the church nor to the government, but rather to the parents. The home plays a very important role in both the church and the government. If the home is not taught right, then the effects will be felt in both the church and the government. Great men of ages gone by have testified to the important role which parents played in making them into what they had become. As Abraham Lincoln said, "All that I am, or can be, I owe to my angel mother." Most, if not all men and women (who were raised by godly parents) after becoming parents themselves, look back at how they were raised by their parents and they begin to have a deeper appreciation for all that was done for them as their parents guided them through their life experiences.

As parents we need to understand just how precious our children are to us. Our children are gifts from God, they belong to God and He has let us have them in order that we might mold them into the person that God wants them to be. David wrote, "Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward" (Psa. 127:3). God has entrusted us with the responsibility of teaching them, or bringing "them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4b). Therefore, as Moms and Dads we need to understand what our responsibility is as it relates to the teaching of our children.

## **WHY ARE PARENTS NOT TEACHING THEIR CHILDREN AS THEY SHOULD?**

Selfishness is one of the reasons why parents are not teaching their children as God has commanded. Parents look more inward than outward. All that many can see is the short run. They have yet to understand that they cannot take any material goods with them from this world into the next. The only thing that is carried over into the next life is the life which we lived for Jesus or the lack of that life.

Selfishness is at the heart of every sin. In their sin against God, Adam and Eve thought only about themselves. They forgot about serving God and could only see what they wanted, (Gen. 3). The rich young ruler was self-centered. All he could think about was what he needed. Jesus, "...spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Luke 12:16-20). The prodigal son of Luke 15 was blinded by selfishness—all he could see was what he wanted, he was blind to his real needs and the needs of those around about him.

Ignorance of God's word has is another reason why many parents do not teach their children. Folks do not know the word of God today because they do not study His word. We have largely become a people who tolerate the views of our society because we do not know how to answer the questions which they have concerning what is right and wrong in the home. Others want to just get along with everyone and never say anything that might cause someone to be upset at what one believes. Those who know the truth and are willing to stand firm and not be moved are becoming extinct.

If we are going to make a difference in the teaching of our children, then we are going to have to change our way of thinking and our manner of life and get back to studying the Bible. Paul told Timothy to, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). It was said of those of old, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hos. 4:6). If God destroyed His children of Old because they failed to study His word and forgot His law, then think not that He will not destroy us for the very same reason. Take a good look at what Jude said in Jude 5-8. If God destroyed these of Jude's record because of their unbelief, then we should not think that we are beyond the same destruction for the same reason.

What we have let into our homes has also helped with our failure to teach our children as we should. Television shows, talk shows, movies, soap operas, and even sports tend to idolize immoral living. When the home can no longer blush at sinful activities that are allowed into the home through the TV, radio and computers, etc., we are in serious trouble. In the days of Jeremiah they also could not longer blush and they had become so used to it that they refused to come back to God. "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein" (Jer. 6:15-16).

If we are not careful, we also will become so used to the sin that we have allowed into our homes that we will say with the people of old when it comes to walking in the ways of the Lord, "We will not walk therein."

## **PARENTS ARE COMMANDED TO TEACH THEIR CHILDREN**

There are many in our government who would like to take over the teaching of our children. Hillary Clinton is one of these who would have us to believe that we as parents do not know how to raise our own children, that as she said, "It takes a village," to raise children. Much of what she said in her book, "It Takes a Village" is good. But the problem is with the implications of what she has said. Already the government is telling us what our children will be taught and what they will not be taught in school and schools are forced to comply or else their funds will be cut off by the government. If the "takes a village" idea is right then who is going to be in control of how we disciple our children? As a Christian, I don't agree with most folks on when discipline is needed and most certainly on the method of discipline. The government as a whole considers spanking a form of abuse. I and most Christians do not agree with what they believe. Hence, if it "takes a village" to raise a child, who in the village will decide when a child needs discipline and when he/she doesn't? And who will decide the means of said discipline?

Hillary and Bill Clinton have already shown the world what they are really after when it comes to the book she wrote, "It Takes a Village" to raise a child. In Conway, Arkansas there is a school called "Arkansas Governor's School". This is a school which Hillary and her husband Bill Clinton have been associated with and have helped promote as an example of what they would like to see the government do with our current school system. In the "Arkansas Governor's School" young men and women are instructed to disregard all that they have been taught by their parents and others and embrace a new form of thinking. That form of thinking is nothing less than humanism. They bring in some of the most liberal thinkers of today and try to destroy all that these young men and women of learned from their parents and others. Having spoken to a young Christian lady who

was invited to attend the school for a short period, I have first hand information about what they taught and the overall attitude of the school toward the world as you and I have known it.

Mary Doly a Radical Feminist was brought in as a guest speaker many different times to expose these young minds to her Feminist doctrine. She admits to being a pagan and says that she is proud to be a "witch". She wants a woman centered society, but she doesn't want either sex to have more power than the other. She supports Affirmative Action but she says it's not always that helpful, because the women in the office are hired by men. She admits being a lesbian and says she agrees with the story "I want a wife" in our tree book. She doesn't want marriage, but she wishes women well if they want to get married; she doesn't see why you have to marry. Overall she hates men and believes that men are the main problem with our society today.

Other speakers are both men and women who believe in a wide range of different liberal thinking. They mock Christianity and teach that you cannot know if God exists if He doesn't. They teach their students that they cannot know for certain that they exist. In fact they say that you may be in a dream world and really you are non-existent. They teach that we were not created but rather that we evolved from some other species. Is this who we want to raise our children? Isn't it time we step up to the plate and do something about who is in control of our children?

Phyllis Schlafly wrote these words that we need to heed. "Bill Clinton, Strobe Talbott, and Madeleine Albright are moving us incrementally into a network of global organizations, each of which will exercise control over Americans in a different area: (1) human behavior, (2) our economic life, (3) our private property, and (4) our armed services. The mechanisms to accomplish this global network are treaties, international conferences, executive orders, executive-branch power over federal agencies, and assignment of our armed services.

Two treaties that were written to regulate human behavior were rejected by Presidents Reagan and Bush, but have become pet projects of Bill and Hillary Clinton and Madeleine Albright.

The United Nations Treaty on the Rights of the Child would set up a broad array of children's rights against their parents. The treaty would give children the right to "rest and leisure." Does that mean that, when you tell Billy to clean up his room and carry out the garbage, he can say, "I have my UN right to rest and leisure"? Does this treaty mean that, when you tell Sally to turn off the television and do her homework, she can say, "Oh, no, I have my UN right to get information from the media of my choice"? Article 43 sets up a Committee on the Rights of the Child consisting of ten "experts" to monitor compliance. Do you want UN "experts" monitoring the way you raise your children?" (Eagle Form Beware of Clinton's "Web" of Treaties by: Phyllis Schlafly).

Is this what we want to leave for our children? If the UN "experts" monitor the way we raise our children, then our children will become wards of the state, controlled by those in power for their own political agenda.

God says that the UN leaders are not the "experts" that He has given authority to, but rather God gave the authority to parents. Abraham was instructed by God to teach his children. Notice what God says about Abraham, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" (Gen. 18:19). Abraham understood his reasonability to be a parent and teach his children so that they would keep the way of the Lord, do justice, and have good judgment.

Hebrew parents were commanded to teach their sons and grandsons, "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;" (Deut. 4:9).

They understood the serious nature of teaching their children the ways of the Lord. They taught their children the ways of the Lord day and night. Moses wrote, "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Deut. 6:6-7). Parents, if you do not teach your children then who will? Society? Schools? Humanists? Many parents have allowed everyone else to instruct their children, including the church, and have failed to teach them anything. It is not the church's place to teach our children, nor is it the world's place. It is the parents place to teach their children.

### CONCLUSION

Albert C. Trent, one of my teachers of years gone by wrote in a book, "Lessons and Sermons on the Home," these words which I believe should be placed in the heart of every Father, Mother and child. These words applied in the home would go a long way in helping to fix the breakdown of the home. "MY DEFINITION, GATHERED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES, OF A GOD-LY HOME. THIS IS THE KIND NEEDED TODAY.

1. Definition of a REAL HOME. A PLACE:
  - a. Where a world of strife is shut out and a world of love shut in.
  - b. Where the great are small, and the small are great.
  - c. Where faults are hidden, and virtues are exalted.
  - d. Where our stomach gets three meals a day and our heart gets a thousand.
  - e. Where we complain the most and have the greatest blessings.
  - f. The father's kingdom, the mother's world and the child's paradise.
  - g. Godly homes are vestibules of HEAVEN.
2. A Christian Home is a place presided over by Christians. Matt.12:25.

- a. The husband as the head. I Cor.11:3; Gen.3:16; Eph.5:23-33.
  - b. The wife, in subjection. Eph.5:22-33; Col.3:18; I Pet.3:1-3.
  - c. Each treating the other properly. I Cor.7:3-5.
3. A Christian home is a place of piety. I Tim.5:4.
  4. It is also a place of purity. I Tim.5:22; I John 3:1-3.
  5. It is a place of love. Prov.15:17.
    - a. The story of the palace and the shack.
    - b. I had rather live in a little shack and have nothing to eat and drink but bread and water . . . and have the love of my wife and children . . . and the love of God in that home, than to live in the palace and have all of the luxuries of life and not to have the love of my wife and children and the love of God. Of course if we could have the love of family and God in the palace we had rather live in the palace. But love is necessary.
  6. A Christian home is a place of contentment. Heb.13:5-6
  7. It is also a place where the WORD OF GOD is TAUGHT. Deut.4:9-10; 6:6-7; Prov.22:6; Eph.6:1-14; Gen.18:19.
  8. It is a place where we teach our children that SIN is SIN. Where we hold up RIGHT as RIGHT.”



# ABORTION VS. THE FAMILY

Tony Pulliam

*“If I am not alive, why am I growing? If I am not a human being, what kind of being am I? If I am not a child, why am I sucking my thumb? If I am a living human child, why is it legal to kill me??*

Every **twenty-one seconds** an unborn child is murdered in our country. **Murdered??** Why not use the wording of society today such as “terminate” or “extract”? For **child**, why not use “tissue,” or “fetus”? Here is why...read the following statement from the late A.W. Wiley, M.D. (world-renown Research Professor in Perinatal Physiology) very carefully...

Biologically at no stage of development can we subscribe to the view that the unborn child is a mere appendage of the mother. Genetically, the mother and baby are separate individuals from conception<sup>1</sup>

According to Dr. Wiley, the unborn child is a **unique and distinct** human being, genetically linked to the mother but certainly not a blob of tissue that the mother may destroy at her whim and fancy. Each day in the United States, approximately four thousand abortions are performed. Abortion is second only to biopsies as the most common surgical procedure in the U.S.; about four thousand abortions per day, 167 per hour, almost 3 per minute around the clock, seven days a week, year in and year out. One child in three dies by abortion in the United States.<sup>2</sup> To illustrate the magnitude of the problem of abortion, Allen Webster offers this observation (“God’s View of Abortion,” p. 6):

The National Vietnam Memorial in Washington D.C. is a shiny black wall that stretches 492 feet and lists the names of the 58,022 known Americans killed in that war. If

such a wall listed the names of the children killed by abortion since 1973, the wall would be about 60 miles long! The casualties of our wars put together are fewer than the casualties from abortion in a single year

This horrific attack on the family and home is not restricted to the United States. Abortion is legal in fifty-four of the ninety-seven countries of the world. Worldwide, there are approximately 126,000 abortions performed **each day**. In light of this, one cannot successfully deny that the most dangerous place for a child in the United States and throughout the world is inside its own mother. Since January 22, 1973, when the United States Supreme Court ruled (*Roe v. Wade*; *Doe v. Bolton*) that the unborn child is not a "person" in any meaningful sense and the killing of an unborn baby (or pre-born human, if you prefer) is an act protected by the Constitution of the United States, more than **45 million** babies have been killed in America alone! The U.S. Supreme Court granted to the woman the right to kill her baby at any time before birth, even through the ninth month of pregnancy. This was one of the most radical and unwarranted decisions ever made by any court—local, state, or federal, and according to Associate Justice Byron White, "an act of raw judicial power."<sup>3</sup> Staggering to the mind and heart to even think about, is it not?

### **SOME ORGANIZATIONS ATTACKING THE FAMILY BY SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING THE KILLING OF THE UNBORN.**

#### **NARAL**

"Originally, the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws, this group was a prime mover in getting the first abortion-on-demand law in New York passed. After legalization (*Roe v. Wade*, 1973) it became the National Abortion Right Action League, and then the National Abortion & Reproductive Rights Action League. It has been

a major force opposing the right to Life movement.”<sup>4</sup>

#### **N.O.W.**

“The National Organization for Women is a national group of radical anti-life feminists heavily influenced by the militant lesbian faction of its membership. While claiming to seek economic and employment equality for women, its two major goals are Reproductive Rights (i.e., abortion rights) and Lesbian Rights.”<sup>5</sup>

#### **ACLU**

“The American Civil Liberties Union has been consistently selective as to whose civil liberties it protects. Totally blind to the existence of the pre-born baby, it has served as the legal defense arm of the pro-abortion, anti-family movement.”<sup>6</sup>

#### **NATIONAL EDUCATION AGENCY**

“The National Education Association is the largest and most powerful labor union in the U.S. Tragically, it has embraced a wide range of radical feminist policies, **including being aggressively pro-abortion** (emphasis mine, TP). By the mid-1990s, because of abortion, U.S. student enrollment had stalled around 46 million. Without abortion, it would have been over 60 million, and over one million additional teachers would be employed (L. Roberge, *The Cost of Abortion*, Four Winds Publishing, 1995, pp. 45-49).”<sup>7</sup>

#### **SIECUS**

“The Sexuality Information & Education Council of the U.S. has worked closely with Planned Parenthood since 1970. SIECUS produces national sex education guidelines and materials. Planned Parenthood uses these through its affiliates to target every school district in the nation with their immoral and destructive programs.”<sup>8</sup>

#### **PLANNED PARENTHOOD**

“This is the largest, most powerful, most effective pro-abortion, anti-life, anti-family, anti-Christian force in the U.S. and internationally. The Planned Parenthood Federation of America is one of over 90 national affiliates of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (London). It

gets about two-thirds of its U.S. financing through local, state, and federal tax money. Over 70 of its 900 local clinics do abortions. Its total annual cash flow is almost one-half billion dollars (\$472 million, 1995). It concentrates its efforts on abortion, contraception, and sex education.”<sup>9</sup>

Note carefully the attitude Planned Parenthood holds relative to all those who oppose killing the unborn (i.e., those who oppose abortions):

In every generation there exists a group of people so filled with bigotry and self-righteousness that they will resort to any means—even violence—to impose their views on society. Today, such fanatics dominate a movement ironically called “the Right-to-Life,” a movement which threatens the most basic of all human rights<sup>10</sup>

Interestingly enough, Planned Parenthood has not always advocated abortion. In its early years, Planned Parenthood limited itself to contraception and opposed abortion. In the 1960s, Planned Parenthood’s Dr. Alan Guttmacher frankly confessed that a human baby was **present at the point of conception**. Planned Parenthood literature from this era even warned women about the dangers of abortion and correctly identified that abortion takes the life of a human being:

“Is birth control an abortion?” “Definitely not. **An abortion kills the life of a baby after it has begun** (emphasis mine, TP). It is dangerous to your life and health. It may make you sterile so that when you want a child you cannot have it. Birth control merely controls the beginning of life.”<sup>11</sup>

Planned Parenthood now emphatically denies that a human baby is present at conception and “its clientele consists largely of unmarried teenagers. It dispenses medically hazardous drugs (the pill) and devices (the I.U.D.), and

Norplant without parental knowledge or consent. It is the largest provider of abortions in America, again, to teenagers without parental knowledge or consent. It aggressively promotes sex education that, rather than reducing promiscuity, premarital sex, illegitimate pregnancies, abortion, and venereal disease, has almost certainly had just the opposite effect.”<sup>12</sup> Please, closely examine the actions, attitudes, and philosophy of this organization, read their documents and do not be fooled by slick advertising and commercialism into believing that Planned Parenthood is pro-family, pro-life, and pro-child. It most definitely is not.

The following statement was made by Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, and the sentiment expressed by her is one that pervades this organization from top to bottom to this very hour: “The most merciful thing a large family can do for one of its infant members is to kill it.”<sup>13</sup> This is the view of a woman who favored “free love” for women without sexual limits AND without the “burden” of children and a woman who saw “the marriage bed as the most degenerating influence in the social order.”<sup>14</sup>

So, what has changed? How does an organization transition from warning women of the dangers of abortions in the 1960s to aggressively promoting killing the unborn today? Has biology changed? Does science provide different information now than it did then relative to the development of the child in the womb? Dr. Landrum Shettles, a pioneer in sperm biology, fertility, and sterility provides the answer:

No knowledge has emerged since the sixties that would cause Planned Parenthood to alter its view on scientific grounds, though alter it has. Indeed, all the new knowledge we have about the unborn only further supports the idea that it is meaningful human life. The biological facts have not changed direction. **But society has** (emphasis mine, TP).<sup>15</sup>

The attitude of society has changed drastically since

abortion was legalized. At one time, our society believed in the intrinsic and equal value for every human life regardless of its stage, condition, or status. Abortion has become accepted as moral, right, and even necessary! This shift in public opinion has affected the church rather than the reverse. Jack Anderson, a journalist, wrote an article in the late 1970s describing his concept of American society and where he believed it to be headed, and time has proved his assessment to be an accurate one:

Never before has so large a share of the population indulged in an orgy of self pampering, over-dosing, loafing, sponging, splurging, cheating, shoplifting, looting, philandering, even murdering. That is what the statistics show<sup>16</sup>

If once we were a nation “under God,” we are rapidly becoming a nation “under Self.”<sup>17</sup> The motto of the world has been for a long time now, “If it feels good, do it!” After all, that is the natural response to being told humans descended from animals, with no greater purpose or higher calling than to survive. It is the natural response to being fed a steady diet of images, pictures, sounds, etc. that arouse, stimulate, provoke, and entice and teach young and old alike to take no responsibility for actions, give no thought to consequences, and if something is inconvenient (even if it is the life of another) just remove it. That is bad enough in itself but how must God feel when He looks down from Heaven and sees all that His people could be/can be, all the potential for good and godliness, and how short His people come because of INDIFFERENCE... BECAUSE WE DO NOT CARE! How His heart must break. Especially when those who profess to be Christians and good and godly stand by and DO NOTHING!! What are the children of God showing the world? Is the name of Christ and His Cause being elevated or cheapened?

## **THAT'S WHAT CHRISTIANS DO NOW**

“In 1973, The Supreme Court said it was OK to kill unborn babies. Since then, we have killed more than the entire population of Canada. And it continues. A woman’s choice? Half of those who have died in their mothers’ wombs have been women. They didn’t have a choice. It’s called abortion. Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That’s what Christians do now.

First, it was in dingy, dirty theaters. Then, convenience stores. Then, grocery stores. Then on television. Now it is in the homes of millions via the Internet. It is called pornography. Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That’s what Christians do now.

They call it ‘no fault.’ Why should we blame anyone when something so tragic happens? Haven’t they already suffered enough? Half of the marriages in America end this way. The children suffered. The family broke down. It is called divorce. Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That’s what Christians do now.

At one time it was a perversion. We kept it secret. We secured help and hope for those who practiced it. Now it is praised. We have parades celebrating it, and elected officials give it their blessing. Now it is endowed with special privileges and protected by special law. Even church leaders and governing bodies praise it. It is called homosexuality. Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That’s what Christians do now.

It used to be an embarrassment. A shame. Now a third of all births are to mothers who aren’t married. The state usually pays the tab. That is why we pay our taxes, so that the government can take the place of parents. After all, government bureaucrats know much better how to raise children than parents do. It is called illegitimacy. Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That’s what Christians do now.

At one time it was wrong. But then the state decided to legalize it, promote it, and tax it. It has ripped apart families

and destroyed lives. But just look at all the money the state has raised. No longer do we have to teach our children to study and work hard. Now we teach them that they can get something for nothing. We spend millions encouraging people to join the fun and excitement. Just look at the big sums that people are winning. They will never have to work again! It is called gambling. Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That's what Christians do now.

Not long ago, Christians were the good guys. But now any positive image of Christians in movies or on T.V. is gone. We are now depicted as the bad guys—greedy, narrow-minded hypocrites. The teacher can't have a Bible on her desk, but can have *Playboy*. We can't pray in school, but can use foul language. It's called being tolerant. Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That's what Christians do now.

Yes, all these things came to pass within thirty years. Where were the Christians? Why, they were in church! All these things are for someone else to deal with. Times have changed. Involvement has been replaced with apathy...But don't blame me. I didn't do anything. Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That's what Christians do now."<sup>18</sup>

### **SOME REASONS OFFERED BY WOMEN FOR GETTING AN ABORTION...**

When women seek to end the life of the baby growing inside them, the reasons that are given offer a great deal of insight, both to the individual and to society at large. Dr. John C. Wilke offers the following observation:

Once a woman is pregnant, barring a miscarriage or an induced abortion, she'll have a baby. Therefore, her only choice is, "How is the baby going to come out?" Will he or she come out alive and crying, or dead in pieces? Truly, her choice is between life and death—a live baby or a dead one<sup>19</sup>



Abortion providers want women to believe there is only one option—abortion. Consider the following quotes from those who have worked in abortion clinics and how they distorted the truth or intentionally withheld information:

“They are never allowed to look at the ultrasound because we knew that if they so much as heard the heart beat, they wouldn’t want to have an abortion” (Dr. Randall “Pro-Choice 1990: Skeletons in the Closet” by David Kuperlain and Mark Masters in October *New Dimensions* magazine)

“We tried to avoid the women seeing them [the fetuses]. They always wanted to know the sex, but we lied and said it was too early to tell. It’s better for the women to think of the fetus as an ‘it’” (abortion clinic worker Norma Eidleman quoted in *Rachel Weeping*, p. 34).

“Sometimes we lied. A girl might ask what her baby was like at a certain point in the pregnancy: Was it a baby yet? Even as early as 12 weeks a baby is totally formed, he has fingerprints, turns his head, fans his toes, feels pain. But we would say, “It’s not a baby yet. It’s just tissue, like a clot” (Kathy Sparks told in “The Conversion of Kathy Sparks” by Gloria Williamson, *Christian Herald*, January 1986, p. 28).

Whether women considering having an abortion have adopted the attitude of society (Me! Me! Me!) or have been deceived into thinking that abortion is the only choice, here are some of the reasons they gave:

A baby would interfere with work, school, or other responsibilities.

I cannot afford a child.

I do not want to be a single parent.

I am having problems with husband or partner.

I do not like what pregnancy will do to my body.

Getting pregnant was an accident. I just want to undo it.

It is not really a baby. It is just a “blob of tissue.”

I have to have an abortion. There is no other way.

More than 93% of abortions are done for **social or economic reasons**.

For some time now, the pro-abortion argument has centered around a woman’s right to choose, to the point of calling the child within her, and abortion itself, a “choice.” Does the woman have a right to chose abortion? Does this supercede the fetal Right to Live?? Literature from the National Right to Life addresses the concept of “choice” with these words:

What is really chosen is the killing of a human being. The methods differ but the results are the same—a dead baby. Even abortion supporters admit this. Dr. Malcolm Watts, writing a pro-abortion piece for the California Medical Association said: *“...it has been necessary to separate the idea of abortion from the idea of killing, which continues to be socially abhorrent. The result has been a curious avoidance of the scientific fact, which everyone really knows, that human life begins at conception and is continuous until death.”*

The real question is not about “choice.” It is whether we have the right to kill over 4,000 human beings a day, for any reason<sup>20</sup>

Founder and President of *Stand To Reason*, Gregory Koukl, points out, “If the unborn are not human, no justification for elective abortion is necessary. But if the unborn are human, no justification for elective abortion is adequate.”<sup>21</sup>

So, which is it? Is it a “choice” or a child? Is it a

“disease”—a “parasitic illness” for which the treatment of choice is abortion as Dr. Warren Hern, a late-term abortionist and author of *Abortion Practice*, the medical teaching text that trains doctors to perform abortions, describes it or is it a human being?<sup>22</sup> The supreme God who created the Universe and revealed Himself to mankind in the Bible has much to say relative to the unborn and the value and sanctity of life. All human life is made in God’s image (Gen. 1:27) and God hates hands that shed innocent blood (Prov. 6:16-17).

### THE CREATOR OF THE UNBORN

“For thou didst form my inward parts: Thou didst cover me (margin, “knit me together”) in my mother’s womb. I will give thanks unto Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Wonderful are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My frame was not hidden from Thee. When I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see mine unformed substance and in Thy book they were all written. Even the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was none of them (Psalm 139:13-16) [American Standard Version-1901]

*“Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself...Did not he that made me in the womb make him? And did not one fashion us in the womb”* (Isaiah 44:24; Job 31:15).<sup>23</sup> The words the Bible uses to describe the unborn child and children who have been born provide valuable insight into the importance God attaches to BOTH; indeed, to all life. For instance, Jacob and Esau are identified as “children” while still in their mother’s womb (Genesis 25:21-24). This same Hebrew word (*ben*) is used to

describe Ishmael at age 13 (Gen. 17:25) and the adult sons of Noah (Gen. 9:19).

Another Hebrew word employed by inspiration is *gohlahl*. Job, in his anguish, expresses a desire that he had never been born, i.e., as an infant (*gohlahl*) which never saw light [had never brought forth from the womb] (Job 3:16). The other nineteen times *gohlahl* is used in the Old Testament it describes a child already born. From God's perspective there is no difference in worth and value between the born and the unborn.

A person has feelings. A person has emotions. The unborn infant in Elisabeth's womb showed both feelings and emotions when he got a few feet from the unborn infant of Mary. "...the babe (*brephos*) leaped in my womb for joy" (Luke 1:44).<sup>24</sup> In the next chapter, the same Greek word (*brephos*) is used with reference to "the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger" (Luke 2:12, 16). The same word (*brephos*) is employed to describe a child that has been born (Luke 2) and one that is still in the womb (Luke 1). Additionally, it describes infants (Luke 18), young children (Acts 7), and a child old enough to learn and understand Scripture (2 Timothy 3).

*Huios* is another word of importance. This Greek word, commonly translated "son" in the New Testament, is used to describe the child within Elisabeth before birth (the one she conceived—Luke 1:36) and the child that was born (the son she delivered—Luke 1:57). God's love and concern for the human being is not reserved only for those who have been born. Scripture, again and again, confirms that the unborn child is as precious in the sight of God as the child that is born.

Abortion is indeed an attack upon the family. The innocent are being slaughtered on a wholesale basis and most people are content to stand by and let it happen. Hearts and minds have become calloused and insensitive. Attitudes and actions manifest the selfish nature of society. But all is not lost. If God's people would wake up, shake off the apathy

that is gripping the church today, and take a stand for moral responsibility, respectability, and common decency, the world can be turned back to God and the teachings of His Holy Word, the Bible.

One thing is for sure and certain, an individual cannot be godly and possess a different attitude toward abortion and the value and sanctity of life than God's. It just will not/cannot happen. So, love God and what God loves—"Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way" (Psalm 119:104).

## ENDNOTES

1. National Right to Life educational material and tracts received from Pregnancy Resource Centers in Arkansas and Texas, 2005-2006. (Available from Jonesboro Right to Life, P.O. Box 2813 Jonesboro, AR 72402-2813).
2. Pulpit Helps, Vol. 13, No. 4, Jan. 1988.
- 3 John T. Noonan, Jr., *A Private Choice* (New York, The Free Press, 1979), p. 32.
4. John Wilke and Barbara Wilke, *Abortion: Questions & Answers, Why Not Love Them Both* (Cincinnati, Hayes, 2003), p. 366.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Ibid, p. 367.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid, p. 369.
- 9 Ibid, pp. 369-373.
- 10 Planned Parenthood Pamphlet (the Justice Fund, 810 7th Ave., New York, NY 10019).
- 11 John Wilke and Barbara Wilke, *Abortion: Questions & Answers*, p. 370. (Planned Parenthood, Aug. 1963. Available from Cincinnati Right to Life, P.O. Box 24073, Cinn., OH 45224, \$3. pp.).
- 12 Ibid, pp. 370-372.
- 13 Ibid, p. 376.
- 14 David M. Kennedy, *Birth Control in America: The Career of Margaret Sanger* (London, Yale University Press, 1970).
- 15 Landrum B. Shettles and David Rorvik, *Rites of Life: The Scientific Evidence For Life Before Birth* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1983), pp. 112-113.
- 16 Jack Anderson, "What Is Happening To the American Dream?" *Parade*, March 19, 1978.
- 17 F. LaGard Smith, *When Choice Becomes God* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1990), p.20.
- 18 *Corinth Road Church of Christ Bulletin*, Vol. 22, No. 32 (Jacksonville, TX).
- 19 John Wilke and Barbara Wilke, *Abortion: Questions &*

Answers, p. 237.

- 20 National Right to Life Pamphlet, "How Are Abortions Done?" (Available from Jonesboro Right to Life, P.O. Box 2813, Jonesboro, AR 72402-2813).
- 21 Gregory Koukl, Precious Unborn Human Persons (San Pedro, CA: Stand to Reason Press, 1999), p.4.
- 22 Warren Hern, Abortion Practice (Philadelphia, J. Lipponcott, 1990), pp.8-10, 12.
- 23 All Scripture citations are from the KJV unless otherwise indicated.
- 24 "Luke, the beloved physician" (Col. 4:14), with a detailed medical background, used the same Greek word *brephos* ("breathing") for an UNBORN child, an infant, and older children. An unborn child "breathes" and receives nourishment through the umbilical cord.

# HOMOSEXUALITY VS. THE FAMILY

Ron Cosby

And he answered and said, Have ye not read, that he who made them from the beginning made *them* male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? (Matthew 19:4-5).

For this cause God gave them up unto vile passions: for their women changed the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was due. (Romans 1:26-27).

Most of us will not become comfortable seeing a couple of homosexual men embrace and kiss one another. Just as hurtful to the senses is to see a husband who has abandoned his wife and kids to shack ... ur ... I mean live with the other woman. The "Women's Liberation Movement," spouses cheating on their mates, divorce, and absentee parents are tearing homes apart. Based upon the evidence before us, we must also add the homosexual lifestyle to this list of destroyers. The homosexual lifestyle is detrimental to the family because it is harmful to the marriage, to society, and to the practicing homosexual.

## **HOMOSEXUALITY ATTACKS THE HOME BY CHANGING THE MEANING OF THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF THE HOME**

God established and properly defined marriage and the home (Gen. 2).



Using this God-given concept from Genesis, the Lord in Matthew 19 illustrated the intent and plan of God and the sinfulness of divorce when He called attention to how God set things up in the beginning. If God had wanted more than one woman for one man, He would have established it from the beginning. He did not, because it will not work. Christ reestablished the home as one *woman* with one *man*. Or, as the old saying goes, “He created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve.”

This phraseology is not “sarcastic condemnation of homosexuality.” It is a clear God-given illustration of God’s intent by creating exactly what He wanted and what man needed, though it contradicts man’s distortions. The homosexual rejoinder is, “Certainly it is obvious that procreation is a function of sexuality or none of us would be here. But, (1) is procreation the sole reason and purpose of sex? (2) along those lines is homosexuality contrary to God’s will? Even though these two questions may not be answered in the Bible to our satisfaction we do know some things for sure. Homosexuality is here.”

We wonder: Answered to whose satisfaction? The Bible has never answered clearly enough for the one practicing sin. This is why those in sin say things like “I wonder when so many of us have become this close-minded.” And, “Christian fundamentalists often use the Bible to promote discrimination against homosexuals and oppose gay marriage.” It is not a matter of being “close-minded” or discriminating against anyone. However, for those who want to do heaven’s will, we can know (John 7:17). Paul addressed the function of sexuality with the brethren in Corinth. He said, “But, because of fornications, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband” (1Cor. 7:2).

Homosexuality changes the meaning of home because a purely homosexual society would die out. Did you notice in the rejoinder that they themselves acknowledged, “It is obvious that procreation is a function of sexuality or *none of*

*us would be here* [italics rlc]” If homosexuality were followed completely, after the first generation, you would not have a home, or society, or mankind. Procreation by purely homosexuality activity is impossible. Even advocates for homosexuality acknowledge a lack of evidence on behalf of their aberrant lifestyle being biological: “While it’s true that science has not yet proven that homosexuality is biological, neither has it proven that homosexuality is environmental” (“The Advocate,” April 27, 1999, by Norah Vincent).

### **HOMOSEXUALITY ATTACKS THE HOME BY FAILING TO PROPERLY IDENTIFY HOMOSEXUALITY**

We have heard it said, “If homosexuality is caused by biological means, then we must accept homosexuality.” We do not accept the language of this assertion. Even so, when the proper distinction of true homosexuality is made, it is not to be accepted as biologically normal. God did not make one a homosexual. Furthermore, when proper distinctions are made, homosexuality is sinful. Romans 1 so teaches (to be studied later).

Is it possible to change the homosexual lifestyle? Yes. The New Report of the Kinsey Institute explains people do not “necessarily maintain the same sexual orientation throughout their lives,” then explained that “programs helping homosexuals change report varying degrees of success” (June Reinisch, *The New Kinsey Report*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1990, p. 138, 143). Keep in mind that the Kinsey Institute is their authority for many sinful activities.

Is it possible to change the homosexual lifestyle? Yes. Paul indicated it can (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Not only can it be changed, it must be changed if those guilty of sin desire to inherit eternal life (Romans 1). If they do not care about their eternal happiness, they can do what they want, as long as they do not transgression their own standard; that is, *do not shove a sinful lifestyle in our face*. If the homosexual community desires to debate the issue, an opponent can be

found if they can gather a courteous audience.

## **HOMOSEXUALITY ATTACKS THE HOME BY EXCUSING SIN**

God Himself delineated homosexuality as sin. It has always been sinful. The law given to the fathers in the beginning shows homosexuality is sinful (Matt. 19:4-6; Gen. 18). The Law of Moses clearly shows it is sinful. "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination" (Lev. 18:22). "If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death" (Lev. 20:13). The law of Christ teaches it is sinful (Mat. 19 "fornication"; Rom. 1:26-31).

Physical opposition to homosexual is contrary to the law of Christ (Gal. 6:1-4). However, if we fail to voice opposition to the homosexual practices, children will believe that wrong is right (Micah 3:2; Rom. 12:9; Isa. 5:20). After all, if the homosexual can voice his opposition to Bible doctrine, we ought to be able to voice opposition to their sinful practices. Both of us are seeking to win the battle for the reasoning "and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5).

Just a side note. Studies show that most physical violence perpetrated against homosexuals come from other homosexuals. Not just most, but almost all! This harmful behavior demonstrates a high degree of frustration.

## **HOMOSEXUALITY ATTACKS THE HOME BY DEMANDING THE HOME CHANGE INSTEAD OF CALLING FOR THE HOMOSEXUAL TO REPENT**

(see note at the end of lesson for some of the references)

Adoption laws are passed to effect change in the home. Hate crime laws are passed to this effect. Same-sex marriage laws are passed to this effect. The court battle with the Boy Scouts Of America is only one example where the sinful community has sought to bring about change through laws:

In 2000, the New Jersey Supreme Court ordered the BSA to accept gay Scout leaders. The BSA has a national policy that forbids homosexual Scouts or homosexual Scout leaders from membership in the private organization. However, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed the New Jersey decision. This reversal by the courts has caused a stir in the homosexual community. They are at odds with each other in determining their future course of action.

Many same-sex "marriage" advocates think homosexuals must win the right to "marry" in several states before bringing the case to the Supreme Court.

"That approach is failing," Mr. Gilbert said (Cf The Washington Times, "Marriage' strategies divide gay advocates," April 4, 2006).

School curriculums are instituted and classroom plays are preformed with changes in the home in mind. The Washington Post (2/2005) reports the purpose behind a high school play was the promotion of homosexuality. "The Loudoun County students who staged a play over the weekend about a high school football star's homosexuality heard some gasps, along with expressions of support, during their play's two-day, modestly attended run at Ashburn's Stone Bridge High School (VA)." Student writer-director Sabrina Audrey Jess openly explains that she was promoting acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle, "I try to promote tolerance in a school where there is not enough among teenagers and am in turn flooded with the intolerance of their parents." A year earlier, a high school play featuring a same-sex kiss between two lesbian characters caused a stir in North Vancouver (CBS News, 4/19/2004).

TV series are displayed to this effect. The American Family Online (web site) observed the subtle indoctrination of all school kids, saying,

[H]omosexual activists even intend to use as an instrument the television programming targeted specifically to children. In 1995, for example, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) called on the federal government to set guidelines requiring children's television programs to educate kids against "homophobia" and "discrimination based on sexual orientation."

Al Kielwasser, a San Francisco spokesman for GLAAD, said, "Inexcusably, broadcasters continue to overlook the enormous potential of children's television for combating homophobia."

The Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) has apparently taken GLAAD's recommendation to heart. The website for the PBS children's show **Puzzle Place** says, "Using a lively combination of song, story, comedy, puppets and lots of fun, this series sows the seeds of self-esteem and respect for others in young children."

While such a statement sounds harmless on the surface, not all the "seed" which **Puzzle Place** "sows...in young children" is innocuous. An episode in October entitled "Family Fun" taught its young viewers that "there are many different kinds of families, including...same-sex parents."

In an informative article, Randy Sharp reports on the homosexual agenda,

In 1987, gay revolutionist Michael Swift

accurately outlined the homosexual movement in America. In less than two decades, Swift's predictions have come to pass.

In the text below are the ominous predictions by Michael Swift, "Gay Revolutionary," printed in bold type, from The Congressional Record, first printed in *Gay Community News*, February 15-21, 1987. Examples of these foretellings coming to pass follow each paragraph:

We shall sodomize your sons<sup>1</sup>, emblems of your feeble masculinity, of your shallow dreams and vulgar lies. We shall seduce them in your schools<sup>2</sup>, in your dormitories, in your gymnasiums, in your locker rooms, in your sports arenas, in your seminaries, in your youth groups<sup>3</sup>, in your movie theater bathrooms, in your army bunkhouses<sup>4</sup> in your truck stops, in your all-male clubs, in your houses of Congress, wherever men are with men together. Your sons will become our minions and do our bidding. They will be recast in our image. They will come to crave and adore us.

<sup>1</sup>Although heterosexuals outnumber homosexuals by a ratio of at least 20 to 1, homosexual pedophiles commit about one-third of the total number of child sex offenses.

<sup>2</sup>Over 1,700 Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) clubs exist in public schools in the United States. GSA is a project of the The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN). In 1996, homosexual activists

organized a Day of Silence for the public school setting. More than 1,900 schools across the country participated in 2003. Students gained endorsements from school administrators, who allowed them access to PA systems, bulletin boards, and "Safe Rooms." In August, 2003, New York announced it will open the first taxpayer-funded "gay" school.

<sup>3</sup>In July 2002, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America announced a new policy allowing homosexuals to participate in after school mentoring programs without parental notification.

<sup>4</sup>In 1993, President Bill Clinton signed an executive order, allowing homosexuals to serve in the military. Until the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law, homosexuals were automatically discharged from the armed services. ([http://www.afa.net/homosexual\\_agenda/takeover.asp](http://www.afa.net/homosexual_agenda/takeover.asp))

Since their two decades of work has accomplished this much, what will the next two decades produce for their agenda? We need to be more productive in presenting the word of God.

### **HOMOSEXUALITY ATTACKS THE HOME WITH AGONIZING DISEASE**

Male homosexuals are 430 times more likely to contract HIV than a heterosexual, while heterosexuals have a 1-in-750,000 chance of contracting the virus responsible for HIV, a male homosexual has a 1-in-165 chance of getting HIV. A 20 year old gay male has a 30% chance of either dying or contracting AIDS before the age of 30.

Reuters reports (3/19/06), "In sub-Saharan Africa alone, more than 12 million children under the age of 15 have lost one or both parents to AIDS. By 2010, at current rates of HIV infection, this number is likely to increase to 18 million." Folks, we need to fight against the homosexual lifestyle not only for the sake of youngsters but for the sake of the homosexual himself/herself, though studies reveal that they choose to ignore the facts of their own demise.

### **HOMOSEXUALITY ATTACKS THE HOME WITH DEATH**

Premature physical death: If there are 9 million children who have lost one or both parents, then there are 9 to 18 million parents who died of AIDS.

Death of morality: There are also moral repercussions stemming from homosexual behavior as evidenced by the fact that one third of all sexual crimes against children are committed by homosexuals even though they are representative by no more two percent of the population. Pedophilia has even been called central to the gay lifestyle. The agenda of the North American Man Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) is to lower the age of consent so that sex with children will be legal.

Death of the will or depression: Gays are five times more likely to commit suicide than a straight person. Why? They are suffering depression because of their lifestyle.

### **HOMOSEXUALITY ATTACKS THE HOME WITH BETRAYAL**

Both adultery and homosexuality are fornication. Too many homosexuals follow the habits of adulterers. Similar to adulterers, when the homosexual comes out of the closet, they have abandoned their wives and children to carry on their illicit sexual lifestyle with another. When a wife discovers that her husband has betrayed her, it is devastating. When her husband has betrayed her to another man, it is even more difficult.



Even the homosexual community recognizes that their lifestyle adversely affects others. "The New York Review" seeks to put homosexuality in a good light. However, in the review of the movie *Brokeback Mountain*, note the detrimental effects incited by homosexual tenets (italics rlc).

After that—because their love for each other can't be fitted into the lives they think they must lead—*misery pursues and finally destroys the two men and everyone with whom they come in contact* with the relentless thoroughness you associate with Greek tragedy. By the end of the drama, indeed, *whole families have been laid waste*. Ennis's marriage to a conventional, sweet-natured girl disintegrates, savaging her simple illusions and spoiling the home life of his two daughters; Jack's nervy young wife, Lureen, devolves into a brittle shrew, her increasingly elaborate and artificial hairstyles serving as a visual marker of the ever-growing mendacity that underlies the couple's relationship. Even an appealing *young waitress ... is made miserable* by her brief contact with a man who is as enigmatic to himself as he is to her.... Though the reviewer was writing in favor of the deviate behavior, even he correctly places the hurt within the players at the feet of homosexual practices. A fact that is true to life and repeated over and over.

### CONCLUSION

Just as society makes laws against other forms of abuses perpetrated by fornication, communities ought to legislate against abuses committed by homosexuals. N.A.M.B. must not be free to fulfill their lewd desires with children. It is not a matter of being honest and coming out of the closet. It has to do with keeping your life to yourself like the rest of society.

Some stats were taken from Family Research Institute. Though one site that I used for stats is no longer available, <http://www.hscca.org/articles/homosexuality.htm> is

# **MATERIALISM VS. THE FAMILY**

**Ryan W. Kepke**

Materialism, like physical sickness, is a real problem with which we must deal. The family caught up in materialism, however, needs to be treated more urgently than the family with the common cold. Chances are this problem, unlike a cold, will not get well with the passage of time. This is because of the disposition to "get all I can" promotes the deadly humanistic philosophy. Materialism is the greatest danger contributing to the demise and instability of the home and family life. Indeed, the family is under attack and materialism is at the helm!

In our study we shall observe 1) The Meaning of Materialism; 2) The Manifestation of Materialism; 3) The Malady of Materialism; 4) The Mastering of Materialism (how to overcome it). Throughout this study we shall investigate practical materialism which many reject in theory, but adopt in practice.

## **THE MEANING OF MATERIALISM**

Materialism is "a desire for wealth and material possessions with little interest in ethical or spiritual matters."<sup>1</sup> "The theory or attitude that physical well-being and worldly possessions constitute the greatest good and highest value in life. 3. A great or excessive regard for worldly concerns."<sup>2</sup>

Brother Wendell Winkler wrote, "Materialism can be defined or described in pairs: two jobs, two wage earners, two cars plus a pickup, two houses (residence and vacation cottage), two vacations (regular and weekend getaways), two bank accounts (check and savings, to say nothing about certificates of deposit), two retirement programs (401K's and mutual funds), two recreational vehicles (SUV and four wheeler), two insurance policies (medical and life), two phone lines (family and teenager), two wardrobes (casual and formal), two televisions (den and bedroom), two weekly highlights (eating out and golf), and two goals (make all I can

and can all I get). Such matters are not wrong in and of themselves. But when they become the goal of living, the chief emphasis of life, the main occupancy of our time, the main thrust of our energies, then, materialism has taken over."<sup>3</sup>

The sin in materialism occurs when "things" become the chief emphasis in our lives. The sin of materialism is "[T]he choice of someone other than God as the supreme object of trust and service. One may choose self or he may choose a thing, another person or a concept."<sup>4</sup> Materialism "[d]ethrones God and enthrones someone or something other than God. So often it is directly the choice of self. In fact, it may be that all cases imply the choice of self as supreme, because self makes the decision, and thinks it is justified in so doing, to choose even when someone or something other than self, with the exception of God, is chosen."<sup>5</sup>

### **THE MANIFESTATION OF MATERIALISM**

Many may deny materialism in theory, but adopt it in practice by directing all their energy toward gain and pleasure. Materialism might well be identified with covetousness. Paul penned, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord [is]" (Eph. 5:17). Understanding, like faith, comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17). The hearing and application of the will of God will help each family member to keep the menacing manifestation of materialism in check. That our society is inundated with evil influences of materialism cannot be denied. Each family member must regard, reply, and react to the sin of materialism by following our Lord's example, giving a "thus saith the Lord!" (1 Pet. 2:21; Matt. 4:1 ff).

Jesus declared "... I am come that they might have life, and that they might have [it] more abundantly" (John 10:10). Jesus is not talking about material abundance; He is talking about an abundant life through happiness, and Jesus only provides such for those who are faithful to Him (John 14:6; Heb. 5:9). Materialism dominating a family is like a man in

the desert seeing the mirage of his "savior" (water). When Christians subordinate the material to the spiritual, how can they enjoy the meaningful and abundant life Jesus came to bestow (Acts 20:35; Luke 19:8ff)?

One of the most penetrating questions ever asked regarding the subject of materialism is posed by Jesus, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26). The lesson here is simple, yet extremely important. Each soul is worth more than all that the world contains. Compared to eternity, life now is miniscule. To lose one's soul means to spend eternity in hell (Matt. 16:28; Mark 8:36ff). Jesus revealed the true value of the soul when He died to save it. What have you gained if what you get from the world costs you your soul? You have gained nothing. You have lost everything!

Will we as Christians take heed and beware of covetousness? Will we understand that our lives consist not in the abundance of the things which we possess? (Luke 12:15). We must do so if we are to be victors over our material surroundings and receive heaven as our home.

Because we are inundated with materialism, Christians should give undying devotion to where they direct their affections (Col. 3:1-10; Gal. 5:24).

### **THE MALADY OF MATERIALISM**

The world is so much more materialistic today than it was just 50 years ago. We are a nation consumed by materialism, i.e. computers, lotteries, casinos, bingo, hand held computer games, and toys by the multitude. There are so many things to do these days and not enough time to do them (Eph. 5:15ff). Because of materialism, people no longer see the need to study (2 Tim. 2:15) the word of God.

Several students were polled with the question, "If you knew life and all therein would end in 24 hours what would you do?" Many answered, "Spend time with family" and "play my X box". The problem with this is that these two

things are not usually done at the same time. The student takes the X box into one room while the parents stay in another room.

Parents are partly to blame for their children's materialism. Why are young people so distant from their parents today? Could it be due to that mentality of "Do as I say but not as I do"? To illustrate: "A father and a son were walking in the snow and the boy lagged behind. The son said to his father, 'Daddy, don't take such long steps.' The father asked, 'Why son?' He replied 'Because I'm walking in your tracks!'"<sup>6</sup> Many parents have left the tracks of materialism for their children! What do parents or grandparents do when a child in a store is wailing because he/she wants something? Negotiation time! The adult quickly says, "I'll buy you a toy if you'll be quiet!" Children are being taught to be materialists! Parents need to make a gap between these materialistic pursuits and quit allowing/causing their children become victims of materialism (Eph. 6:4).

One teenager stated he would spend his 24 hours attempting to get others to know about God. When asked, "When was the last time you opened the Bible to read from it?" He answered, "I don't remember." Then next question was, "What do you believe is the major cause for this hindrance?" He answered, "My X box." A hand held computer game! We purchase and pursue things that cause us to neglect experiencing the joys of family life as God intended. A talk show some years ago depicted people, in light of our "24 hours to live" question, spending and "maxing credit cards to the limit!" Not a concerned syllable was given toward their soul's eternal abode. That however shouts everlasting condemnation!

Many parents are experts at growing flowers, crops, gardens and making money; but they are failures at training their children. The Bible talks of "training up" and "bringing up" children (Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4).

A lady with two children patched things up with her husband. Then she focused her attention on making money.

She would go to garage sales and flea markets to buy and then sell these things over the internet (Ebay) for a greater profit. Her goal was to pay off her home in order to purchase a much larger home! The children did without a mother's love because she spent the majority of her time on the computer.

Solomon wrote: "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). At the birth of his first child, Lt. Commander J.P. Carr received a letter of advice from his own father, "Teach her as many of the seven hundred thousand words of the English language as you have time to, but be sure she knows that the greatest word is GOD; the longest word, ETERNITY; the swiftest word, TIME; the nearest word, NOW; the darkest word, SIN; the meanest word, HYPOCRISY, and the deepest word, SOUL."

Parents, the greatest thing you can give, rather than to will your possessions so that little Johnny or Suzie "won't have to work," is a Christian AUG degree (2 Tim. 2:15). While secular education is certainly needed to make "ends meet," the greatest is our "Approval Unto God" degree. Drawing nigh is that time of year when shopping stores will be filled with multitudes purchasing gifts for family and friends. Parents, the best thing you can give your children is not your "presents" rather, your "presence." Setting an example before your children patterned after the divine directives is a duty not to be neglected (Col. 3:17). A televised biography, the life of Sam Walton, one of the richest men to have ever lived stated, "Mr. Walton wished he would have spent more time with his children."

Children are a sacred trust and every parent in the world would do well to accept the challenge "... ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

## **MATERIALISM DECEIVES**

How much will you spend in the approaching holiday

season? Will you spend more than you have contributed to the cause of our Lord this year? The family infected with wantonness (Jas. 5:5-11) will always be void of the comfort, the happiness provided by God.

There is a popular country song that says, "It's only human to never be satisfied." Look at many of the televised commercials, the ads you see on billboards and even in magazines. Most, if not all of these, are things which you can do without! Yet, their goal is to influence us to believe otherwise. A television commercial began with a question, "Who ever came up with the phrase: 'want verses need'?" Then came the reply after a panoramic view of the jewelry it was advertising, "Ok" it said. "We don't need jewelry. We want it!"

Covetousness is consuming our nation. "Someone living in the Bagoda Mountains of Africa observed an old baboon running through a row of corn and literally cleaning every single ear off each of the stalks. The baboon would grab an ear of corn and tuck it under his arm, then grab another and put it under the same arm. He must have been pretty stupid because when he would raise his arm to put the second ear of corn under it, the first would always drop to the ground. He would go all the way down the row, however, putting one ear after another under the same arm and dropping the previous one. When he reached the end of the row he would have only one ear of corn. The baboon would then sit down with a worried expression on his face, wondering where the rest of the corn had gone. This dumb animal was so anxious to have all that he could that he ended up losing all that he had. ... Living in a land of plenty, we have grown accustomed to getting what we want right now! Many lives have suffered disappointment because they, like the old baboon, sought to hoard the things of life in an effort to possess more. Jesus reminds us that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things which he may possess. Unfortunately our Western world has not yet come to grips with the fact that when one is minded to be rich, he is inviting trouble into his

life, and in the process, he often makes a monkey of himself."<sup>7</sup>

Jesus said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). God provides life's necessities, our needs, not our wants! (Matt. 6:19-32). The only way anyone will ever be a victor in this bout with materialism is to recognize the deceptive influences of this material world, the end thereof (Luke 12:15; 2 Pet. 3:10ff) and to properly prioritize (Acts 17:11; 1 Tim. 6:5). Paul said, "And having food and raiment let us therewith be content" (1 Tim. 6:8). The suggestion is not to sell all except a few changes of clothing. However, Christians should look where, and on what, they are spending their time, energy, and money. In view of this, are we glorifying the Lord, or are we just adding another possession to our ever growing collection of wants? Look at the life of Solomon. What will bring true happiness in life? What is the purpose of man's existence? Solomon turned to a hedonistic, materialistic lifestyle. "So King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom" (1 Kings. 10:23). Did Solomon's riches come from God? Absolutely (1 Kings 3:13), but Solomon was to blame for letting his possessions get out of hand and in front of God. After all was said and done, what did Solomon think of his great wealth? "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all [was] vanity and vexation of spirit, and [there was] no profit under the sun!" (See Eccl. 2:4-11).<sup>8</sup> "What will bring true happiness in life?" The answer is: not wealth! There was a certain ruler (Luke. 18:18ff) who was required to sell all he had because that was where his heart trusted (Luke. 12:34). By all appearances, this man was going in the right direction. Jesus, however, reveals his heart was dependant upon his material goods rather than the spiritual splendors as his question presupposes (John 2:24). "What is the purpose of man's existence?" – "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (Eccl.



12:13 cf. Matt. 4:1ff)

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (3 John 2). If the attainment of worldly possessions is our goal in life, we will never find happiness or fulfillment because there are always more things that we do not have. In Luke 12:14, 15 "one of the company" demanded, that Jesus speak to his brother that he divide the inheritance with him. Jesus responded, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." "I am going to get all I can" is the summation of the goals of those involved in materialism. A lady was once enamored with money. However, after she divorced she began to "feel" the empty pockets. Later, after remarrying, she developed an overwhelming desire to have things that did not belong to her. After she was found out, her worldly sorrow took her to counseling. She came back having learned she had a disease and proudly proclaimed that was her problem. Her problem biblically is called sin - specifically named, covetousness!

The material goods left when a family member dies have torn many families apart. Many times the siblings or the surviving spouse and the siblings are never again able to be cordial to one another.

Contrary to the teaching of Jesus, the materialist believes life is about the acquisition of things. Your life is measured by the things you own. The problem with such "happiness" is the fact that one dies when his toys are gone, and when he physically dies, then comes the judgment (Heb. 9:27). Only after we place God first and foremost in our lives, many of these other things will not matter nearly as much (1 Tim. 6:7). Despite Jesus' warning to "beware," many are plummeting headlong toward materialism's eternal abode (Matt. 4:1ff; Rev. 19:20; 20:10).

## **MASTERING MATERIALISM**

Money or material things are not sinful, rather, it is when

the love of them becomes greater than the love of things spiritual that there is sin (Rom. 8:13; 1 Tim. 6:10). Families are victorious over materialism when they pattern their lives after the worthies of Old (Heb. 11; Rom. 15:4). Abraham was a man of wealth. "Abram [was] very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold" (Gen. 13:2). These items are material blessings from God (Gen. 24:35). Abraham was able to live a life pleasing to God because he did not let his possessions become more important than God. Truly, he was a man of great faith! What a tremendous example for us today (Rom. 15:4).

Job likewise personifies the faith each of us is to emulate. Even if we were to lose everything to violence, fire, persecution, and the like, the thing Christians dare not lose is their faith and the consolation of the hope of Heaven (Col. 1:23). In the opening words of the book of Job we learn he "was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil" (v. 1). He had "seven sons and three daughters" (v. 2). "His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east" (v. 3). This was the "Bill Gates" of that time - Job, a man of much material wealth. God allowed Satan to cause Job to suffer, taking away all his material possessions, his health, and his family. What undying faith in the God of the universe! How would we fare if the same circumstances were experienced by us today? Through it all Job would not, as was encouraged by his wife, "curse God, and die" (Job 2:9). Job, an upright man, declared, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" (Job 1:21f). Through it all Job was blessed even more than in the beginning as God doubled all that he had. If you are undergoing hardship as a Christian, do not give in! Be like Job (Gal. 6:9; 1 Pet. 4:16). Even if we do not regain

our losses in this life, there is something much more glorious over the horizon (Rev. 2:10).

In Luke 16:19-31 there are two scenes pictured. The first scene is the here and now, in which each of us makes decisions that will determine our eternal destination. The second scene is after death. One man in the narrative had prepared carefully for death. He was not one to say that he had plenty of time to prepare to die. He was not only a son of God; he was faithful. Remember, "he that is faithful in little...?" (Luke 16:10). There is little danger that poverty will cause one to turn from God. Any person can deal with the lack of wealth. It is riches that choke out the word.

The rich man in the narrative had given all of his thought to the world in which he lived without any cares. Riches were his ruin. The man who had been rich in the previous world had become a beggar! Though he had the best in the previous world, he now had the worst that would last eternally. Though he had not gone to Lazarus when he was in need in the previous world, he wanted Lazarus to come to him in his need. Abraham spoke the two chilling words: "Son, remember..." God is just. Now, Lazarus, who had misery, is comforted. The rich man who had plenty is miserable for an eternity. Abraham is warning the wise. He speaks for the benefit of each one still on this side of eternity. Will we be rich here and poor there, or will we be poor in spirit here, and mindful that all really belongs to God, and be rich in the world to come?"

Leo Tolstoy wrote a story about a successful peasant farmer who was not satisfied with his lot. He wanted more of everything. One day he received a novel offer. For 1,000 rubles, he could buy all the land he could walk around in a day. The only catch in the deal was that he had to be back at his starting point by sundown. Early the next morning he started out walking at a fast pace. By midday he was very tired, but he kept going, covering more and more ground. Well into the afternoon he realized that his greed had taken him far from the starting point. He quickened his pace and as

the sun began to sink low in the sky, he began to run, because he knew that if he did not make it back by sundown the opportunity to become an even bigger landholder would be lost. As the sun began to sink below the horizon he came within sight of the finish line. Gasping for breath, his heart pounding, he called upon every bit of strength left in his body and staggered across the line just before the sun disappeared. He immediately collapsed with blood streaming from his mouth. In a few minutes he was dead. Afterwards, his servants dug a grave. It was not much over six feet long and three feet wide.<sup>10</sup>

Jesus said, "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:13ff.) "... choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15). Will it be Mammon (Materialism) or God?

If we do not fill up on the Will of God and live our lives according to its precepts, we are going to be left empty with pain and suffering in eternity. "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage" (Ps. 119:154). May we truly see our possessions as not our own.

## END NOTES

1. <http://www.onelookdictionary.com>  
<http://www.onelook.com/?w=materialism&ls=a>
2. American Heritage Electronic Dictionary-<http://education.yahoo.com/reference/dictionary/entry/materialism>.
3. Wendell Winkler, Materialism: The Spiritual Sword quarterly, Vol. 33, No. 3, p. 39.
4. The Living Messages of the Books of the Old Testament 1977, The Living Messages of Genesis, Bales, p. 25.
5. Ibid.
6. Words of Truth, Robert Taylor Jr., Parental Tracks Vol. 21, No. 03.
7. Online writings from Tom Wacaster, Lessons from a Baboon.
8. Wendell Winkler, Materialism: The Spiritual Sword quarterly, Vol. 33, No. 3, p.40.
9. Excerpts taken from the writings of Earl Gieseke, "A Voice Crying in the Wilderness," The Richest Man in Hell vs. The Poorest Man in Heaven!" No. 44.  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/VoiceCrying/message/44>
10. Bits and Pieces, November, 1991

# IMMORALITY VS. THE FAMILY

Josh Haley

One of the greatest challenges facing the Christian family is the influence of immorality so readily available and prevalent in society today. The fate of every soul ever born is directly associated with the moral fiber found in the family unit in which it was born. The world demands a strict aversion to God and morality. To be associated with the world and to fit into the societies found therein increasingly means to abandon God and the strict morals He has placed upon all people. With ideas such as this so widespread in society, it is easy to see why issues such as immorality and its effects on the family are so important to discuss. Immorality continues to destroy the family as God purposed it so many thousands of years ago.

When God first created Adam and Eve on the sixth day, he told them to be "*fruitful and multiply*", thereby creating and ordaining the first family on this earth (Genesis 1:28). Since that time God has purposed that the family be the institution to bring children into this world, an institution containing one man and one woman (Genesis 2:23-24). David the psalmist wrote by inspiration great words regarding children and their value to parents and to God: Psalms 127:3-5 "*Lo, children are a heritage of Jehovah; And the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: They shall not be put to shame, when they speak with their enemies in the gate.*" Yet as precious as children are, immorality has caused people to treat their children in horrible ways. The children of Israel destroyed their children, their families, and brought horrible curses upon themselves due to the immorality they let invade the home. Immorality caused these people to pass their children "*through the fire*" as a sacrifice to the god Molech (Leviticus 18:21, Ezekiel 16:21). The echoes of this vile action are seen today in our society's willingness to murder

the unborn.

When immorality invades the family and becomes a part of the family structure, each family member is influenced and the entire family suffers the consequences. The prophet Jeremiah illustrates this fact when he wrote to the children of Israel about their immoral deeds and the fact that immorality had invaded and found permanent residence in the home. Found in Jeremiah 44:15-19 is the account of the idol worship offered unto the “*queen of heaven*” by the entire family. Husbands, wives, and even children were involved in this form of idolatry. Jeremiah writes in Jeremiah 7:16-18, “*Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me; for I will not hear thee. Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead the dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger.*” Even after Jeremiah warns the people of this immorality and tries to dislodge immorality from its place in the family, the people replied, “*As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of Jehovah, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly perform every word that is gone forth out of our mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem; for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil*” (Jeremiah 44:16-17). Immorality, once it has found its place in the family, will surely be difficult to remove. This is why it is of utmost importance to have moral, upright families dedicated to serving God.

The very first moral instruction a person ever receives is through the family, beginning with Mom and Dad. This is why moral parents are so vitally important to rearing moral children. However, due to a lack of morality, many children are faced with a life of serving sin instead of serving God.

The examples and teachings they receive from infancy are the examples and teachings of the world, not of God. It is amazing to witness the amount of immorality to which young children are exposed, simply by watching Mom and Dad. The writer of the Book of Judges records some very sad words regarding the failure of parents in Judges 2:10- *“And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, that knew not Jehovah, nor yet the work which he had wrought for Israel.”* This passage shows the horrible failure of those parents in not instilling in their children the proper morals that God requires. This lack of teaching resulted in an entire generation falling away from the blessings of God.

God continually warns all those who would be parents to teach their children the ways of righteousness. Moses commanded the Hebrews to teach their children about God and about the great works He did for them in Egypt and in the wilderness. Moses states in Deuteronomy 6:6-9 *“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the doorposts of thy house, and upon thy gates.”* God demands that parents teach their children his ways and his commands. God places no limit upon the amount of Godly instruction a parent places upon his or her child. God commanded the Hebrew parents to diligently teach their children God’s commandments, thinking about them at every moment of every day. The poet states in Proverbs 22:6 *“Train up a child in the way he should go, And even when he is old he will not depart from it.”* God says that the child who is taught the commands of God will grow into a faithful person free from immorality. The opposite of this is clearly seen; the child that is not taught God’s ways will fall to immorality and serve



sin.

The importance of raising a child to obey God's commands is clearly seen throughout the Bible. This is extremely important because children will eventually grow up and have children themselves, and without proper morals, the next generation, just as the writer of Judges claims in Judges 2:10, will be a generation "*that knew not Jehovah.*" Asaph the prophet writes the following in Psalm 78:1-8: "*Give ear, O my people, to my law: Incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, telling to the generation to come the praises of Jehovah, and his strength, and his wondrous works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; That the generation to come might know them, even the children that should be born; Who should arise and tell them to their children, That they might set their hope in God. And not forget the works of God, But keep his commandments, And might not be as their fathers, A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation that set not their heart aright, And whose spirit was not stedfast with God.*"

Asaph the prophet clearly demonstrates the importance of each generation teaching the next generation the commands of God, so they may then teach the following generation the same. The generation before Asaph had purposed to teach Asaph's generation, who continued the teachings of God down four generations in this passage. The purpose was to prevent the generations from becoming "stubborn and rebellious", generations that were not "stedfast with God".

God likewise commands in the New Testament that parents teach their children moral, upright ways. Paul states in Ephesians 6:4, "*And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.*" Children are to be raised with the values that

God has decreed. Without such instruction in God's ways, the children will certainly leave God. Yet so many parents are unconcerned with teaching their children upright, moral ways. Parents send their children to school for forty hours a week to learn math, English, sciences, and other subjects of this world. Unfortunately, many of these parents only provide a very few hours a week teaching their children important issues such as godliness, patience, self-control. Where God commanded the Hebrews to teach their children and dwell on this teaching every minute of every day, parents today only provide spiritual training on Sunday morning and Wednesday night, if even that much. Little, if any, spiritual training is done at home. If a child learned mathematics only one or two hours of the week, the child would never grow to understand the subject of mathematics. Yet many parents think that teaching a child one or two hours of godliness every week will prepare that child for the most important day of this life, judgment day. Sadly, this simply is not the case. People spend the majority of the day bombarded with immorality, the majority of the week seeing immoral behavior, yet only dedicate a few hours a week to seeing godliness. Moral purity requires constant attention. Children and parents must focus on God and his commands, and tune out the immorality so common in society.

Society has an astounding amount of influence upon people of all age groups. What is considered normal, acceptable, and necessary actions by society becomes the normal, acceptable, and necessary actions of the individual. Unfortunately, immorality has become the normal, acceptable, and necessary action for many, if not all, societies. Therefore, these immoral practices affect each member of the family living within that society. The American society demands that immoral actions such as premarital sex, immodesty, consumption of alcohol, and acceptance of immoral behaviors such as homosexuality be commonplace and acceptable to all living within the society. It is very common for those that stand against such things to

be considered hateful, ignorant, and backward. Those opposing such immorality are considered to be abnormal and old-fashioned. Unfortunately, these immoral practices are readily available and can be found anywhere. Television, magazines, newspapers, and radio all broadcast and display immorality to the family nearly every minute of every day.

Television and magazines are perhaps the worst source of immorality available in America because of their easy access to every age group. Society demands through television and magazines that people must be “sexy and attractive”, must dress in the most modern and fashionable ways, and must look a certain way to be normal. The affect of this can readily be seen in the ways people present themselves in public. Immodesty is at an all time high in America today. Society tells people to wear less and less clothing, so this idea has now become the normal thing to do. Immodesty is normal; it is acceptable, and it is encouraged. According to Focus Adolescent Services (FAS), sex is marketed to children in many ways, encouraging them to accept sexual immorality as normal and necessary (FAS, 1999). This is done in a wide variety of ways. For example, in 2003, 83% of the episodes of the top twenty television programs viewed by teenagers contained sexual content, with 20% containing acts of fornication (FAS, 1999). According to a recent Kaiser Family Foundation report most American children over the age of 8 have TV’s in their bedrooms with no parental supervision of the programs they are watching on them (MacPherson, 2005). MacPherson also reports that the highest viewed programs of children aged 2-11 are “Survivor”, “American Idol”, and “Desperate Housewives” (2005). As if these programs were not bad enough due to the themes, content, and dress of the characters, the advertising during the commercials likewise portray sex and immodesty as normal and acceptable. One such example can be seen in an Abercrombie and Fitch marketing campaign for girls underwear with phrases such as “Wink Wink” and “Eye Candy” printed on them (FAS, 1999). These “garments”

were marketed to girls aged ten!

A person only needs to watch television channels such as MTV or VH1 for one and a half minutes to see what these “music” channels are all about. According to the FAS, 42% of the most popular songs in America contain sexual content and descriptions of sexual acts (1999). “On average, music videos contain 93 sexual situations per hour, including eleven “hard core” scenes depicting behaviors” that cannot even be mentioned in this article (FAS, 1999). With this immoral garbage being broadcast into homes all across America, is it any wonder why immorality is so prevalent and doing so much damage to the family? With sexually explicit television programs, commercials, and songs everywhere, is it any wonder that people today have chosen a life of sexual immorality? According to a CBC News broadcast that reported sexual marketing to teens in America, the average teen sees 280 sexually explicit images on the Internet, on TV, in magazine ads, and in store ads every day (CBC News, 2005).

America’s role models are also to blame for the lack of morals regarding sex and modesty in America today. A parent interviewed in a CBC News program stated the following about her daughter’s tendency to dress immodestly: *“I think that whole glittery thing is still a little bit of the child in her. She’s still got a bit of that, but now ... it’s more of a sexy look. I think it’s just the influence of pop stars. I don’t think it’s that she wants to look sexy. Not for boys. I don’t think she’s even noticed boys yet.”* (2005). Pop stars such as Britney Spears, Jessica Simpson, and Lindsay Lohan have influenced millions of young girls to dress immodestly and provocatively. Even toys have been designed around sexual content. The “Bratz” dolls so popular these days are dressed like Britney Spears, with mini-skirts and “belly shirts”, covering little and leaving little to the imagination (MacPherson, 2005).

Television Pop stars also tell us that becoming intoxicated is normal and acceptable as well. God says in Proverbs 20:1

*“Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler; and whosoever erreth thereby is not wise.”* Alcohol commercials frequently show people having so much fun, being surrounded with attractive people, being the center of attention. These same commercials never show the fat, beer belly Dad beating up his wife in a drunken stupor. Nor do they show the family of five killed in a car accident by a drunk driver. We see famous people arrested for drugs, caught in sex scandals, promoting sex tapes, all acting as if such was normal and acceptable. On the same television, people opposing such behavior are shown as hateful, ignorant, hypocritical people. They are termed “fundamental” and “closed-minded”. Television stars depict homosexuality as normal and acceptable as well. Only “homophobes” and bigots are anti-homosexual. The messages these people are telling America is that only people who are Bible thumping hypocrites do not accept such behavior. God says in Colossians 3:2 *“Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth.”* All Christians must continue to stand up against such things, no matter what the world calls us, for God wants such out of his children, *“So that with good courage we say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me?”* (Hebrews 13:6).

Because of this “norm” in the American society, more and more children are becoming sexually immoral and accepting immorality as the “norm” for everyday life. Once this mindset is in place, it will be extremely hard to dislodge it from the minds of these young people. Parents need to guard their children from such things. Parents who want to raise moral children ought to block certain TV channels and monitor all the rest, because even TV channels made for children advertise merchandise with sexual content. Parents also should closely monitor the music and video games with which their children entertain themselves. It is not just children that are affected; adults also see this form of immorality on a daily basis in all forms of media as well. This constant bombardment of immorality slowly causes

people to accept it as normal and slowly moves them away from God and the morals He demands. Sex, drugs, alcohol, homosexuality, in fact all forms of immorality, are portrayed as a normal part of everyday life. Christians, be on guard for all this! The enemy, the devil, uses this as a prime weapon against the Christian. It would do the family more good than can be imagined if Mom and Dad would turn off the radio, throw away the TV, and read the Bible instead of People Magazine. God expects more from His children than for them to allow this into the home and into the family. Remember the words of Paul in Colossians 3:5-6 *“Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for which things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience.”* Let us all put to death the things that pollute the purity of the family.

God demands that all men and women live within the moral limits He has ordained through the inspired writings of the Bible. God requires all men and women to repent of immorality because there is a day coming when all will be judged in righteousness (Acts 17:30-31). All persons have the assurance from God that they will be judged according to their deeds done while living on this earth (Romans 2:6). God has always promised that those who live faithful lives, dedicated to the morals that He has ordained, will receive the inheritance of salvation when this world passes away (Revelation 2:10, Titus 1:2). As His creation, all men and women must live godly and righteously, doing the righteous works that God has predestined for his children since before the world began (Eph. 2:10). Only those men and women who make the choice to serve God and work righteousness will be pleasing to him and granted the hope of eternal life (Acts 10:35). Considering that God means what He says - rewarding men and women for righteous behavior and condemning them for unrighteous behavior - what kind of people must we choose to be while living on this earth (II Peter 3:11)? The answer is obvious; moral people dedicated

to raising moral children. Only through righteous, moral, and upright families is this going to happen, and God tells us exactly how to do it in Philippians 4:8 “*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*”

## REFERENCES

- MacPherson, K. (2005). Is childhood becoming oversexed? Retrieved May 9, 2006 from <http://www.cyc-net.org/features/ft-oversexed.html>
- Focus Adolescent Services, FAS. (1999). Teen sexual behaviors. Retrieved May 7, 2006 from <http://www.focusas.com/SexualBehavior.html>
- CBC News. (2005). Buying into sexy: the sexing up of tweens. Retrieved May 9, 2006 from <http://www.cbc.ca/consumers/market/files/money/sexy/index.html>

# **PORNOGRAPHY VS. THE FAMILY**

**Nathan Brewer**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Ladies, the mistress coming between you and your husband might be available to him from almost any room in your house, just about any time he wants to see her. Mom and Dad, the images that could start your child down a road of perversion, confusion, violence, depression, or a lifetime of dysfunctional relationships can be seen twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week from his bedroom. And it's as easy as punching a few buttons on a keyboard.

For those of you already viewing pornography, do you know what it's doing to your family, to your mind, and to your soul? Do you care? For spouses and parents whose loved ones may be watching others do things that ought to be reserved for the marriage bed, you need to know what kind of damage is being done to your family.

## **THE FAMILY**

The Bible says a man and a woman leave their respective homes and come together to form a new family (Genesis 2:24). Marriage is the only realm in which God sanctions sexual activity, and through procreation children are brought into the world and into the home. Father, mother, and children comprise the basic family unit.

Roles for each participant are clearly defined. Dad is the primary breadwinner, gaining the family's livelihood through the sweat of his brow (Genesis 3:17-19). Mom's task is more daunting. She keeps the home fires burning and manages the day-to-day operations (Titus 2:3-5). The children are supposed to obey their parents, and the parents, in turn, are supposed to provide for the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of the kids (Ephesians 6:1-4).

The family is the basic building block of society. Man and wife forsake all others, cling to each other, and promise to do their best until they breathe their last. This means



supporting and protecting each other, modeling proper behavior for the children, and, most importantly, helping each other go to heaven. Getting through this life is easier in a family setting, and getting to heaven is easier when Mom and Dad help each other and train the children through teaching and example. But a disruptive intruder is making its way into too many homes and tossing a monkey wrench into the inner-workings of American families.

### **PORNOGRAPHY**

Merriam Webster gives three definitions for the term:

- 1: the depiction of erotic behavior (as in pictures or writing) intended to cause sexual excitement
- 2: material (as books or a photograph) that depicts erotic behavior and is intended to cause sexual excitement
- 3: the depiction of acts in a sensational manner so as to arouse a quick intense emotional reaction

That's the dictionary definition, but creating an explanation for legal purposes hasn't always been so simple. After all, in postmodern, non-judgmental, amoral American society, one man's pornography is another man's constitutionally protected freedom of expression. A few decades ago, Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart pointed out the difficulty of defining pornography when he stated that he couldn't describe it but he knew it when he saw it. But for moral and spiritual purposes, you and I can reasonably agree that pornography is material in still photos, in audio, and in video of an explicitly sexual nature, meant to produce sexual arousal. And it's everywhere.

Years ago, visual pornography was only available by renting movies, attending low class movie houses, or purchasing magazines. Having to go out in public to get this bawdy material or relying on the postman to deliver it each month kept many would-be users from indulging. But now, the preferred method of viewing licentiousness involves only

a few mouse clicks in the privacy of the home or office. The Internet provides anonymity for men, women, and children who otherwise wouldn't dare let neighbors know what they are doing.

A recent article in *The Christian Chronicle* referred to studies which revealed about 40 million adults visit X-rated web sites in America each year. The problem seems to be getting worse, both in and out of the church.

### **PORNOGRAPHY IN THE CHURCH**

John Bentley, information technology director at Freed-Hardeman University, surveyed members of the church of Christ about pornography in 2005. Of the more than 4,000 members who responded, forty-five percent of the men admitted struggling “with Internet pornography as a temptation.” And thirty percent of the men who responded said they had viewed Internet pornography more than twenty-five times. Jackie Halstead is chairwoman of the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy at Abilene Christian University. She says addiction to pornography is a problem in the church. “We’ve hardly scratched the surface of the issue.”

The story of Steve Holladay shows how pornography addiction can affect a marriage. By his early teens, Holladay led singing, organized youth activities, and even preached occasionally. But even at that young age, addiction to illicit sexual material “consumed him.” This continued while he was studying to become a youth minister at Freed-Hardeman.

He met his future wife, Holly, at school. They married, adopted two children and had two more biologically, and Steve worked as a youth minister in the Lord's church. He hoped marriage would help quench his desire for artificial sexual stimulation, and to the outside world he appeared the rock solid family man. But Steve's addiction put a strain on the marriage. In spite of their seemingly perfect life, “Holly couldn't help but feel an emotional distance, a lack of intimacy.” The couple went to counseling and things got a

little better.

But then Steve was introduced to the world of online pornography. Although he would go weeks or months without a problem, stress would lead to temptation and he'd give in, in spite of the guilt that always followed. Holladay finally got help after taking an online quiz about addiction and scoring "off the top of the chart." That's when he contacted Bethesda Workshops, a "faith-based treatment program for sexual addiction." His wife was actually relieved when Steve confessed because she realized that was the problem in their marriage—that it wasn't something she'd just imagined.

### **PORNOGRAPHY'S EFFECTS ON THE HOME**

So does pornography harm the family? Researchers say it does.

First, there's the psychological damage done to the viewer. Doctors Bob and Shay Roop are counselors who describe habitual users as people already suffering emotionally who inflict further damage on their psyche by viewing sexually explicit images.

A person caught in the web of pornography, from our observation, is someone who fears rejection at all costs, has anxiety about true intimacy and commitment, and can only be comfortable with superficial connection. Their behavior causes self-loathing, shame, a feeling of unforgivable "badness" that separates them from God, and an immense pain they cannot escape.

Author Laurie Hall claims that "the images of, and experiences produced by, pornography are permanently burned into your mind by a curious mixture of hormones that are released when sexually explicit materials are viewed." Hall says this hormonal mix becomes even stronger when the sex involves violence or fear. She says "as a result of this imprinting process, sex...will now be linked with fear, violence and shame." This is not the atmosphere in which God intended sexual activity to take place. Instead of

bringing husband and wife closer together, it becomes an avenue of gratifying debased, warped appetites.

These pornographic images tend to stay tucked into the mind long after the viewing is over, and they recur at will. Hall compares them to LSD flashbacks, and she says they take the viewer deeper into a world of fantasy. Over time, fantasy and reality become indistinguishable. “Eventually, the pornography participant becomes an empty shell of a man...seeking only one thing: fulfillment of the lust that has taken hold of him...Until at last...he spends most of his time fantasizing.”

### **DAMAGE TO MARRIAGES**

Bob and Shay Roop claim families suffer most from pornography. Addicts use virtual sexual experiences to replace actual people, putting emotional distance between husbands and wives.

The Roops’ angle on how women suffer from pornography is especially interesting. They claim the distance between men who view porn and the objects of their desire, and the uncritical “acceptance” by those women, create a false atmosphere and unfair expectations for wives. If their theory is true that addicts are typically people who fear rejection and have trouble with intimacy, then pornography only reinforces these predispositions. The Roops claim that while a wife may reject her husband for any number of reasons—physical characteristics, disappointment with finances, being “too tired” for intimacy, perceived poor physical performance—the visual images of women on computer screens never reject viewers. Men always feel welcome, wanted, and adequate. In fact, the women acting on screen always appear to want to please the men watching them. Many men would rather find virtual acceptance in a fantasy world than deal with the possibility of rejection.

A corollary to this is the unlimited access to the female body that pornography provides. With on-demand viewing of anything the male wants to see, men become accustomed

to getting what they want when they want it. Although there are times in marriages where physical intimacy is inconvenient because of any number of reasons, pornography provides the physical satisfaction that a wife may withhold.

With this virtual acceptance, a man may no longer feel the need to earn his wife's admiration. Instead, he may just expect and demand it. Rather than seeing his wife as a person worthy of his time and attention, someone with emotional needs, he may come to view her only as someone to validate him and provide him with sexual gratification. As Bob and Shay Roop point out, this focus on sexual gratification and conquest is far removed from the Bible's picture of godly love that ought to exist within the marriage bond. This mindset cuts off positive, supportive interaction and creates barriers to real intimacy.

Those descriptions of what can happen between husbands and wives when pornography enters the union is discouraging enough, but what reasonable person would deny that mental, virtual sexual gratification outside of marriage can easily lead to the real thing with another person? David Sanford cites Dr. Victor Cline who argues that addiction to pornography may lead to acting out sexually. Among the behaviors Dr. Cline lists, "compulsive promiscuity" is at the top. This is sinful and a recipe for disaster whether promiscuity occurs in or out of the bond of marriage.

"But my wife and I use pornography to spice up our love life. Since we do it consensually, and since we use it within our own relationship, I think it's okay," someone may say in response. J. Budziszewski says this rationale is a smokescreen for using a device which actually drives a wedge between spouses. He argues that when a couple utilizes porn to create excitement before love making, the man and his wife may go through the motions of having sex, but in their minds they're having sex with the actors who just aroused them. Budziszewski makes a good point: if a married couple were to hire a male and female prostitute to "warm them up" before having intercourse, society would be

shocked. “Yet that is in essence what they are doing. They are having sex with other people even though no one is present but themselves.”

If *love* involves giving of oneself in the best interest of another, this should certainly carry over into a husband and wife “making love.” This action is not simply for procreation; it brings physical pleasure and intimacy into a relationship, which strengthens a husband and wife’s emotional bond.

At least it’s supposed to. “Of course sex can be a way of making love, but it can also be a way of destroying it.” A caring person is concerned about the physical and emotional satisfaction of the spouse, even during lovemaking. Yet “when the spouses have pornographic intercourse, neither of them is fully aware of the other; each is locked tightly in self.” This has nothing to do with the sacrificial love which husbands and wives are supposed to have for each other (Ephesians 5:25; Titus 2:4).

Budziszewski also alleges using pornographic material in a marriage to enhance physical intimacy has the unintended consequence of making the users increasingly dependent on those images. A wife may be unable to arouse her husband as he comes to rely more and more on fantasy created by watching porn. And, he may need a new fantasy as the old loses its power. Not only could it escalate to needing pornography *during* sex, but Budziszewski says “fantasy may no longer be enough. He may find himself wanting his pornographic fantasies to become real.”

### **DAMAGE TO CHILDREN**

Some kids see pornography on their computer at home. Others sneak a peak at the neighbor’s house while the neighbor’s parents are at work. It’s everywhere, and it’s easy for kids to get at. But how does it affect their young minds?

Benedek and Brown say methodological and ethical concerns have limited the amount of scientific study done on the subject, yet they conclude “that enough empirical and

theoretical evidence exists to prompt alarm about the exposure of children to pornography and to support a vigorous effort to shield them from it.”

A federal suit in 1998—*Playboy Entertainment Group v. the United States of America et al.*—involved the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and the ability to block pornographic content on TV. A psychiatrist testified in the case “that all children who view televised pornography are at some risk for emotional disturbance.” This includes anxiety, nightmares, changes in attitudes, and modeling behavior.

An unpublished study on the effects of pornography on children “found that sexually reactive behaviors—including oral copulation with a same-age child, insertion of an object into one’s own anus or vagina or that of a same-age child, simulating sexual intercourse...were most apt to be displayed not by children who had been sexually abused but by those who had been exposed to pornography.”

Benedek and Brown refer to another unpublished study which shows unsettling modeling behavior by children after listening to pornographic messages on the telephone. One 13-year-old boy repeatedly exposed to these sounds had sexual intercourse with his sister’s 12-year-old friend as a result of a game of “dare.” His mother found out and asked why he did it. He replied, “It sounded like fun....You know, the phone call—the \$74 phone call.”

Parents need to fight to keep their kids away from this trash. Even though parents may teach their children about purity and the evils of premarital sex, and even if their particular social circle may disapprove of sex outside of marriage (and these days, that’s a big *if*), exposure to pornography might “encourage premature sexual activity because it may legitimize certain sexual behavior and counteract societal prohibitions concerning such conduct.” Parents can exert a tremendous influence over their kids, but so can sexually explicit material that appeals to their curiosity and to their changing bodies.

Watching and hearing sexual activity can also confuse

children.

Children up to 9 years old frequently confuse explicit parental sexual activity with violence because they do not understand what sex is, and sexual behavior looks violent to them because of the intense, repetitive, and unfamiliar movements. Children hearing sexual cries, grunts, or moans often associate them with reactions to pain.

It follows that viewing explicit material on television or the Internet can produce the same confusion. These images may result in nightmares, sleep disturbance, and regressive behavior.

One of today's ironies is that while many parents choose to pamper their children instead of helping them mature into hard working, independent adults who can handle responsibility, these same children are growing up too fast sexually. They're not psychologically and emotionally equipped for sexual activity, yet they are exposed to it in various forms. God made man a sexual being, with all of the reproductive and emotional ramifications that accompany it. But Benedek and Brown allege that watching porn can either stunt or accelerate children's normal sexual development.

### **WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS**

You will search in vain for the Bible verse that says "Thou shalt not watch pornography." But the Bible teaches in principle as well as in specifics. No passage specifically condemns using cocaine, but God's prohibition of drunkenness applies to narcotics because they produce results similar to alcohol—loss of rationality and functionality. Biblical *principles* condemn viewing pornography.

The Sermon on the Mount touches on this principle. In Matthew chapter 5, verses twenty-seven through thirty, Jesus warns that looking on a member of the opposite sex with lust is what leads to adultery. Better to remove things from our



life that cause us to commit sin than allow them to remain, only to enter eternity lost. Lust is precisely the hot button that porn pushes. Pornography is so potent because it creates lust in the viewer. This is just the sort of thing that Jesus warned against. If there are no spiritual consequences to such an activity, Jesus' warning is meaningless.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

First, if *you* view pornography, stop it. It's wrong, and you cannot continue. If you are addicted, get counseling. Work out the problems in your life that are most likely leading you to seek fulfillment outside the parameters of normal, healthy relationships. Understand that it's harming you and your family, and that God won't hold you guiltless for this activity. Consider either removing Internet service completely, or arrange it so that you're never surfing the net while alone.

If you suspect your spouse is addicted or could become addicted, confront him with your concerns. Talk about the problem. Then either remove Internet service from your house or create an atmosphere that disallows private viewing. Similar advice goes for parents with children at risk. If you're going to have Internet service at home, at least install filters. Make your children tell you which sites they visit, and check the computer for yourself for a history of their activity. While it may seem drastic, either removing Internet service from the house or physically monitoring their every move in cyberspace are two ways to ensure your kids don't see the lurid scenes wreaking so much havoc in society. You're not being overbearing or nosy—you're being a parent.

### **CONCLUSION**

Pornography continues a vicious cycle. It results from a breakdown in the social and moral code, and it perpetuates that breakdown through the antisocial, immoral behavior it encourages. American society in general and the church in

particular are faltering, at least in part, because homes are crumbling. Pornography is one of the sledge hammers that's pounding society's basic building block.

Pornography drives a wedge between spouses and leads all too often to adultery. It brings kids into a world they're not ready for, alters their normal psychological development, and warps their view of the opposite sex. It flies in the face of God's intention for sexuality and for the home. Viewing pornography is wrong, and it needs to stop.

## END NOTES

All scripture references taken from the King James Version unless otherwise noted.

*Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, tenth edition  
(Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 1993)  
907.

Bobby Ross Jr., "A Minister's escape from sexual addiction," *The Christian Chronicle*, (April 2006) 17.

Ibid, 17-18.

Ibid, 18-19.

Dr. Bob and Shay Roop, "Two Therapists Talk About Pornography," [www.family.org/married/perspectives/A0030345.cfm](http://www.family.org/married/perspectives/A0030345.cfm)

Laurie Hall, "What's the Big Deal?" [www.bauercom.net/pornography\\_whats\\_the\\_big\\_deal.htm](http://www.bauercom.net/pornography_whats_the_big_deal.htm)

Ibid.

Roop.

Ibid.

# ALCOHOL VS. THE FAMILY

**Ben Bailey**

At the tender age of 6, little Johnny began to realize his childhood was anything but normal. There were times in Johnny's life when he laughed, played, and felt almost like a normal child. Yet, even those times were overshadowed by darkness. You see, Johnny's dad was a horrible alcoholic who was verbally and physically abusive to Johnny's mother, and sometimes to Johnny. To help you understand Johnny's problem, here is an example of many days in Johnny's life. Johnny would wake up very quietly without turning on any cartoons or making any noise, for fear that he would incur the wrath of his father who had a horrible hangover from the night before. Johnny would quickly get dressed and ready for school, longing for the moment when he could finally leave. Johnny loved school more than most kids. It was the only time that he could really be himself and feel safe. Yet, even this joy was overshadowed by the fact that he would have to go home to his drunken father, who might be waiting with venomous lips and hurtful hands. About lunch time every day, little Johnny's stomach began to hurt because of the fear of having to go home. Once Johnny got home, he did everything in his power to please his father, but it was never enough. About 6 o'clock every evening, Johnny's dad would often intentionally start a fight with his mom. Johnny had seen his mother beaten to a bloody pulp many times at the hands of his intoxicated father. When this began, Johnny would go upstairs to his room, get in the closet and pray to God that his mommy and daddy would stop fighting—and that God would help his daddy quit drinking. Johnny prayed that one day he could have a normal family like the rest of the boys and girls at school. Sadly, that day never came for Johnny.

Sometimes Christian families act like the "little Johnnys" of this world do not exist; but if they did, it could never happen to us or someone we know. We sometimes pretend

to live in a idealistic world where nothing evil or bad ever happens. It is time for the Christian family to wake up and realize that these things not only do happen, but very likely are happening in our communities, congregations, and even in some of our own families. That being true, what can the Christian family do to help prevent more families like Johnny's from becoming a reality? To prevent alcohol from winning the war against the family, we must come to the Bible for the answers to three important questions: (1) How does alcohol destroy the Christian home?; (2) Why must the Christian family abstain from alcohol?; and (3) How does the Christian family prevent an alcohol problem from occurring?

### **ALCOHOL IS AT WAR WITH THE FAMILY**

The Christian family needs to understand that we are at war with an alcohol problem. Unless we make some serious changes, alcohol may even win the battle. For example, drug-rehabs.org, a Non-profit Social Betterment Organization, found that alcohol is the number one drug problem in America.<sup>1</sup> In families where alcohol is present, the children are more likely to grow up to have an alcohol problem. A report given by the Journal of Studies on Alcohol showed that parents' drinking behaviors, and favorable attitudes about drinking, have been associated with adolescents' initiating and continuing drinking.<sup>2</sup> Further evidence shows that alcohol is already a serious problem for many families today. Statistics given by Narconon, a drug-rehabilitation program with a 76% success rate, show that about 43% of U.S. adults—76 million people—have been exposed to alcoholism in the family (viz., they grew up with or married an alcoholic or a problem drinker, or had a blood relative who was an alcoholic or problem drinker.)<sup>3</sup> How sad it is that almost half of the people in the United States have grown up with, or shared their life with, someone who was battling alcohol.

While it is a statistical fact that alcohol in the home affects the home in a negative way; there is also encouraging

evidence to suggest that parents who are involved with their children, and who set clear ground rules for morality and life, will help their children not to be involved in things like alcohol. For example, the Journal of American Medical Science reports that research studies indicate children are less likely to drink when their parents are involved with them, and when they and their parents report feeling close to each other.<sup>4</sup> Another important study by the Journal of Studies on Alcohol showed that adolescents drink less, and have fewer alcohol-related problems, when their parents discipline them consistently and set out clear expectations.<sup>5</sup> This statistical evidence suggests to us that alcohol is indeed a grave problem that is threatening the home. Yet, at the same time we can clearly see that when parents make up their minds to do something about the problem, they can have a positive affect on the family. The question then arises, "What is that something?" Let us turn our attention to what God has to say about alcohol and its destructive nature on the family.

### **THE DESTRUCTIVE NATURE OF ALCOHOL ON THE FAMILY**

From the earliest days of mankind, alcohol has had a negative affect on the family. Every time we see an example of a family or person in Scripture who has become involved with alcohol, it affects the whole family in a tragic and devastating way. Let me illustrate with four examples from the Old Testament of families that suffered due to alcohol. [Notice how each of these families suffered in a slightly different area due to the affect of alcohol.]

1. Alcohol brings a curse, not a blessing to the family (Gen. 9:20-25). After coming out of the ark, Noah decided to take up farming. The Scriptures tell us that he even planted a vineyard (Gen. 9:20). When his fruit ripened, Noah drank of the wine and became drunk. We then are told that "Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside." (Gen. 9:22). Noah learned about this later, as the Scriptures record, "So Noah awoke from his

wine, and knew what his younger son had done to him” (Gen. 9:24). How sad it is to read of the great man, Noah, who had one of his sons take advantage of him sexually while he was in a drunken stupor. The text records for us that Ham “saw his nakedness” (vs. 22) and that “his younger son had done” something to him. Commentators disagree on whether or not Ham just exposed his father’s nakedness, or if he actually sexually molested him. One thing is certain; Noah never would have allowed this to happen were it not for the effects of alcohol. Sadly, Noah’s drunkenness and Ham’s immorality brought a curse upon the family. The Scriptures record Noah saying, “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants he shall be to his brethren” (Gen. 9:25). How sad it is to see this renowned biblical family of faith—who survived the flood when the rest of the world perished—drown in the muck and mire of alcohol. Yet, how many families today are also enduring a curse because of alcohol? How many fathers have gotten drunk and cheated on their wives? How many mothers have had extra-marital affairs that began as a one-night fling at a bar? How many children have been molested because an adult was under the influence of alcohol and could not control his or her passions? May God help us to realize that alcohol in the home brings a curse, not a blessing!

2. Alcohol weakens one’s morals instead of strengthening them (Gen. 19:30-38). After the destruction of the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Bible tells us that Lot and his two daughters dwelt in the Mountains outside of Zoar. Since there were no men in these mountains, Lot’s daughters concocted an immoral way of becoming pregnant—convincing their own father to impregnate them. There was only one problem: they both knew that in his right mind, Lot would never follow through with their plan. Thus, they found a destructive alternative that would weaken Lot’s moral awareness—alcohol! Lot’s daughters conspired together saying, “Our father is old, and there is no man on the earth to come in to us as is the custom of all the earth. Come,

let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father” (Gen. 19:31-32). The Scriptures tell us that their plan worked well. “And the firstborn went in and lay with her father, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose” (Gen. 9:34). This grand scheme worked well for the younger sister, too. (Gen. 9:35). As we view this immoral scene, we think to ourselves, “How disgusting and repulsive to lie with one’s own daughters!” The sad thing is that without the affects of alcohol, Lot would have been just as disgusted and repulsed. Lot never would have had sexual intercourse with his own daughters had he not been drunk. Imagine how many people look back in shame on things they did under the influence of alcohol—things they would never do in their right mind. For example, how many fathers have regretted getting drunk and beating their wife or children? How many young men have looked back in shame on the grocery store they robbed while under the influence of alcohol? How many teenage girls have become pregnant because their morals were weakened while they were under the influence of alcohol? Truly, the use of alcohol weakens one’s morals instead of strengthening them!

3. Alcohol contributes to foolish choices, not wise ones (1 Sam. 25:31-37). Nabal, whose name means fool, made some foolish decisions that are indirectly (if not directly) linked to alcohol. In the context of 1 Samuel 25, David and his men provided protection for the shepherds of Nabal while the shepherds were on the plains with the sheep. David and his men never asked for anything in return, or stole anything from these shepherds. When it came time for Nabal to return the favor to David by providing food for his army, Nabal mocked David and his men (1 Sam. 25:14). In response to this, David prepared his men for war to obliterate all the descendants of Nabal. Thanks to Abigail, Nabal’s wife, this war was prevented as a result of her kindness. When Abigail returns home to Nabal, we read these words, “. . . and there he was, holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal’s heart was merry within him, for he was very

drunk...” (1 Sam. 25:36). How foolish were the decisions of Nabal! Were it not for Nabal’s wife, David and his men would have slaughtered Nabal and all the male descendants in their drunken state. How many people today have made foolish decisions while intoxicated? How foolish it is when someone who is drunk gets behind the wheel of a car and kills an innocent family! How tragic it is for young people to be promiscuous while under the influence of alcohol and contract a sexually transmitted disease (or end up pregnant)! Truly, alcohol causes us to make foolish decisions instead of wise ones!

4. Instead of protecting the family, alcohol leaves it open to death and destruction (1 Kings 16:9ff). The life of King Elah is a prime example of the deadly nature of alcohol. One day when Elah was in Tirzah drinking himself into a stupor, his commander Zimri came in and struck him dead. Not only did his drunken state leave him open to danger, but it also wrecked his family. The Scriptures record for us that it came to pass when Zimri began to reign, “as soon as he was seated on his throne, that he killed all the household of Baasha; he did not leave one male, neither of the relatives nor of his friends” (1 Kings 16:11). Notice how deadly this one man’s moment of intoxication was. He died. All his family died. And all his friends died. The use of alcohol today is just as deadly and destructive to one’s family and friends. For example, a local newspaper reported a story of a mother who left her three children asleep in the middle of the night while she went next door to a friend’s house to “party”. Unfortunately the house caught on fire, and all the children burned to death. Could this have been prevented? We will never know. One thing is certain: had that mother been sober and at home, there would have been a greater chance those children would have survived. It is a proven fact that the use of alcohol is a leading factor in fatal accidents. According to Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, in the State of Texas in 2004 there were 3,583 traffic fatalities. Of those fatalities, 1,642 were related to the use of alcohol. That translates into



a shocking 46% of all traffic fatalities that were directly linked to alcohol! Truly, alcohol destroys the family instead of protecting it.

## **THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY MUST ABSTAIN FROM ALCOHOL**

There can be no doubt that in our battle against alcohol that abstinence is the best way to defeat this enemy of the family. Not only is it the best way, but it is also what God has authorized in His word. You will not find one passage in all of Scripture which teaches that a family should imbibe alcohol for pleasure or entertainment. The majority of what God says about alcohol appears in a negative light, and presents the use of alcohol as being destructive to a person's soul. For example, the Proverbs writer said, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise" (Prov. 20:1). Isaiah issued a strong condemnation upon God's people for their use of alcohol when he said, "But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment" (Isa. 28:7). In view of the physical affects that alcohol has upon the body (Prov 23:20-21; Hos. 7:5; Isa 19:14; Ps. 60:3), and the fact that in the Bible God condemns drunkenness in the Bible (1 Cor. 6:9-11; Eph. 5:18), the Christian family must abstain from alcohol.

The Christian family must also abstain from alcohol so that its members are alert and ready to do battle against the devil. The Scriptures teach that Christians must have all their faculties at their disposal in order to resist sin and temptation (1 Thess. 5:6-8; Titus 2:2; 1 Peter 1:13; 1 Peter 5:8). The interesting thing about these passages is the use of the word "sober." Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament defines this word as, "...the opposite of intoxication, both in the literal sense of intoxication with

wine and in the figurative sense of states of spiritual intoxication.”<sup>6</sup> Although every time the word “sober” is used in the New Testament it applies to a spiritual sobriety. Can one be sober spiritually and be drunk physically? Absolutely not! Therefore, the alert and attentive attitude that Christians should to possess demands abstinence from intoxicating drink.

One of the clearest and easiest-to-understand reasons why the Christian family should abstain from alcohol is because God has not authorized Christians to use it for physical gratification. Remember, the Christian must only do that which is authorized by the Word of God (Col. 3:17). We are told not to “go beyond” what is written in the Bible (1 Cor. 4:6). We must not add to or delete from what the Scriptures say (Rev. 22:18-19). In view of these passages, the child of God must inquire, “Where does the Bible teach that alcohol is acceptable in the home?” Within the pages of the Bible, God does not authorize, even a single time, the use of alcohol by the family. Too many times people will say, “Well, God didn’t say we couldn’t drink alcohol.” This is backward thinking. The Christian does not practice something because God does not say we cannot do it. The Christian does only that which the Bible says we can do! Christians must understand the deceptive and dangerous nature of alcohol. Alcohol appeals to us as something that will make us “cool.” The Proverbs writer vividly described for us the deceptive and deadly nature of alcohol in Proverbs 23:29-35. Notice what Solomon said, “Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, And your heart will utter perverse things. Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, Or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: “They have struck

me, but I was not hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?" (Prov. 23:29-35) (NKJV).

How I pray that every parent and young person will read Solomon's advice about alcohol through eternity's glasses, and realize its deadly and deceptive nature.

## **HOW TO PREVENT AN ALCOHOL PROBLEM IN THE FAMILY**

Since alcohol is a deadly threat to the family (and one that God strongly condemns), parents might be asking themselves, "What can I do to keep my children from getting involved in alcohol?" I thank God for every parent who asks that question. Here are four things that parents can do to help prevent alcohol from becoming the plague of their family: (1) Teach your children the evil nature of alcohol (Eph. 6:4; Deut. 6:1-6; Prov. 20:1). (2) Do not open Pandora's Box even one time. Do not let alcohol into your house for any reason (Jer. 8:12). (3) Fill your lives with godly service and Christian activities (Phil. 4:6-8; James 1:27). (4) Pray to God often for help in fighting this terrible threat to the family (James 5:16; Luke 18:1; 1 Thess. 5:17).

Satan is doing everything he can to defeat the family. He has summoned one of his greatest warriors—Alcohol—to fight against the family. Unless Christian families arise with faith in God and His Word, this dreaded adversary may well destroy our homes. However, if Christians come to understand how alcohol can destroy the family, why we must abstain from its use, and how to prevent an alcohol problem from occurring in the first place, we can win the war against both the devil and his warrior, Alcohol. May God give each of us the courage, faith, and perseverance to win the battle against alcohol!

## END NOTES

1. <http://www.drug-rehabs.org/alcohol-statistics.php>
2. Hawkins JD, Graham JW, Maguin E, et al. 1997. Exploring the effects of age of alcohol use initiation and psychosocial risk factors on subsequent alcohol misuse. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 58(3):280-290.
3. <http://www.alcoholaddiction.info/statistics.htm>
4. Resnick MD, Bearman PS, Blum RW, et al. 1997. Protecting adolescents from harm: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 278(10): 823-832.
5. Hawkins JD, Graham JW, Maguin E, et al. 1997. Exploring the effects of age of alcohol use initiation and psychosocial risk factors on subsequent alcohol misuse. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 58(3):280-290.
6. Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. IV. Pg. 936.

# **THE JUDICIARY VS. THE FAMILY**

**James Cudd**

## **INTRODUCTION**

On September 11, 2001, the United States of America came under attack by radical Islamic forces seeking to destroy this nation. But prior to and subsequent to that vicious assault, the God-designed family has been under fire in a culture war. The basic building block of society is the family. Marriage is the cornerstone of the family. Marriage is being challenged by a number of state and federal court decisions. The theme of this 2006 lectureship is “The Family Under Attack!” The focus of this particular lecture is “The Judiciary vs. the Family.”

## **OUR CREATOR DESIGNED THE FAMILY**

The family was designed by Almighty God. The family is not a product of man’s imaginative thinking. It was not created by government as another social program. No political party devised it. Marriage and family are of divine origin. The Creator of heaven and earth purposed, prepared, and provided the home for the good of humanity.

In the Book of Genesis, rightly called the “Book of Origins,” is an incredible passage in chapter two. In this historical narrative of the creation of woman and of the establishment of marriage (2:18-25), we read God’s sovereign declaration that it is not good for man to be alone. He was alone because among all the animals that God had created, there was not found a helper fit for Adam. His aloneness at this point was by God’s design; it anticipated the subsequent creation of woman for the completion of man.

At verse 21 the Scripture says, “So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.” What was Adam’s response when he saw the woman God had created for him? He said,

“At last.” Surely, through the entire lengthy, incredible process of naming the animals, Adam must have come to the conclusion that it was not good for him to be alone. So he says, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.” Adam sees a fellow image-bearer of God. He is introduced to the one that God has created especially for him, the helper who completes him. Contrary to perverted thinking, the one who completes the man is not another man, but a woman.

The inspired writer then makes the grand announcement: “Therefore a man shall leave his Father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” (2:24). The first man and the first woman became the first husband and the first wife. God established the institution of marriage between male and female, not between male and male or female and female. When Jesus addressed a question of the Pharisees regarding divorce, he referred them to “the beginning,” when God “made them male and female” (Mt. 19:4; cf. Gen. 2:24). From the beginning the divine design has been for marriage to be between a man and a woman. Marriage as established by God is to be “held in honor among all” (Heb. 13:4).

But why did God establish marriage? What is its purpose and function? One purpose of marriage is *companionship*. In the Genesis account, God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone.” God filled Adam’s need for completeness with a companion who is like the man, yet different. God-designed marriage unites opposites, each of whom provides what the other lacks, and therefore resolves the incompleteness that each feels when alone.

Another function of marriage is the *regulating of sexual behavior*. God created man with sexual desires only to be fulfilled within the confines of the marriage relationship. Anthropologist Frank Beach has written, “There is not, and can never have been, a true society without sexual rules.” The Bible sets the rules for sexual conduct for every society. The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 7:2, “But because of the

temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.” A few verses later he issued a warning to the unmarried, “But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion” (7:9). Sexual fulfillment that occurs outside the God ordained marriage relationship is sin (Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Rev. 21:8).

A central purpose for marriage is *procreation*. God’s mandate to Adam and Eve was “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it” (Gen. 1:28). In marriage, husband and wife bear offspring and join God in the procreation of other human beings with the sobering responsibility to “bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). The family as implemented by God reflects his unsurpassed wisdom. This great institution, however, is in grave danger.

### **SATAN’S FORCES ARE ATTACKING THE FAMILY**

The family as God designed it is under vicious attack. The family is not battling “against flesh and blood,” but “against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12). Satan our “adversary” (1 Pet. 5:8) is the devastating force behind all the assaults the family is facing. It appears that one of his most willing accomplices in his efforts to destroy the God-designed family is activist courts. Rulings are being handed down that place the institutions of marriage and family in extreme jeopardy.

### **Same-sex Marriage**

Activist judges are being used as instruments by homosexual activists to promote the same-sex marriage agenda. The gay crowd is pushing their plan with a passion, and the judiciary is aiding their cause. Peter Sprigg, in his book *Outrage: How Gay Activists and Liberal Judges Are Trashing Democracy to Redefine Marriage*, describes how America has arrived at this crisis moment.

“The debate over ‘gay marriage’ is the culmination of a

thirty-year struggle by liberal activists to change the definition of marriage. That effort has failed completely at the ballot box, has made only small inroads in democratically elected legislatures, but has finally broken through in the courts—an ominous sign for democracy, as well as for marriage.”

What was once truly inconceivable is now reality. The very definition of marriage, and in fact the essence of marriage itself, is under assault by an out-of-control judiciary who consider it their prerogative to write and rewrite laws rather than interpret them. Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council warns of activist judges and others “who would impose upon the American people a definition of marriage which is inconsistent with history, inconsistent with tradition, and inconsistent with the biblical instruction that we’ve been given.”

Two prominent legal decisions helped set the stage for the battle our country is now fighting against the homosexual agenda. The highest court in the Canadian province of Ontario ruled on June 10, 2003, that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms requires that marriage be granted to homosexual couples. Sixteen days later came the U.S. Supreme Court’s shocking decision in the case of *Lawrence v. Texas*, in which the Court struck down a Texas law that made “homosexual conduct” a criminal offense, essentially proclaiming homosexual sodomy to be a constitutional right.

Then five months later the horrifying deed happened! On November 18, 2003, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled, in a 4-3 decision, that same-sex couples have a newly discovered legal right to “marry.” By the narrowest of margins marriage was radically redefined for the citizens of Massachusetts. One judge’s vote changed the course of history. The decision stripped marriage of its core purpose of uniting men and women as the basic unit of the family. The court unashamedly declared that it was unilaterally changing the law to define marriage as the union of “two persons.” Judicial activism at its worst! Following this destructive



decision, Jeff Jacoby wrote in the *Boston Globe*, “This job of the judiciary is to interpret the law, but this was no mere interpretation. It was a wholesale rewriting of the law to make it say and mean things it had never said or meant before.”

Let us not, however, be uninformed about the ultimate goal of the most radical homosexual promoters. Their final aim is not merely to secure the benefits of marriage for same-sex couples, but rather to do away with God-designed marriage altogether. They seek to cheapen it to the point of irrelevance. They want to take a wrecking ball to the institution of marriage itself. Their desire is to abolish it completely. Alan Sears and Craig Osten express it plainly in *The Homosexual Agenda: Exposing the Principal Threat to Religious Freedom Today*:

“And once marriage and monogamy are redefined, they both become insignificant. It is the goal of radical homosexual activists to redefine both, and end up with a situation like parts of Europe where both marriage and the family have become meaningless.”

One of the most compelling arguments against same-sex marriage is that children suffer. Alan Sears and Craig Osten state, “If children have the right to anything, it is to begin life with a mother and father. . . . Only same-sex marriage would legally ensure that children are deprived from birth of either a mother or a father.” Homosexual activists contend that having both a mother and a father doesn’t matter—having two loving parents is what counts. Social science does not support that claim, and more importantly, neither does biblical evidence.

Jake Edwards wrote an entire book about being raised by a lesbian home. The following is a summary of the sad lessons she learned:

“We constantly wonder if we will eventually become gay. There is humiliation when other kids see our parents kissing a same-sex lover

in front of us. Trust me, it's hard on the children, no matter how much they love their gay parent. The homosexual community may never admit it, but the damage stemming from their actions can be profound."

When man tinkers and tampers with the institutions of marriage and family, children are the ultimate losers.

### **Abortion**

From the days of our beginning as a country, the sacredness of human life has been a top priority. In the preamble to the *Declaration of Independence*, the very first of the inalienable rights, said to be endowed by our Creator, is LIFE, then liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Thomas Jefferson said, "The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only legitimate object of good government."

Then the case of *Roe v. Wade* appeared before the U.S. Supreme Court thirty-three years ago. On January 22, 1973, nine black-robed men issued a death decree that lives in infamy. The case concerned Jane Roe, also known as Norma McCorvey, a resident of the state of Texas who was denied an abortion. The unmarried woman sued the state of Texas in 1970. The federal court ruled that the Texas law was unconstitutional and infringed on a woman's right to reproductive freedom. The state of Texas appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. On January 22, 1973 the Court upheld the decision of the federal court and ruled that the Texas law was unconstitutional. In fact, they ruled that all states must allow abortions not only in cases of rape but also in all cases—abortion on demand. With this landmark decision, the High Court overturned a commitment to the sanctity of human life which had been a cornerstone of Western Civilization and culture for 20 centuries.

In 1992, the Supreme Court upheld the right to abortion in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. The ruling, however, significantly weakened the legal protections previously

afforded women and physicians. The decision gave states the right to enact restrictions that do not create an “undue burden” for women seeking abortion.

In *Stenberg v. Carhart* (2000) the Supreme Court declared Nebraska’s law which criminalized partial birth abortion unconstitutional. It lacked an exception to protect the woman’s health. The Court also determined that the law imposed “an undue burden” on women.

Truly, the most dangerous place for a child in America is inside its own mother. In many cases, the mother’s womb has become the baby’s tomb. Annually, 1,370,000 abortions occur in the U.S. There are about 3, 753 abortions a day; 156 per hour, or two per minute. In our “Christian nation,” a baby is aborted every thirty seconds around the clock, seven days a week. Over 40 million abortions have been performed since the *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973.

These judicial rulings permitting abortion have definitely not demonstrated “good government.” Isaiah said, “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!” (Is. 5:20). Abortion advocates consider it a good thing that the U.S. Supreme Court eliminated any protection for an unborn child’s life in favor of a mother’s right to privacy.

Judicial decisions that uphold the practice of murdering babies are detrimental to the God-designed family. God’s desire is for mothers to love their children (Titus 2:4). Abortion is an act of selfishness rather than a demonstration of love. A child is to be cared for and nurtured and trained “in the way he should go,” with the possibility that such training will serve one in old age (Prov. 22:6). Abortion prevents such training from occurring and denies the opportunity for a life to glorify God in old age. An aborted baby is arbitrarily and unnecessarily prohibited from ever participating in the Creator’s plan to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” to God’s glory (Gen. 1:28). Abortion goes against everything God intended for the human family. The

practice produces guilt, anger, loneliness, depression, and sometimes leads to suicide. Families are divided over the issue. Abortion does not benefit the family in any way.

### **Parental Rights**

The ACLU has stated, “The United States Constitution does not mention the right of parents to direct the upbringing of their children.” Apparently, the 9<sup>th</sup> U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals shares that view. On Wednesday, November 2, 2005, the court dismissed a lawsuit brought by California parents who were outraged over a sex survey given to public school students in the first, third, and fifth grades. The survey, administered by the Palmdale School District, asked the children some very explicit questions regarding their sexuality. The parents argued that they, not the public schools, have the sole right “to control the upbringing of their children by introducing them to matters of and relating to sex.”

The three-judge panel of the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit dismissed the case with this reasoning:

“There is no fundamental right of parents to be the exclusive provider of information regarding sexual matters to their children. . . . Parents have no due process or privacy right to override the determinations of public schools as to the information to which their children will be exposed while enrolled as students.”

Judge Stephen Reinhardt, writing for the panel, said, “No such specific right can be found in the deep roots of the nation’s history and tradition or implied in the concept of ordered liberty.” If this is not one of the most blatant examples of judicial tyranny in American history, I’m not sure what qualifies. This court essentially declared parenthood unconstitutional. Keep in mind the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals is the same court that struck down the

Pledge of Allegiance in 2002 due to the phrase “under God.” It is not surprising that they struck down parenthood as well, for it, too, is “under God.”

The ACLU is working overtime to prove their disregard for the rights of parents to raise their children to embrace their values and beliefs. The ACLU, which positions itself as the great defender of rights, is very much against the rights of parents.

### **THE CHURCH MUST FIGHT FOR THE FAMILY**

The war rages on in our nation against the God-designed family. The Lord’s spiritual army must take up arms and join the battle to preserve and protect the institutions of marriage and family from being redefined and ultimately destroyed. Be aware that Satan is the number one enemy and he is a formidable foe. He utilizes powerful and effective weapons. As Christians we “are not ignorant of his designs” (2 Cor. 2:11). Satan is “a liar and the father of lies” (Jn. 8:44), and he is telling blatant and damnable lies through arrogant activist judges who sit on the courts across our land. When officials in black robes rule that two people of the same-sex can constitute a marriage that is a lie! When a judge declares man has the right, in the name of freedom, to murder babies through the practice of abortion that, too, is a bold-faced lie! When the judiciary legislates that parents really do not have the right to direct the upbringing of their children, another shameful lie has just been told! With such tragic falsehoods being uttered that threaten the well-being of the family as God designed it, what do we do? What is our responsibility as the church? How can we be most effective in the war against Satan’s forces?

### **Speak the Truth**

Let’s begin by *speaking the truth*. The truth of God’s word is where we start, where we end, and is what we must diligently defend. The apostle Paul clearly states that “the church of the living God” is “a pillar and buttress of truth” (1

Tim. 3:15). Jesus said to his Father, “Your word is truth” (Jn. 17:17). We must not remain silent. The Lord has given us an effective and powerful weapon with which to fight Satan’s forces, “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph. 6:17). We must wield it courageously.

God’s word clearly teaches that a homosexual lifestyle is sinful. God said, “You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination” (Lev. 18:22). The apostle Paul wrote:

“Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature, and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error” (Rom. 1:24-27).

Men who “practice homosexuality” will not enter heaven (1 Cor. 6:10). The church must speak the truth and issue the divine warnings on the matter of homosexuality and denounce same-sex marriage.

The scriptures also prohibit the taking of innocent and defenseless lives through abortion procedures. The Lord hates “hands that shed innocent blood” (Prov. 6:17). Who possesses more innocence than an unborn baby in its mother’s womb? The Bible makes no distinction between an unborn baby, the newborn baby, or the young child – all are considered as human beings. The church must speak the truth on the matter of abortion and uphold the sanctity of life. We

must be a friend to the unborn.

The Bible also gives parents not only the right but also the responsibility to raise their children in the way that they should go. The scriptures teach, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right” (Eph. 6:1). And yet, the ACLU has the audacity to argue that it is not right for parents to demand obedience from their children in certain matters, such as morality. The word of God instructs, “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). The ACLU on the other hand contends that parents should not be allowed to instruct their children in order to protect them from such evils as pornography. The church needs to speak the truth on the matter of the rights of parents in raising their own children. As we speak the truth from God’s word, let us remember to always do so in love (Eph. 4:15).

### **Encourage Change**

In addition to speaking the truth in love, the church should *encourage* those who show a willingness to repent and a desire to change their sinful lifestyle. In addressing the Corinthians about a number of sins, Paul wrote: “And such *were* some of you” (1 Cor. 6:11). The past tense suggests that those who once engaged in those sins, including homosexuality, had *changed* their practice through the influence of the gospel. No Christian should possess a hateful attitude toward any sinful person. We love the sinner but hate the sin. One who feels “godly grief” (2 Cor. 7:10) for having chosen abortion and seeks forgiveness must be assured that God forgives the penitent. We must long for, and work towards, the conversion of all sinners. The gospel of Christ can transform any life that is willing. God will forgive anyone who responds to his teaching with obedience (Heb. 5:8-9).

### **Pray**

The church must also fight the devil in behalf of marriage

and the family by engaging in fervent *prayer*. James wrote: “The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working” (Jas. 5:16). Christians need to be busy praying about the crisis our nation is experiencing. We must pray that those in sexual sin will repent and be transformed by the gospel. We must pray for parents to have the courage to train their children in the way they should go (Prov. 22:6). We must pray that “all who are in high positions” (1 Tim 2:2) will make decisions and rulings that favor the God-designed family. Pray that God will work providentially through those in power so that good may come to our nation.

### CONCLUSION

President Bush gave his support for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman. Some believe that the Federal Marriage Amendment has surfaced as the best-known solution being offered to the problem of same-sex marriages. Peter Sprigg states,

“Events in the courts have already made it clear that the Constitution *will*, de facto, be amended. It will either be amended by arrogant judges who write into that document “rights” that the founding fathers could never have conceived of, or it will be amended through the democratic process to protect our most fundamental institution.”

The big question in the minds of those on both sides of the abortion issue is whether *Roe v. Wade* will ever be overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court. No one is certain of the answer.

The potential damage the judiciary could inflict on the family by denying parental rights, prompted by the tireless ACLU, is unsettling to say the least. Stripping power from parents ultimately hurts the children.

Regardless of the political outcomes, children of God



must continue to preach the word to save souls and live faithful lives in obedience to our Creator. No matter what has been declared “legal” by human governments, the word of God trumps every court decision. As Peter proclaimed, “We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). We must not abandon the fight to preserve and protect the God-designed family. Let us elevate the biblical view of marriage for all eyes to see. Let our voices be heard in behalf of marriage and the family. “And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up” (Gal. 6:9).

# EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM VS. THE FAMILY

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

Oftentimes one is heard to ask, "Why aren't they teaching values in the schools?" In fact, there have been such courses for at least forty years! Kilpatrick notes, however, that: "...students are being taught the wrong method" (Kilpatrick, p.15). The foregoing author adds:

...This method, which made its appearance in the 1960's, not only fails to encourage virtuous behavior, it seems to actively undermine it, leaving children morally confused and adrift. On the other hand, there is an approach to developing character that does work....The latter is called "character education." It is based on the idea that there are traits of character children ought to know, that they learn these by example, and that once they know them, they need to practice them until they become second nature. The other approach is called "decision making" or "moral reasoning" or the "dilemma method" or "Values Clarification" (Ibid., pp. 15-16).

"Character education" is what Christian parents are told to do by God (Eph. 6:1-4). Values Clarification, along with its sister methods called "sensitivity training," and "self-esteem" courses have actually led modern children to adopt non-biblical (i.e., immoral) life-styles.

"Sensitivity training" involves groups usually "consisting of ten to fifteen persons and a facilitator or leader" (Ibid., p. 36). The goal of sensitivity training is to lead young minds into being non-judgmental or, as the sensitivists call it, "non-directive" (Ibid., p. 36). As a result of sensitivity ideals (identified as a utopian mindset where educators dream of a social structure that will "take care of everything") (Ibid., p. 221), modern education involves itself in sensitivity groups:

Values Clarification, self-esteem, day-care, health care, social care, and multi-cultural issues.

Self-esteem, on the surface, sounds good, but modern education does not view this as “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (Mat. 22:39). Kilpatrick insists that today’s educators believe that “bad choices and destructive behaviors--such as drug taking--are a result of low self-esteem” (p. 41). Most school curriculums, however, do not “connect self-esteem and behavior. People are just simply good as they are” (p. 41). This “I’m okay--You’re okay” is the “normal” mindset of today’s students, but God has said that “all have sinned” and need a change (Rom. 3:23; 1Cor. 6:9-11). Hitler seems to have been self-satisfied, but would anyone call him moral? And, would George Washington, who is often quoted as saying, “I cannot tell a lie,” actually have said, “I cannot tell a lie; I cannot tell the truth, and I cannot tell the difference?” Had Washington been educated in the modern system, he might well have adopted that latter view.

### **VALUES CLARIFICATION**

About thirty years ago the Missouri state legislature mandated that all students from kindergarten through the twelfth grade should:

Acquire a personal set of values, faith, and philosophy by the appropriate use of skills received from Values Clarification and...given the scenario of a child murderer, students should be detracted from suggesting punishment which would detract from the dignity of the prisoner” (U.S. Department of Education pamphlet. At that time, Maine, North Carolina and Virginia followed suit with the latter mandating that “If the student did not achieve ‘value,’ he was to be ‘recycled.’”).

Mary Futrell, once president of the National Education Association, is on record as saying that “Schools must move away from the ‘stuffed sausage’ approach such as learning facts to the mastery of learning project” (NEA: Teacher Training, Charlotte Isyerbyt, who was a Reagan appointee to the Department of Education, Washington, D.C.). “Mastery of learning” is a code for the values clarification method of letting a child develop his own values. Mastery of learning attempts to modify a child so that he is “socially compliant, and non-judgmental about all behaviors” (Isyerbyt, cassette tape).

Regardless of parental objections, according to Ward, “Proponents of values clarification specify certain areas...in the curriculum” (Ward, p. 41). Ward adds that these areas are “economics, minority group relations,...sex, courtship and marriage, religion and morality, and patriotism” which is defined as “local allegiance versus world allegiance,” the latter of which is preferred (Ward, 41). Isyerbyt added that “one curriculum challenges fifth graders to develop an anthem for a new country, a world-wide postage stamp, and to act out a scene showing the positive effects of interdependence” (cassette tape).

Since 1967, teachers have been trained in values clarification and can read the newsletter, Moral Education Forum, for updates. A recent website insists that “Teachers...favor Values Clarification over the...discussion approach...(and do not) transfer their own values to the student” (<http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/files/chardev.html>). A revealing note on the latter website is that after nearly four decades of teaching children to develop their own values, “Research concerning Values Clarification showed no significant change in dependent variables such as value thinking, self-concept, value-related behavior, attitudes toward school, and various courses, and willingness to see another’s point of view” (Ibid.). Evidently some educators are beginning to realize what God-fearing people have known all along. Only absolute standards from God obeyed

by one who loves God can change the inner man (c.f. John 6:63). Note the following admission from a Canadian educator:

One of the most popular teaching methods of the current decade, cooperative learning, not only improves academic achievement but seems to promote character development as well (Streshly and Schaps, 1988).

Also note the following: “The current trend in developing character revolves around the idea of directly teaching a specified set of values” (McKay, 1994). Imagine that. An educator who refers to “specified values!”

Kilpatrick lists twelve consequences of Values Clarification curriculums:

1. Classroom discussions are nothing more than the tossing around of opinions.
2. Teachers have become like “talk-show hosts” where the merits of wife-swapping and even cannibalism are debated.
3. Students are completely confused about moral standards and learn to question values taught at home.
4. Such students, when reaching adulthood, question the importance of setting a good example for their children.
5. Some churches have adopted curriculums completely at odds with their own traditional beliefs. (One might speculate here as to the origin of the liberalism among churches of Christ).
6. Theorists are now the educators and they reject Christian virtue or past history as irrelevant.
7. Values Clarification claims to be non-indoctrinating but in reality indoctrinates non-standards.

8. A generation of moral illiterates has been created who go to college without any knowledge of the Ten Commandments.
9. Students are encouraged to explore all sex options and to practice “safe sex” in whatever option.
10. Teachers are encouraged to keep parents in the dark about the content of the new curriculums.
11. Today’s populace cannot distinguish between reasonable moral arguments and mere rationalizations
12. The current system withholds from students the greatest incentive to moral behavior--namely the conviction that life makes sense (Kilpatrick, pp. 14-15).

The core of Values Clarification was first proposed by Louis E. Raths in his *Value and Teaching* (1966). Raths outlined three areas of instruction. Choosing, which was to be done freely from all available moral alternatives including a “thoughtful” consideration of the consequences of each. (Note that Kilpatrick above said that such discussions had deteriorated into mere opinion swapping.) Prizing, which meant that the student should be “happy” about his choice and should be willing to affirm the chosen moral publicly. (One wonders why a student might be reluctant to affirm some choice if, according to the educators, there are no absolute moral standards.) Acting, which meant doing something about one’s choice in a repetitive manner. The results of the process are called “values.”

John Dewey, who signed Humanist Manifesto I, believed in Darwinian evolution, which is the basis for Values Clarification methods (Stearnsman, p.1). Since no God exists, there are no absolute morals; and, therefore, Dewey would apply the “scientific method” to solve moral problems. When the problem occurred one was to observe it, reflect on it,

suggest different solutions, and reason out the consequences of each (“American Humanist Association,” *Liberal Family*, p. 675). In 1966, the National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators published a statement of principles called “Education and the Spirit of Science” which contains the following:

The spirit of rational inquiry...is called the spirit of science...and poses a clear challenge to pretensions of absolute certainty...Science insists that the student make up his own mind and no one, the school included, knows the final answer (pp. 1-22).

It is incredible that American parents would want their children educated by people who know nothing about anything! Kirschenbaum, 1977, suggests ways for teachers to keep parents from knowing what is taught. He further adds that students be asked whether they chose a value freely or whether their parents wanted them to so choose. (See the chart at the end of this essay.)

Trends that have emerged since 1960 from the teaching methods of the humanists are disturbing:

There has been a more than a 500 percent increase in violent crimes inside public schools; there has been a 400 percent increase in illegitimate births. The number of single parent families has tripled and the divorce rate has doubled. Teen suicide has tripled in number and forty percent of all births are to unwed mothers with eighty percent of all minority births occurring outside of marriage (Durand and Reister, 1990).

It seems rather obvious that choosing one’s own values is not a method able to produce moral behavior. Bible students will recall that God forbade Adam and Eve from eating of the tree of knowledge and evil (Gen. 2:17). That tree represented

the temptation to be the one to choose for oneself what was right or wrong. All through man's history he has rejected the absolute standards of a holy God and has chosen a path desired by man himself. Such direction is not in man, but he keeps trying to walk it (Jer. 10:23).

### **SENSITIVITY TRAINING**

The same principles apply that humanistic educators use to develop "Values Clarification" curriculums. The behavioral psychologist, B. F. Skinner, whose philosophy underlies modern education, decreed that man was absolutely determined by physical, environmental causes (Skinner, ). However, Jeremiah wrote that man's heart needed to look to God and that man's inner self was humanly unknowable (Jer. 17:9). Paul added that:

For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words (Col. 2:1-4).

Adding evolutionary theory to Skinner's hypotheses results in the idea that man exists only here and now and that no behavior is an aberration. The resultant philosophy is known as relativism, and its by-products are insecurity in people and a nation devoid of God or His standards. More and more one is hearing that what the Bible calls sin is merely an "alternative" lifestyle and all people are to be sensitive to all behaviors no matter how hideous. However, Paul wrote:

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not



inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind [men], Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

Those who adopt the Skinnerian philosophy believe that the state should solve all of man's problems since there can be no supernatural Being guiding man. Christians, today, are well aware of the restrictions placed on using God's name, praying in public, and even speaking out against such things as homosexuality and abortion. "Political correctness" is the coined phrase describing the sentiments of sensitivity trainers. Today one is not a sinful alcoholic but rather has a "dependency." Today one is not a deviant, but is one who has adopted an "alternative lifestyle." Kilpatrick, commenting on the various myths perpetrated in today's society by those who seek a god-less, secular world notes that:

...the worst utopian temptation is the desire to shift the focus of responsibility from the individual to the institution...the utopian imagination denies that tragedy and suffering are inherent in the human condition, and...it hopes to relieve individuals of the burden of personal morality (underlined for emphasis, K.M.). It is the habit described by T.S. Eliot of "dreaming of systems so perfect that none will need to be good." An individual governed by the utopian imagination doesn't see moral problems, he sees technical problems, and as a result his solutions are technical (Kilpatrick, p. 222)

Given the above secularly trained mind, one does not condemn drug use, but one offers clean needles in a hospital area. Given the above secularly trained mind, one does not condemn sexual activity outside of heterosexual, monogamy, but offers safe-sex kits instead. Given the above secularly trained imagination, instead of calling sin what it is, one learns new, sensitive communication skills. The most often used manual for sensitivity groups is Carl Rogers' Freedom to Learn. Rogers advertised and found some teachers ready to come to his seminars (Kilpatrick, p. 34). At first the results seemed promising but, "The final result of months and months of in-depth sharing" (between sensitivity trained teachers and students, K.M.) caused "deep divisions...between parents and teachers" (Kilpatrick, Ibid.). In fact, Catholic schools who adopted Rogers' ideas secularized and not a few closed (Kilpatrick, Ibid.). As a result of sensitivity training, teachers today "view their jobs as therapeutic" and this teaching method is called the "affective approach" (Kilpatrick, p.37). Curriculum writers today psychologize education and enforce the idea that no student is ever wrong about anything. Teachers are to:

1. Paraphrase behavioral statements such as, "so, you have had a similar experience?"
2. Reflect on "feeling" statements with such remarks as, "I see that that other person's behavior annoys you."
3. Determine never to advise, evaluate, nor moralize.
4. Realize that all statements from students are opinions and that everyone has a right to his own.
5. Ask nonjudgmental questions to promote further (underline mine, K.M.-meaning the student is to be taught that all other opinions are as right) thinking.

6. Express one's own feelings.
7. Push "risk levels" (i.e. prizing one's personal value system, K.M.) gently.
8. Trust the process (Kilpatrick, p.37).

If one is trained in sensitivity methods, then drug-taking cannot be condemned; homosexuality cannot be condemned, abortion cannot be condemned; and one cannot attain any absolute. A recent study of students who received sensitivity training concluded that "the single use of didactic methods do not work; behavior is unrelated to one's ability to reason out various questions of morality" (Leming, 1993).

Historically in America "teaching positions were filled by individuals who were considered moral and upright" (Website, p. 4). Inconsistencies in character education then arose when those teachers did not practice the standards they promoted. In America today the student is often offered a smorgasbord of values by secular teachers. "Good teachers," it has been stated actually should "present clear, consistent, and sincere messages" that "communicate high expectations" (Williams, p. 22).

## **PUBLIC EDUCATION HAS CHANGED**

### **PUBLIC EDUCATION THEN**

- AIM -

1. To promote knowledge of God, ability to read Bible, self-government, morality, and personal enrichment.
2. Teachers were considered as instructors to impart knowledge.
3. School is considered as an extension of the home.

### **GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS – NOW**

1. To secularize the individual, to change from Christian to Humanistic values.
2. Teachers are considered as "change agents" for the socialization of children.
3. School was considered as an extension the state.

## -CONTENT-

### PUBLIC EDUCATION THEN

1. A body of knowledge consistent with Judeo-Christian values, e.g., belief in existence and sovereignty of God, creation of heaven and earth, deity of Christ, inspiration of Bible, absolute Moral values, etc.
2. Emphasis upon obedience, duty and responsibility.
3. Patriotism was encouraged.

### GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS – NOW

1. A body of knowledge consistent with Humanistic values, e.g., human potential, evolution of man, naturalism, relative moral values, etc.
2. Emphasis upon moral autonomy and personal rights.
3. New-age Globalism, or one-world socialism is promoted.

## - METHODS -

### PUBLIC EDUCATION THEN

1. Reading was always taught by phonetics method (before 1930).
2. Learning was cognitive, expository, and objective.
3. Processes were by memory and recitation.
4. Teachers were authoritarian, using corporal punishment when needed.
5. Students were promoted to next grade level only when subject material was learned.

### GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS – NOW

1. Reading is now taught (85% of time) by 'look-say' method.
2. Learning is affective, by discovery, and subjective.
3. Processes are frequently by behavioral modification and psychological manipulation.
4. Teachers are generally permissive, having no disciplinary authority.
5. Students are automatically promoted whether or not the subject matter is learned.

## - RESULTS -

### PUBLIC EDUCATION THEN

1. Education quality was excellent    Adult illiteracy rate, 1800s = .4%; 1930s – 1.5%
2. Moral character – strong
3. Children were expected to achieve greater than their parents.

#### GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS – NOW

1. Educational quality is mediocre Adult illiteracy rate now functionally illiterate = 20%; barely literate, another 40%
2. Moral character – weak
3. Children are not expected to achieve equal to their parents.

(The above is from Robert Waggoner, Humanism Attacks Our Christian Homes, a sermon. Brother Waggoner is quoting from eighteen source books which he lists.)

#### CONCLUSION

It seems paramount that given the secular humanism rampant in the public school system that parents must create a moral ethos in the home, that is a school of goodness. If a child imbibes relativism all week in class, the parents must be able to counteract such drivel and cultivate a sense of absolute morality in the home (Eph. 6:4). Those children, whose parents are unaware of values methods, or who are unwilling or unable to counteract such, will be so trained that they even can smile at a sermon from the Bible and listen to another person's "truth" which just does not happen to be theirs.

Forever settled in heaven are the following words:

Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:1-4).

## ENDNOTES

“The largest independent drug education program in the United States is called Quest. Quest is described in a promotional brochure as a ‘non-profit educational organization founded in 1975 ‘whose mission is to ‘create a world that cares deeply about its young people! According to the organization’s literature, its skills for living program has been installed in ‘more than 2000 school systems in 47 states and seven countries’ while its skills for Adolescence program is used in ‘more than 12,000 communities and schools throughout the world! Quest, like many of the other drug prevention programs developed in the seventies and eighties...is modeled on Roger’s therapeutic education scheme. (‘Roger’s scheme’ is a values clarification approach, K.M.) Group leaders or ‘facilitators’ of the Quest program must teach that ‘I will never censor you--nor must you censor yourself.’” (Kilpatrick, pp. 37-38).

“Americans have been led to believe that their children will be able to fight their personal moral struggles with weapons that, upon examination, turn out to be very flimsy; there is not much evidence that values curriculums or the ‘self-esteem’ they claim to foster have much effect on behavior” (Kilpatrick, p. 25).

Suicides among young people have risen by 300 percent over the last thirty years (Statement from 1992, K.M.), and one in seven teens say they have tried to commit suicide (Kilpatrick, p. 14).

Rogers’ therapeutic approach was based on the assumption that each person has two selves, a real self and a false self, which is constructed in response to social expectations. The real self, which is basically good and trustworthy, tends to be repressed but can be released under certain conditions. What conditions? In therapy (group sessions, K.M.) ‘unconditional positive regard’--a sort of complete acceptance--is the main

ingredient...Therapists must be nonjudgmental about their clients' values and behaviors (Kilpatrick, p.35).

### BOOKS CITED

1. Dewey, John. In *Utopia Against the Family*; by Bryce S. Christensen. San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 1988.
2. Durand, A. and Reister B. "Management Theory Meets Student Developmental Theory," ERIC Document 26128, 1990.
3. Isyerbyt Charlotte, cassette tape. Isyerbyt was a presidential appointee to the NEA.
4. Kilpatrick, William K. *Why Johnny Can't Read*. New York, Simon and Schuster, 1992.
5. Leming, J. S. "In Search of Effective Character Education." *Education Leadership* 51 (3): pp. 63-71.
6. McKay R. "Character Education: A Question of Character." *Canadian Social Studies* 28 (2): pp. 46-47.
7. Raths, Louis. *Values and Teaching*. New York, 1966. (Co-authors were Merrill Harmin and Sidney Simon and all were professors of education. Simon co-wrote the *Values Clarification Handbook* with Louis Raths).
- 8, Stearsman, Jackie. "The Void of Humanism." *The Word of Life* 10(11): 1981, pp. 1-2.
9. Streshly, W. and Schaps, E. "Teaching Character Development." *The Educational Digest*, 1989, 55 (4), pp. 25-28.
10. Ward, Rita Rhodes. "Humanistic Moral Education in the Public Schools." *Voice of Freedom*, March, 1979, pp. 41-42.
11. Website:<http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/files/chardev.ht ml>.
12. Williams, M. "Actions Speak Louder Than Words: What Students Think." *Educational Leadership*, 1993, 51 (3): pp. 21-22

# **DIVORCE VS. THE FAMILY**

**David Ray**

## **INTRODUCTION**

I still recall what I consider to be the worst breakup I ever endured. It was in college and I only dated her one month, but that was long enough for me to believe she was “the one.” After she broke up with me, I recall feeling so incredibly low and worthless. I had been very confident that I would marry her, so her rejection devastated me. I can’t even imagine the feelings that accompany rejection by one who is already your spouse...someone who had pledged the rest of this life to you...someone whose life and emotions are bound up with yours. And as I think about my wife and our relationship, I do not ever want to know that feeling!

What greater weapon does Satan have with which to attack the family than divorce? When I study divorce statistics, I find that this weapon wasn’t quite so powerful 150 years ago. Robert Taylor, in his introduction to Gooble Music’s book, *Divorce*, stated that in the 1860’s there were only about 10,000 divorces per year in this country. However by 1901 that number was about 65,000, and now has hit the million mark annually since 1975. This lesson is about the effects divorce has on the family, not about divorce statistics. Even if there were only one divorce annually in this country, that would be too many. And that one divorce would have the same devastating results on its victims.

Divorce is destructive to the family. There are so many more victims than just the husband and wife. It makes us wonder if those who go through with a divorce ever truly understand the feelings and emotions of all those around them who will be affected. Because of the nature of God’s law on this topic and the vast majority of people today, even in the church, who ignore this law, it’s very easy for Christians to place a stigma on divorcees, even the innocent ones. We need to be an encouragement to these people, remembering the words of Peter, “be ye all of one mind,



having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous” (1 Peter 3:8). In order to show true love to those involved in divorce, we must recognize that true love is to love their souls. We must first understand Christ’s law on divorce and remarriage, then be able and willing to lovingly teach it, reproving and correcting those who are in violation of this law. At the same time however, recognizing the pain that accompanies those who have experienced divorce, we must not forget to provide the love and support they need from us as their brothers and sisters in Christ.

### **THE LAW ON DIVORCE**

The scope of this lesson is *not* to teach God’s law on marriage, divorce, and remarriage (MDR) in detail. Nor is it to go through all the scenarios that people get themselves into and determine who is and who isn’t eligible to remarry (although these are extremely important questions). However, in order to address the effects of divorce on the family, a brief overview of God’s law is needed.

Matthew 19:3-12 provides us with the Divine law on MDR. This law was binding in Christ’s day, regardless of the different beliefs that surrounded him. The same is true for us today. In short, Jesus said that when a man and woman get married, they become one flesh and are bound to one another for life – “what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (verse 6). Therefore, to break this bond (i.e., divorce) is sin. But are there any exceptions? And what about remarriage?

In verse three the Pharisees had asked, “Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?” In other words, can I divorce my wife for any and every reason? Our legal answer today is “no-fault divorce.” You absolutely can put away your spouse for any and every reason, or for no reason at all (just cite irreconcilable differences). But what was Jesus’ answer? Verse nine says, “And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery:

and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.” Herein Jesus gave the law on divorce and remarriage, and it’s clear that He gave one and only one exception to this rule – fornication. Notice that this exception is given only to the one doing the putting away. The one who is put away, regardless of whether he or she has committed fornication, is not entitled to remarry. No exception is given.

It is also important to briefly mention 1 Corinthians 7:15, which states, “But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.” Here Paul is speaking of the unbelieving (non-Christian) spouse of a Christian. Many interpret this as another exception to Jesus’ law in Matthew 19:9, calling this the “Pauline Privilege.” Two points need to be made regarding the word “bondage.” First, it comes from the Greek word meaning slavery, and is never used in the Scriptures in reference to the marriage bond. Marriage was never intended to be a bond of slavery. Second, the word bondage is in the perfect tense, referencing something from the past, the effects of which are still felt in the present. It could properly be translated, “a brother or sister *has not been* under bondage...” The Christian brother or sister in this situation is not under the bondage of slavery to his or her non-Christian spouse, nor has he or she *ever been* under this type of bondage. Therefore we can easily see that this verse does not give another exception to Matthew 19:9.

If a man or woman is divorced, or contemplating divorce, and is concerned with whether or not he or she can remarry, the question that must be asked is, “what is/was the reason for the divorce?” If the reason is anything other than “my spouse committed fornication,” this person is not entitled to remarry. If he chooses to remarry anyway, he will be committing adultery. The Greek verb is in the present tense, indicating here that he will be *continuously* committing adultery as long as he remains in this unauthorized relationship that God did not join together. In 1 Corinthians

7:11, Paul gave the following command to a woman in that situation: “let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband.” No other options are given, and no other scripture contradicts this law.

In showing compassion towards victims of divorce, we must realize that many of these people are indeed living in sinful situations (whether or not they are aware of it), and failure to repent and remove themselves from these relationships will eventually cost them their souls. It’s up to us to know and teach them the truth in love. Though many attack God’s law in attempts to justify these unauthorized subsequent marriages, we must realize that God is not to blame for the situations we get ourselves into; His laws are for our benefit. If we will bring our lives into harmony with His Word, we will find peace. But in doing so, those who are affected by divorce are going to need our love, care, and support.

## **THE EFFECTS OF DIVORCE**

There may be no biblical teaching that is under a heavier attack today than that of divorce/remarriage. Because of this, we may tend to become so firm and rigid on it that we forget the emotions of those who are involved in it. A divorce affects so many people – much more than just the husband and wife. As caring Christians, we need to be aware of and ready to help relieve the suffering of each person involved. Let’s look at who and how divorce attacks.

### **The Spouses**

Matthew 19:6 states, “What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” When a man and woman divorce, sin has occurred. Although there may be an innocent party in a divorce, there can never be two innocent parties. At least one has sinned either by committing fornication, or by forcing a divorce (or agreeing to divorce) where there is no fornication. So we can see that the initial effect of divorce is sin. Sin, unrepented of, leads to spiritual

death. Herein lies the worst effect of divorce.

One can be guiltless in a divorce if she does not want to divorce and does not agree to it. Unfortunately, due to our system of no-fault divorce, a spouse who desires to keep trying may have no recourse. The person she has devoted her life to, and whose life is her own (two have become one – Matthew 19:6), has torn himself away from her, taking much of her life with him. Those who have not experienced this emotion may not understand how badly this person needs our compassion and support. The person she loves most, and whom she has trusted and relied on for the fulfillment of every need she has, is now gone. But this person didn't die; he didn't leave her against his will. Rather he *chose* to leave her. How devastated she must feel! And how easy it must be to immediately seek another relationship in attempt to fill the void her husband has left, even though she is not entitled to it.

Our compassion should not be limited only to those who are innocent victims. There are many members of the church who have been divorced, *not* for the cause of fornication, and realize that they are not entitled to remarry. They understand their two options given by Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:11 – either to reconcile or remain single. But, for so many, reconciliation is not an option and they're forced to remain single for the rest of their lives. These brethren probably never expected to be in this situation, and many times may be hurting in ways that we cannot see. A congregation that fails to recognize this person's plight only makes things much worse for him. Having been deserted by his wife, he now may feel deserted by the church.

The empty feelings of abandonment brought on by divorce can lead to other physical and emotional problems. According to a study of over five thousand married adults in the late 1980's by the Institute for American Values, there is no evidence to support the false idea that divorce brings happiness. Rather, those unhappy couples who had divorced were no happier than those unhappy couples who remain

married.

"Divorce leads to many ills including poverty, depression, poor health and a greater likelihood of suicide," said Bridget Maher, a policy analyst on marriage and family at the Family Research Council. "Divorced men have higher rates of mental illness and death due to accidents and suicide than married men. Also, divorced fathers who do not live with their children are more likely to engage in behaviors that compromise their health. A study of children's home environments found that divorced mothers are less able to provide the same level of emotional support to their children than married mothers." ("The Happy Divorcée?" Chris L. Stollar, [www.family.org/married/comm/a0021846.cfm](http://www.family.org/married/comm/a0021846.cfm))

Glenn T. Stanton, Director of Social Research and Cultural Affairs and Senior Analyst for Marriage and Sexuality at Focus on the Family, discussed the effects of the no-fault divorce laws in our country.

This revolution provided researchers with a massive population sample to study, and they came to press in the late '80s and '90s with some startling findings. Large numbers of divorced adults were less secure, were failing to put their lives back together and entered affairs and cohabiting relationships that were just as troubled, if not more so, as the newly discarded marriage. Domestic violence increased dramatically. Some entered new marriages that broke up faster and as tragically as the previous ones. ("Divorce Still Hurts" Glenn T. Stanton, [www.family.org/cforum/fosi/marriage/divorce/a0031653.cfm](http://www.family.org/cforum/fosi/marriage/divorce/a0031653.cfm))

Already experiencing abandonment by a spouse, parents can also fear abandonment by their children. God never intended for the home to be split up like this, and it is certain that His intention was not to have parents vying for their children's affection. Yet this is another unfortunate result of divorce. Recently in the city where I preach, at a town meeting addressing underage drinking, a well-known college football star spoke about his problems with alcohol. When asked what was the greatest enabling factor in regards to his drinking, he sadly said that it was his mother. He told of how much he loved her, what a wonderful mother she was, and how he had never even seen her with an alcoholic beverage in her hand. However she and his father had gotten a divorce, and although she did not approve of her son's drinking, nevertheless during the alternate weeks that he lived with her she would allow him to drink because she didn't want him to "choose" his father over her! Unfortunately, this lack of proper discipline is all too often typical from parents who are divorced, simply because they fear losing their children too.

### **The Children**

What about the children? If there are children involved, this question will come up as soon as one even considers a divorce. Do we really understand how a child can be affected by his parents' divorce? Study after study has shown that children of divorcees struggle with depression, confusion, guilt, drugs and alcohol, bad behavior, poor school performance, psychiatric issues, and even suicide.

Continuing in his article "Divorce Still Hurts," Glenn T. Stanton spoke of the no-fault divorce laws and their negative effects on the children of divorcees.

Children fared even worse. Many of them described their childhoods as ending the day their parents announced the divorce. Others described being "scarred" for life. They reported being crippled by anxiety, possessed

by anger and disoriented by fear of abandonment. Their behavior, grades, and physical and mental health suffered. They were different children. In fact, they didn't see themselves as children any longer. Divorce forced them to become adults, sometimes before they became teens. (Ibid.)

Stanton went on to say "it wasn't just a handful of studies coming to these conclusions. These findings are found in mountains of academic studies."

One of the most impressive of these studies, and certainly the best known, is Judith Wallerstein's. She began studying 131 children of various ages as they experienced the divorce of their parents in the early 1970s and followed them over 25 years. Her conclusion, set forth in *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce: A 25 Year Landmark Study* (Hyperion, 2000), was that divorce was a deeply painful experience for children. They endured more depression, greater learning difficulties, more aggression toward parents and teachers and were two to three times more likely to be referred for psychological help at school than their peers from intact families. (Ibid.)

Also in reference to Wallerstein's study it was said: Compared to children from intact homes, children of divorce are far more likely to struggle academically, engage in drug and alcohol use and other high-risk behaviors, commit suicide, experience psychiatric problems, live in poverty, and have a greater likelihood to divorce themselves. Thirty years of research conclusively shows its harm to

children in virtually every measure. Studies support marital longevity as a vital component of good health for children and adults alike. (<http://www.family.org/cforum/fosi/marriage/divorce/index.cfm>)

As was mentioned above, children of divorce are more likely to go through divorce themselves later in life. This should not be a surprising discovery, understanding how children learn from their parents and tend to mimic their actions. David Popenoe, Professor of Sociology at Rutgers University and also Co-Director of the National Marriage Project, had the following insight:

Marriages of the children of divorce actually have a much higher rate of divorce than the marriages of children from intact families. A major reason for this, according to a recent study, is that children learn about marital commitment or permanence by observing their parents. In the children of divorce, the sense of commitment to a lifelong marriage has been undermined. (“The Top Ten Myths of Divorce” [www.marriage.rutgers.edu/Publications/Print/Print%20Myths%20of%20Divorce.htm](http://www.marriage.rutgers.edu/Publications/Print/Print%20Myths%20of%20Divorce.htm))

These studies have shown that divorce is like a cancer spreading from parents to children. These children don't go into marriage expecting it to last for the rest of their lives. Psychologist E. Mavis Hetherington studied 2,500 children for 30 years, and in her book *For Better or For Worse: Divorce Reconsidered* (Norton, 2002), stated that “one of the surest ways to avoid divorce is not to marry a child of divorce, so accordingly, children of divorce are not marital prospects.” What a sad statement to make! These children grow up with a tainted view of marriage, and Satan then easily wins multiple generations. Certainly this is one of his



greatest weapons (“for we are not ignorant of his devices” - 2 Corinthians 2:11).

A child may also be forced to “choose” one parent over the other. What a horrible decision to ask a child to make! Lynda Hunter wrote about how her divorce had affected her daughter. She told of watching her daughter win a race, celebrating with her father immediately afterwards, but at the same time looking over her shoulder at her mother with a look of uncertainty, not wanting to hurt either of them. She said she recognized this look from other times her daughter had been forced to decide between her parents. She concluded with this comment: “To try to mend the torn places in a child from a divorced home is similar to patching a torn piece of fabric: It can be repaired, but it will never be like new.” (“The Way It Wasn't Supposed to Be” Lynda Hunter, [www.family.org/fofmag/marriage/a0010571.cfm](http://www.family.org/fofmag/marriage/a0010571.cfm)).

Another aspect of ‘parent choosing’ to consider is when the divorcing parents have multiple children. A likely scenario has one child choosing the father, while another chooses the mother. Now not only do you have a broken home because of divorced parents, but also because of divided siblings. No wonder so many have commented about children of divorce being forced to grow up far too early. It certainly takes a mature child to maintain good relations with his brother or sister in this type of environment. A child is to honor his father and mother (Ephesians 6:2), not be forced to pick one over the other.

There are mountains of other statistics available to the researcher interested in the effects of divorce on children. However, these last two statistics ought to make us question those who claim that divorce doesn't have any negative effects on children.

According to pooled data from 1996 and 2001, 86% of adolescents ages 15–17 who lived with their married, biological parents, were reported to be in excellent or very good health, compared with 80% of adolescents

who lived with a married stepparent, 76% of those who lived with a single parent, and 67% of those who lived with neither parent.

Pooled data from 1996 and 2001 show that 2 percent of all females ages 15–17 who lived with their married biological parents became unmarried mothers by age 17–19, compared with 9 percent of those who lived with a single parent, and 27 percent of those who did not live with either parent. (“America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2005” [www.childstats.gov/americaschildren](http://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren))

### **Other Family Members and Friends**

Many may not realize how divorce has similar effects on all family members involved. When a man and woman become one in the marriage bond, they should recognize that the two families involved will and should bond as one also. Though the “in-laws” seem to become a part of many family jokes (maybe referred to as the “outlaws”), these new family members can and should become very close friends. As the statement says, “you’re not losing a daughter, you’re gaining a son.” Yet divorce reverses that statement to say, “you’re not gaining your daughter, you’re losing your son.”

These in-laws, if they care at all for their daughter, have prayed for a good spouse for her since she was born. From even before the wedding they have been good parents to her husband, welcoming him into the family and treating him as one of their own. What is their reaction supposed to be when they find out the marriage is ending? Indeed they may be as devastated as anyone. And this reaction may also be shared by grandparents, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, etc., who have welcomed him into the family and become close friends with him.

## God

It would be appropriate here to mention how divorce affects God. **1)** Divorce is a rejection of His perfect plan for man and woman. It says that God's plan wasn't good enough. **2)** It is sin. All sin is against God (1 John 3:4). As already mentioned, there is no divorce without sin on the part of at least one spouse. Sin hurts God. Both Joseph and the psalmist knew this (Genesis 39:9 and Psalm 119:11, respectively). **3)** So often, divorce brings the ultimate spiritual death of one or both parties, because of unauthorized remarriages. This hurts God, who doesn't want any to perish (2 Peter 3:9). No wonder God said that He hates divorce (Malachi 2:16).

## COPING WITH DIVORCE

For a divorcee, the first and most important step in coping is to make sure that you are not living in a sinful situation. According to Christ's law, only the one who has put away his or her spouse for the cause of fornication is entitled to marry again and be right in God's sight. If you are remarried for any other reason, Christ said you are committing adultery (Matthew 19:9). If you do not cease this sinning, your soul will be lost (Isaiah 59:2). Removing yourself from this situation may be a very difficult step to take, but remember that any suffering in this life is worth it if your eternal home is Heaven.

Also included in getting yourself right with God is the topic of forgiveness. Depending on the details of the divorce, one or both parties may need to learn forgiveness. Luke 17:3 teaches that if a brother sins against us, but then repents, we are to forgive. Colossians 3:13 teaches to forbear and forgive one another, as Christ forgave us. Therefore, if your former spouse repents, you must forgive. We cannot be right with God if we refuse to forgive a penitent brother or sister.

As has been mentioned, 1 Corinthians 7:11 provides two options for those who have divorced for some reason **other than fornication**: either reconcile or remain unmarried. In

most cases, it would seem that reconciliation would be ideal. However, this is obviously not always possible, and those who remain unmarried still have responsibilities and needs, many of which the church can help with.

It's important at this point for the single-again person to acknowledge his own spiritual needs. We are familiar with the acronym "J.O.Y." – Jesus first, Others second, and Yourself last. However, before a divorcee can take care of his responsibilities (e.g., the children), he must first remember to take care of himself. He needs to strengthen his own faith in God through prayer and personal Bible study. Once he recognizes that God and the brethren still love him, then he will be better equipped to handle his other responsibilities.

One of the biggest responsibilities is in raising children. Two parents who are divorced are not relieved of this responsibility. This includes proper discipline. It is easy for someone who has lost his or her spouse in a divorce to fear losing the child as well if he exercises necessary discipline. But a child still needs it, and parents are still required to administer it. Ephesians 6:4 still directs fathers to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Mothers are still taught to love their children (Titus 2:4). Parents are still to "train up a child in the way he should go" (Proverbs 22:6).

As in any relationship, good communication is essential in raising the children – don't leave them in the dark. Take every opportunity to reassure them that they are *not* to blame. Children react differently to divorce. Some resent their parents because of it, and some fear that they are the cause of it. Regardless of the situation in your divorce (e.g., who's at fault, who has custody, etc.), both parents should do everything they can to show their children that they are still loved. Spend time with them. Don't be late for visits with them. Do everything you can to let them know how much you still love them.

Both the parents and the children should look for and

expect support from the brethren. This is a very important resource Christian divorcees have to help deal with the effects of divorce. Good brethren should and do desire to help you in whatever way they can. Don't take away their opportunity to be blessed in this deed (Acts 20:35 – "it is more blessed to give than to receive.")

### **What Can The Church Do?**

Over the last several decades, Christ's church has been hurt repeatedly and in multiple ways by divorce and remarriage. Unfortunately, many congregations have taken the easy way out, changing God's law on the subject in order to accommodate those in unscriptural marriages. Their way of coping is to simply say that everyone's okay - that God knows your heart and will forgive any sin, even those sins for which one hasn't repented. This is, to say the least, an unbiblical handling of the situation.

In those unfortunate situations where a person is living in sin and refusing to repent, the church must exercise biblical church discipline. Failure to do so is failure to love. Although this discipline may be difficult, it is far worse in the long run to ignore the problem and allow a brother or sister to continue in this sin.

As the church strives to be more equipped to deal with divorce and its effects on the family, we mustn't stop at understanding and properly teaching Christ's law on the subject. Where we have a divorcee who has not remarried, either because he is guilty of fornication, or there was no fornication at all, we need to recognize the family destruction that has occurred, and do everything in our power to help resolve and relieve problems as best as we can.

Perhaps no scripture is more appropriate at this point than Galatians 6:1-3.

Our first instruction here is to restore (repair, mend) a brother who is overtaken in a fault or trespass. This, of course, has reference to our encouragement of this brother or sister to repent. If a brother or sister is affected by divorce to

the extent that he or she is now living in an adulterous subsequent marriage, we need to do everything we can to restore this person.

Next we're told to bear (lift, endure) one another's burdens. These "burdens" are weights that we should not have to bear alone in this world. This type of support is one of the many wonderful benefits of Christianity. Jesus said in Mark 10:29-30, "Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time..." Part of this hundredfold Christians receive in this life is the blessing of the love, compassion, support, and encouragement of their Christian brothers and sisters. We must be careful not to fall asleep on the job here and let a struggling brother or sister down.

Many who have gone through divorce feel completely rejected. They do not need this feeling perpetuated by members of the church who don't notice, or worse, don't care about their suffering. We need to make sure we are continually showing them our support and acceptance as brothers and sisters.

### **Preventive Measures**

Although the main purpose of this lesson is to address and cope with the effects of divorce on the family, it would be inappropriate not to address some preventive measures as well. So, for those couples who *are not* divorced, please accept the following advice.

Always strive to grow together in your marriage. Think about your closest friends in kindergarten. Can you even remember any of them? How about elementary school, middle school, and high school? How many of those closest friends remain your closest friends today? Probably few, if any. This is because even "close" friends grow apart. This doesn't have to happen, but it usually does because we develop different interests, spend time with different people,

decrease our communication, and slowly stop trying to be close friends. It is not surprising then that this also happens in marriages. Be careful with the amount of time you spend with other people, especially of the opposite sex! Your spouse should be your best friend and confidant. When you begin to confide with someone other than your spouse, your need for your spouse is diminished. Work on talking to and committing your attention to your spouse. Note those things the two of you have in common (ideas, opinions, foods, hobbies, books, movies, activities, etc.) and spend more time together doing these things.

“‘Divorce’ is not in our vocabulary.” My wife and I are not naïve enough to think that we’ll never have problems in our marriage. However, as two Christians dedicated to God and His Word, divorce will never be an option. When this is the case, couples are going to be much more open and motivated to reconcile!

“Love” is not just a noun; it’s a verb. And, it’s a decision. “Falling in love” sounds nice, but implies the lack of decision or intention (as one might fall into a pit). To love someone is a decision. We must choose to love God, our brethren, and our spouses. Sometimes this takes effort! As human beings, all of us at times are difficult to love. If we only loved our brethren when we “felt” it, then the church couldn’t function (and this certainly is the case at times). If we only love our spouses when we “feel” it (i.e., when we’re still “falling”), then how can a marriage last beyond the first year or two?

## CONCLUSION

Christ gave us one and only one reason for a person to divorce his spouse and remarry another, and still be acceptable in God’s sight. But this is not the message we want to leave with today. Though we may have and hold to the truth on this topic, it may be that we are guilty of failure to bear the burdens of those who have been hurt by divorce. If you have not had to experience this tragedy, either personally or in your own family, thank God for that

blessing. But don't feel that this relieves you of your responsibility to help those who have dealt with, and are dealing with, divorce. This lesson was written with the main purpose of encouraging each one of us to think about the burdens divorce victims are bearing, how their families have been attacked, and how we can help them in whatever way we can. "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."



# GAMBLING VS. THE FAMILY

Johnny D. Hinton

I remember my first experience with gambling. This was in the mid to late 1970's. I was about 13 or 14 years old. We were living in a small SE Missouri town when a carnival came through for a few days. They had a game in the fairway that involved throwing darts. Though it was illegal (I found out later) for someone my age, I was allowed to play.

The object of the game was to choose your target and depending upon your skill or luck you could make money. There was what looked like a checkered-board on a large sheet of plywood. The squares were alternately red and white. Each square was trimmed in a thin black line. The whole thing was bordered by a wide green margin.

You would choose your color by placing your money on the color you would try to hit. Red and white were 1 to 1 pay off. If you placed a quarter and hit your color, then they gave you another quarter...double your money. But if you chose black there was a 3 to 1 pay-off. If you missed your color selection you lost and if you hit the green outer margin you lost. Well I thought I was pretty good at darts, so I gave it a try. I only had one quarter left for the evening anyway. And since, it wouldn't buy much anyway the loss would be negligible. I put my quarter on my color of choice, gave it a throw. Wow, I hit my color...doubled that ole quarter. Well I kept this up for some time and was doing so well that others stopped throwing and would just follow my "bets". I made a few people some good money...for a while. My own little quarter expanded to a whopping \$5.50. That was an amazing 22-fold profit in a matter of minutes. If I had been wagering at that rate using a \$2.50 bet instead of \$ .25 bet, I would have netted \$ 55.00 in those few minutes. Or, at \$ 25.00 I could have made \$ 550.00. Or,... Well, you get the picture.

What happened in the next few minutes is where the lesson came into play. Before I could hardly blink it seems, I

was back down to my single solitary quarter and my crowd of cheerleaders was silent or gone. That event has stuck with me ever since. To my recollection, I have never wagered on anything else.

Several years later while living in Wisconsin I began to be even more acutely aware of the problem with gambling. Wisconsin was one of the first states to have a lottery and the Indian tribes operate casinos.

I borrowed a car from a friend one day. While in possession of his car I went to the car wash to spray it off and vacuum it out. In the process I found over \$ 60.00 worth of \$ 1.00 scratch off lottery stubs.

I later mentioned this to him and he said that he had won \$ 40.00 "playing" those. I just burst out laughing at him, "Mike, you haven't won anything! You're still over \$ 20.00 in the hole just on the tickets I found." Point of fact, he had cleaned similar amounts of these stubs out of his car on a few other occasions.

Gambling or "gaming" for stakes is becoming increasingly popular. A person can bet by lottery, casino, poker, slot machines, raffles, office pools, sports wagers, or online betting. But does God view it as moral or immoral? Should a Christian gamble? What does the Bible say? What about gambling addiction?

Gambling is big business. Most states have now legalized some form of "gaming." Many states are in the gambling business themselves with state lotteries. Oklahoma is one of many which allow legal casinos. And still, much gambling is still illegal.

Some contend that Americans spend more money each year on gambling than on groceries! In one state it has been calculated that more money is spent on betting than on all retail sales. And sadly those gambling the most are usually the people who can afford it the least...the poor and the elderly. [National Gambling Impact Study Commission, 1999.]

The purpose of this study is to consider whether or not

gambling is morally acceptable. If not, then it constitutes another attack on the family. We hope to discuss what constitutes gambling and what the teaching of Jesus Christ says regarding its moral significance. Since the Bible is the highest moral standard ever known, and since it reveals the will of the God who created us all, we will appeal to it as the supreme standard (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Corinthians 14:37; John 17:17; Matthew 7:21-27).

The following website by a skeptic is an effort to pit the scripture against itself.

[www.skepticsannotatedbible.com/contra/gambling.html](http://www.skepticsannotatedbible.com/contra/gambling.html)

He asks the question, "Does the Bible condemn gambling?" He then lists what he believes are pertinent references in two columns. The first column says, "No" and lists Proverbs 28:22 and John 19:23-24. The latter reference he notes, "Since the Roman soldiers were bad guys and they gambled for the robe of Jesus, gambling must be bad."

The second column says, "Yes" and lists Numbers 26:52-56; Joshua 14:2; 18:6; 19:51; 21:8; 1 Chronicles 26:13-14; Nehemiah 10:34; Acts 1:23-26. The passages referenced in this column all have to do with using the casting of lots to help make a decision. This process was used to remove the possible claim of favoritism, when all parties under consideration are equal. This is not gambling where one gains that which belonged to another at his loss.

For our purposes of study "gambling" refers to a wager or bet in which each player agrees to risk losing some material possession to other players in exchange for the chance to win the possessions of other players without compensation to the loser, the winner(s) and loser(s) being determined by the outcome of a game.

Take note of the fact that this can be any event of uncertain outcome. Also, no goods or services of fair value are given in exchange for what is lost. Some folks will argue, "Everything in life involves gambling." By this they are confusing ordinary risk with gambling even though some essential elements of gambling are absent. Not all risk is

gambling... like crossing the street or driving a car. Such actions have no wager or stakes involved. No is trying to take someone else's property.

Interestingly, many games people bet on can be enjoyed simply for fun with no money at risk. Played in this way, they cease to be gambling. To some running a farm or owning a business is a gamble. They think this because one risks losing money. Here again there is no wager. There is no agreement to take other people's property without compensation. The goal is to produce goods or services for the benefit of others in exchange for that which benefits us. This is good old-fashioned work, something the Bible explicitly authorizes.

Probably even more confusing is the area of investing. Many argue that this is no difference at all. Investing in stock allows a person to become part owner of a company. It is essentially identical to ownership of any other business. The objective is to turn a profit by producing something beneficial to its customers. Investors receive a share of the profits as dividends or increases in the value of the stock itself. Also, if stock is sold, both buyer and seller agree on the price. No wagers are involved - no prior agreement to risk loss at the other's expense. If either thinks the price is unfair, they refuse to deal.

Another category often held to be a form of gambling is insurance. And yet, there is no wager, just compensation. No one agrees to gain at the expense of someone else's loss. Quite the contrary, the whole purpose of insurance is to compensate the one insured if he does suffer a loss (such as death, car wreck, hospitalization, etc.). If no such loss occurs, the customer has had the peace of mind knowing he would have been compensated in the event of such loss.

The gambler, on the other hand, always wants financial loss to occur, because he hopes to profit from those losses. In ancient Israel one was forbidden to gain at another's loss (Deuteronomy 22:1-3; Exodus 23:4). Interestingly, the Deuteronomy passage applies to a brother, while Exodus

applies to an enemy.

I grew up, like many of you, with the saying, "Finders keepers; losers weepers." This is not a biblical ethic. If the scripture forbids that one should profit from another's loss that occurred accidentally; then how could one possibly justify seeking to make a profit from another by means of his loss intentionally? This crosses the line of greed, covetousness, and theft.

Let us turn our attention now to such things that have all the elements of gambling present. Among these we find casino gambling (slot machines, roulette wheels, dice and card games, numbers games, etc., played for stakes), racetrack betting (horses or dogs), lotteries, charity and/or church-sponsored bingo or raffles. When someone tells you, "It's for a good cause," then tell him to just make a donation and skip the gambling.

Amateur gambling includes poker games for money, office pools, matching quarters for cokes or coffee, playing marbles for keeps. Also included are some athletic leagues where winners are not just awarded a trophy or plaque, but players put money into a "kitty" then play to try to win some of the money.

Folks want to excuse the activity if it only involves small amounts of money. But it still violates Bible principles. It also sets a precedent that makes it nigh impossible to consistently object to other people's gambling. Who is going to draw the line, "This much money risked is all right, but any more is immoral"?

An online Catholic encyclopedia argued that gambling was fine so long as it was not in excess or did not involve some element of scandal ([www.newadvent.org/cathen/06375b.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06375b.htm)).

While it is true that the term "gamble" is not found in the Bible; its practice violates Bible principles. The Bible authorizes only three legitimate ways for money or possessions to pass from one owner to another. But gambling is not one of them.

First, one may get paid for work done in the production of goods or services that benefit other people. Scripture clearly teaches this "work ethic" (1 Timothy 5:18; Luke 10:7; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Thessalonians 4:11,12; Matt. 20:1-15; James 5:4; 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12). Gambling undermines the Biblical work ethic because, instead of accomplishing productive labor that benefits others, the gambler seeks to get something for nothing by taking what other people have earned. Thieves must do some labor to accomplish their objective, but such "work" is forbidden because it is harmful to others, not beneficial. In similar fashion if gambling were Scriptural labor; then all gamblers should be paid because they are all laboring to win.

A classic argument is, "Gamblers are just paying for a form of entertainment." In true entertainment the entertainers are paid a predetermined fee for providing a service to others. But gamblers are all providing the same "service" for one another; so if gambling were true entertainment, then all participants should be paid or all should pay. The gambler does not want the other players to profit; he wants to profit at their expense! This violates the principle that the laborer is worthy of his hire. Bottom line, gambling undermines the work ethic by leading people to seek a profit by causing loss to others (see also 1 Corinthians 9:7-10; Genesis 3:17-19; Proverbs 31:24; Acts 18:3.)

Second, a person may simply agree to exchange possessions (goods or money) with someone else. Each person is paid or compensated by receiving items of fair value in return for what is given up. For instance, Abraham bought a field and a cave for money (Genesis 23:1ff). Also, a merchant sold possessions to buy a pearl (Matthew 13:45-46). And we see the disciples buying food (John 4:8).

In fair transactions, both parties receive what they deem as equitable to what they give up. Here again gambling does not fit. The winner has no intention of compensating the loser. Each gambler wants the other person to lose so he can take his property, while at the same time hoping no one takes his property. Gambling violates the principle of fair exchange

(see also Genesis 33:19; Proverbs 31:16; Acts 4:34,37).

Third, a person may knowingly, freely, and unconditionally choose to give something away. This may simply be an expression of good will or kindness, with no obligation on the recipient to return any compensation. Scripture encourages one who has earned goods by his own labor to give to those in need (Ephesians 4:28). Giving is to be done willingly and cheerfully (2 Corinthians 9:6-7). Jesus said that there is more blessing in the giving than in the receiving (Acts 20:35). I doubt seriously if any gamblers consider losing to be more blessed than winning! (See also Matt. 19:21; 25:35; 2:11; Acts 2:45; 4:34,35).

God authorizes three legitimate ways for people to obtain property from others. Gambling fits none of them. It clearly contradicts and undermines them, showing it to be morally illegitimate. One might argue a fourth... inheritance. Gambling is more akin to the sins of covetousness and greed. The Bible repeatedly warns against such, classifying them as unrighteous (Ephesians 5:5-7; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Romans 1:29-32; 1 Corinthians 5:11; see also Deuteronomy 5:21; Mark 7:20-23; 1 Timothy 6:6-10; 2 Timothy 3:2; Proverbs 1:19; 21:26; 15:27; Hebrews 13:5).

Generally speaking covetousness is the desire to wrongfully take someone else's property. It is "a desire for the increasing of one's substance by appropriating that of others" (Baker's Dictionary of Theology). So a person is covetous if he wants to take other people's property in a way not authorized by God. Paul did not covet other people's property but worked to earn his keep (Acts 20:33-35). Covetousness contrasts with the legitimate means for obtaining the property of others. This puts gambling within the very definition of covetousness.

When someone is compelled to give property against his will ("grudgingly or of necessity"), instead of cheerfully out of generosity, it is called "covetousness" (2 Cor. 9:5-7, KJV). Legitimate gifts involve a gesture of good will and kindness. To take someone's property when he really does not want to give, and at the same time we try to avoid giving fair

compensation in return, would be covetousness. Herein fits gambling. "But", someone says, "Gamblers agree to pay up if they lose, so they do give it willingly." Yes, but it is not done in the spirit of good will that the Bible describes, else why does the gambler try to keep others from taking his possessions?

Gambling is mutual covetousness like dueling is mutual attempted murder. In a duel, each man agrees to let the other man try to kill him in exchange for the opportunity to try to kill the other man. But killing would still be unauthorized regardless of the agreement (Romans 13:8-10). Similarly, a gambler agrees to let others try to take his possessions in exchange for the opportunity for him to try to take theirs. It is still covetousness; the agreement merely makes both parties guilty of sin!

If someone says, "It's just a friendly game. We don't really care whether we win or lose the money", then tell them to play without the stakes. While it is true that some play for the thrill, the high, the excitement, they are the exception. Just listen to the advertisements. Casinos and such know that people do care about the money, and that's the way they advertise it.

We are truly only stewards. God is the one who owns all things. He places them at our disposal and we should use them to His glory (1 Peter 4:10-11). A steward is a servant who has been entrusted to use his master's property to achieve the master's purposes. The master will judge the steward for how well he used the property (Luke 12:42-46; 2 Chronicles 28:1; 1 Corinthians 4:1,2). We may provide for the needs of ourselves, our families, give to the church, preach the gospel, and help the needy. (See also Haggai 2:8; 1 Chronicles 29:11-14; Acts 4:32-35; 1 John 2:15-17; Deuteronomy 10:14).

Gamblers are far from being faithful stewards. Instead of using the Master's possessions for the intended purpose, the unfaithful steward wastes them or risks losing them for selfish purposes (Luke 16:1-2; Matthew 25:14-30).

The second greatest command is "love your neighbor as



yourself" (Matthew 22:39). Does the gambler love his neighbor as he loves himself? No! He wants the other guy to lose so that he can win. Love leads us to do good, not harm, even to our enemies (Luke 6:27; 1 John 3:16-18). Coveting violates the law of love because it does harm our neighbor (Romans 13:8-10). Love does not seek to profit by taking what belongs to others against their will and without compensation. But the very essence of gambling is hoping other people will lose, so you can profit at their loss. "Love seeketh not its own" (1 Corinthians 13:5). "We should seek, not just our own interests, but the interests of others" (Philippians 2:4). Gambling is selfish and self-seeking.

The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil (1 Timothy 6:9-10). Greed leads to many foolish and hurtful lusts, many sorrows, etc. If gambling is greed then we should expect to find it associated with all kinds of sin and immorality. Consider the principle of Matthew 7:16-19, "A tree is known by its fruits." A corrupt tree will surely produce corrupt fruits. If so, it should be destroyed (v19). If gambling produces many forms of evil, would this not confirm that gambling is itself evil.

The fruits caused by and associated with gambling include...poverty, neglect of families, quarreling, and divorce because gamblers often gamble with money the family needs.

One out of every five homeless people admits that gambling contributed to their poverty. Among the states Nevada, long known for gambling, has the highest rate of divorce and the highest rate of high school dropouts. Even casino owner Donald Trump admitted: "People will spend a tremendous amount of money in casinos, money that they would normally spend on buying a refrigerator or a new car." And did you know that about one third of all millionaire lottery winners end up in poverty again afterward!

Other fruits include anger, hatred, and even murder directed by the losers against the winners, especially if the losers think they have been cheated. Drinking and drugs, alcoholism and addiction always abound where gambling

occurs. Gamblers who lose seek to drown their sorrow and guilt. One tenth of all southern Nevadans are alcoholics. Gamblers often lie in order to hide their habit and their losses. Deception does not stay in the bluffing, but makes its way into the home and on the job.

Much gambling is illegal. Gambling of all kinds attracts criminal types and is often sponsored by organized crime syndicates. Like other addicts, gamblers are known to deal drugs, embezzle, or steal to get money to gamble or to pay gambling debts.

Prostitution, lasciviousness, and general sexual immorality are also associated by way of the immoral entertainment provided in gambling houses. Also, many women use these means to get money to gamble or to pay gambling debts. The Las Vegas Yellow Pages list 136 pages of advertisements relating to prostitution.

People commit suicide to escape their compulsive gambling or huge losses. Nevada is first in the nation in suicides. Truly, "by their fruits ye shall know them," and "the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil." Those who love money and are minded to be rich fall into temptation, a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts (1 Timothy 6:9). Surely no one can deny that temptation is associated with gambling.

We should pray to avoid evil and temptation (Matthew 6:13). We are told to watch and pray lest you enter into temptation (Matthew 26:41). It makes no sense to pray to avoid temptation and then deliberately subject oneself to it.

We are expected to set a good example in word, manner of life, love, faith, and purity (1 Timothy 4:12). Does the gambler set this kind of example? What kind of influence is he wielding on his family, friends, young people, the lost, or even other Christians?

Gambling is pernicious. No one gambles alone. If you gamble, you must gamble with others. So every gambler has a bad influence on someone. The only way to avoid this problem is simply to avoid gambling altogether.

One last thought. Legal gambling seldom, if ever replaces

illegal gambling. If anything it draws more. Legal gambling will motivate some to try it that would have otherwise never done so. Once the involvement starts it is hard to turn back. Those who begin gambling legally often end up gambling illegally. They not only become desensitized, the odds are better and no one is reporting it for tax purposes.

It is from Proverbs that we derive the expression “Haste makes waste” (20:21; 21:5b; 28:20b). Gambling often involves haste. One chooses to gamble because an immediate “need”. The game itself is played at a fast pace so that the player is hasty in his decisions. All of this is calculated to help him lose.

While most people have some discretionary funds with which they may choose to entertain themselves, a gambler is not content. A person who is winning on their “play around” money may choose to add a bit more for the bigger win. Then all of a sudden the table turns and now they have not only lost their “play around” money but also some of their necessary money. Then, of all things, some will take even more of their necessary money and put it at risk in an effort to win the other back. In the process, they have simply continued to dig a deeper and deeper hole.

Now they cannot put groceries on the table or clothes on their children. The utilities don't get paid, or the car payment, or the mortgage, or the... Next they try to beat the situation by covering all of these things with their credit cards or by a line of credit or a loan on the equity in their house.

Next thing you know it appears that everything is all right. But now they have to pay back those credit cards. The finances are squeezed; the nerves are on edge; tempers flare. Another home is at risk of imploding. Sadly, as soon as it appears there is some more play around money, someone goes back to the game and the cycle gets worse. Sooner or later the hole is too deep. The marriage is in shambles and bankruptcy looms on the horizon. And the casino is laughing all the way to the bank.

Much, much more could be said. Statistics could be piled

as high as the ceiling, but we have covered enough to establish that gambling is wrong. It is destructive to society and it harms families.



For Lectureship books, tracts, etc., which we  
publish, you may order from:

**Church of Christ**  
**P.O. Box 760**  
**McLoud, OK. 74851**  
**(405) 964-3370**

**Copyright by Wayne Price**  
**2006**

**Published by**  
**Basic Bible Truths Publication**  
**1314 E. Broadway**  
**Sedalia, MO. 65302**  
**660-826-1950**



For Lectureship books, tracts, etc., which we  
publish, you may order from:

**Church of Christ**  
**P.O. Box 760**  
**McLoud, OK. 74851**  
**(405) 964-3370**

**Copyright by Wayne Price**  
**2006**

**Published by**  
**Basic Bible Truths Publication**  
**1314 E. Broadway**  
**Sedalia, MO. 65301**  
**660-826-1950**