



Understanding  
**Human**  
Sexuality



# Understanding **Human** Sexuality

A Well Known Secret

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# Understanding Human Sexuality A Well Known Secret

## Part I Manhood and Womanhood

Genesis 3:16-20

*To the woman He said,  
“I will greatly increase your pains in  
childbearing;  
with pain you will give birth to children.  
Your desire will be for your husband, and he  
will rule over you.”*

Genesis 3:17-20

*To Adam He said,  
“Because you listened to your wife and ate from  
the tree about which I commanded you,  
‘You must not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground  
because of you ...  
By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food ...  
Adam named his wife Eve, because she would  
become the mother of all the living.*

Isaiah 51:3

*“The Lord will surely comfort Zion and will look  
with compassion on all her ruins;  
He will make her deserts like Eden, her  
wastelands like the garden of the Lord.  
Joy and gladness will be found in her,  
thanksgiving and the sound of singing.”*

With the proclamation of the Genesis passage above, all human sexuality was tainted. But before you think that God does not care for the people He created, listen also to His proclamation in the Isaiah passage. Hope is still alive!

Before we proceed to this section, however, it will be helpful for us to understand the normal developmental stages of a human being. Read Chapter 5 of *“Building a Love House is Hard Work”* for a fast and comprehensive view of this subject. A basic grasp of the eight normal life stages will help us place the area of our sexuality in proper perspective as people wonderfully made by our Creator. <sup>1</sup>

Does the truth about my manhood or womanhood start with *“who I believe I am”*? Does not who I believe I am largely depend on *“what others think of me”* and *“how I feel about myself and what I do”*? Ponder for a few seconds on how we first came to know that we are boys or girls.

Most of us cannot recall those first events because they were too far back in our human existence. We were too young, we say, to remember. For many of us who are parents, we may safely assume that the way we responded to the birth of our baby boys or girls probably were the ways our parents responded to us. We wonder how they

really felt the first time they were told our gender or beheld our delightful newborn forms. All other things being equal ... our parents wanted us.

On the other hand, does the truth about our gender come from a higher Authority who carefully designed us in His mind before we were formed? David reflected on this in Psalm 139.

Elizabeth Elliot, a Christian woman author, believed that:

*"In order to learn what it means to be a woman we must start with the One who made her." <sup>2</sup>*

What does the typical man from our fallen world say? Let us hear from writer Kurt Tucholsky, who describes a man as:

*"The typical man, man, man -*

*He's the misunderstood man.*

*He does not try to court his wife.*

*There are more important things in life.*

*It's up to her, whatever her mood, to do his laundry and cook his food.*

*The main thing is she obeys his will.*

*If not, he could have another still.*

*And should she doubt his loyalty, then he gets tough:*

*"I'm a man and that's enough."*

*He's the self-sufficient man who feels that a woman will never quite understand him-ever."*

So, what is the truth about manhood and womanhood?

Who is the *real* person ... could he or she be the *redeemed* man or woman?

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia <sup>3</sup>, in the section under Anthropology and Woman, defines:

*Man* as a husband or male.

The Hebrew word = is

*Woman* a wife or female.

The Hebrew word = issa

*Adam* as the human race or a name (Genesis 2:23 f.)

The late Walter Trobisch, a pastor-writer-counsellor to some African churches, in his book "*The Misunderstood Man*" (male), [4] described the real man as the redeemed man who is guided, humbly humorous, talking, motherly, fatherly, sheltered and loving. As I thought about his description, the awareness that dawned on me led me to joy as I realise that God has actually spoken much to us about manhood and womanhood. I also saw that what he described could apply to "woman" as well.



Therefore, such redeemed men or women are:

- **Guided**, and therefore are not afraid to seek direction when necessary. Failure no longer haunts them. They are able to lead others as they have been led by their Lord. In Luke 24:13-35, for example, we see Cleopas and his friend being led by the resurrected Lord. They in turn returned to the other disciples to lead them.
- **Laughing and Humble.** They are able to laugh about themselves and be real. There is no longer any need to prove themselves and to wear masks or assert their self-will. They are freer as the days go by because they are students in God's presence all the time. Others are free to come to them or to go away. Popularity does not worry them any more. Jesus was such a Person. Peter reminded us, in one of his letters, that His Master had no self-will, no self-justification and no resentment (1 Peter 2:21-23).
- **Talking and Listening.** The Father who speaks to His children has made them to converse with Him and others. The man has been *redeemed from silence*; because he has faced the hurts in himself; he is not afraid to face the

feelings of others ... especially that of his wife. The woman has been *redeemed for silence*; because she has learnt to accept herself, she is not afraid to face the words of others ... especially that from her husband [Genesis 1-2]. In married life, we need to recapture God's truth that everyone's needs may be met only by a right relationship with God, not by one's spouse. Hence, both spouses are freed to communicate without fear of not meeting up to the other partner's expectations.

- **Motherly**, as they *are* free to be motherly in order to portray the *tenderness of God* (Isaiah 66:13; Matthew 23:37).
- **Fatherly**, because, having received their *heavenly Father's affirmation and strength*, they are then able to father others in need of His grace (Matthew 10:8).
- **Sheltered** by their God and thus they can be a *shelter to others*. They are not afraid even if, at times, they should lose or suffer defeat. They simply get up and move on because they dwell in the shelter of the Most High (Psalm 91).

- **Loving**, without asking for returns. They do not love out of their own strength. They know that, ultimately, they are dependent on God in life or in death. Therefore, they are *not afraid to lay down their lives for others as their faithful Creator will raise them from the dead to see Him face to face!*

Ponder on the wonder of God's gift of manhood or womanhood to you.

## **Development of Sexual Identity and Gender Identity**

### **Definitions**

*Sexual identity* has to do with whether *I am a male or female according to my anatomy, hormones and brain functions*. Most of us are born distinctly differentiated as a boy or a girl in our bodies. Sexual identity has more to do with roles we play in family and society because of our given body type.

*Gender identity* has more to do with *my feelings/my feeling more comfortable as a male or a female* irrespective of what I am expected to do or what is happening in my body (because of my physical make-up). It is more a matter of disposition (temperament, outlook) and character (attitude, how I handle my temperament) damaged though it be by sin.

*Both identities normally overlap.* In a broken world, sometimes they do not. Their gender identities do not seem to correlate with their sexual identities. Therefore, this is partly why some people suffer when, although their bodies are of one sexual definition, they often do not feel comfortable in a role defined by their bodies. This could be due to some dysfunctional upbringing in their gender roles or their having some severe anatomical and physiological discrepancies. A person with male anatomy may have more of a feminine proportions of the thinking and feeling functions.

### **Common Examples of Gender Confusion**

Before we proceed, please let me clarify that gender confusion does not necessarily mean having homosexual tendencies. Here, we are discussing the issue of ordinary men and women who struggle with their God-given roles associated with their earthly bodies. Some common examples are:

- a. Mothers who do not feel comfortable breastfeeding their babies. For various reasons, they feel alienated from their abilities to nurse their babies. This appears to be more common among

mothers ignorantly influenced by  
wavering scientific discoveries  
publicised through advertising efforts.

- b. Fathers who find great difficulty in leading their families. Many men today feel inadequate as wives begin to take on more of the responsibilities once carried by husbands. They, in turn, cannot take on their wives' functions e.g. bearing babies and breastfeeding them.
- c. "Tomboys" are girls or women who dress and behave like men externally.
- d. Transvestites - men who feel more comfortable dressed as women.
- e. Women who intentionally or unintentionally look for boy friends whom they may later dominate in marriage.
- f. The macho image is portrayed in insecure men who womanise to make themselves feel important and wanted.

## **Anatomy - What Actually Happens?**

Read Psalm 139 and picture yourself being formed in your mother's womb decades ago ... nevertheless, it did happen ...

<b>Boy</b>	<b>Girl</b>
<b>Male Chromosome</b>	<b>Female Chromosome</b>
<b>XY</b>	<b>XX</b>

**Early stage of gestation**    **Reproductive tissues are formed with female features in both male and female babies because hormones are predominantly of the female type**

<b>Towards the 12th week of gestation</b>	<b>Male hormones increase to levels that develop tissues into male reproductive organs</b>	<b>Female hormones remain at levels that develop tissues into female reproductive organs</b>
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(Gestation refers to the growth process of the foetus between conception and birth while pregnancy refers to the mother's carrying of her developing baby in her womb.)

## Questions

- At the Genesis 1 stage, was the first human person differentiated sexually?
- Did sexual-gender differentiation take place only in Genesis 2? Could it be that sexual-gender differentiation was created only at that stage when the female and male human beings were formed?

We do not know. What matters is that the first person created in Genesis is as humanly complete as God made that person to be.

*Out of that one person He made two equal persons, one a male and the other a female. Did He differentiate them to create a community of differing people, and yet of equality, to reflect His image ... the "Us" in the Trinity Community? That is not only an academic question but a practical one too. This is because the answer to this question will affect how we live before Him. If the answer is in the affirmative, at least, the unhealthy sense of competition among men and women will be discouraged. There will be mutual submission out of submission to God's purposes for them.*

The development of different reproductive organs includes the development of differing giftedness or temperaments. Before the fall, this would have harmonised to form the human oneness in marriage.

*I believe that no one person can by himself or herself truly reflect God's image. It is the total community of male and female persons that reflect His image while we are on earth. Hence, it seems reasonable to induce that, in God's wisdom, He ensures that a baby needs the intimate proximity of both male parents to nurture him to maturity, not male-male or female-female parent figures.*

On this side of the cross, we call the people of God the organism "church".

Having understood something about the different temperament types, we may assume that,

In heaven, sexual and gender differentiation may or may not be necessary any more. We are not told beforehand. However, Jesus did tell us that there will be no marrying or giving in marriage (Mark 12:24-25). But we know that we will be like Christ; we will be complete like Him to function in all types of temperament together. Whether we will each have both sets of temperament is our guess. Just remember that our Father is the creative God.



## **Significant Differences between Man and Woman**

If we look at some of the natural (inborn as in contrast to environmentally induced) male-female differences from the angle of temperament, then, whether we are men or women, we will feel more comfortable and less fearful of such a discussion. The potential for change exists because it is our individual character that determines how we use our temperament fruitfully. Character is no respecter of gender.

In the general population,

Man is:            while            Woman is:

- |                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. More objective       | 1. More subjective      |
| 2. More thinking        | 2. More feeling         |
| 3. More leading         | 3. More supportive      |
| 4. More task orientated | 4. More person oriented |

These differences are commonly shown in the area of language where the same words spoken may be interpreted differently by man and by woman. Let us now try to perceive how male-female differences meant to compliment both genders in the human race became thorns in the flesh.

## **Before the Fall (Genesis 1 & 2)**

The above differing sets of giftedness did not conflict with each other.

Physically, both were externally different and naked but not ashamed because there was no guilt internally.

Adam and Eve must have enjoyed the complimentary temperamental differences too.

## **At the Fall (Genesis 3)**

Woman- misused her gifts by supporting God's enemy instead of supporting her husband in obedience to God. Eve's sin was being discontented with what she had. She thus fell into the trap of God's enemy.

Man- misused his gift of leadership and followed his wife in her disobedience to God. We may presume that he wanted to please his wife. Adam's sin was the idolising of his wife instead of worshipping God alone and loving Him above all else.

## After the Fall

Both had guilt (concern for truth) and shame (superficial recognition of sin, more externally orientated). Their sinful character then determined the way they used their gifts.

- Man
- The curse on him is that his *enjoyment of work* would be turned into the *burden of work*.
  - He became over-concerned with tasks and the produce of labour instead of contentedly taking care of God's world and enjoying His provision.
  - He began to *perceive his wife as related to her function of reproducing children*, which is related to the physical aspect of her sexuality, rather than as related to her complimentary temperament. *He began to have a distorted view of her body; her body for his use.* (This perception later became generalised to women in our fallen world.)
  - Instead of regarding her as an equal in God's eyes to be loved and cherished, he *lost respect for her partnership in making major decisions.*

Woman - The curse on her was that the *enjoyment of her womanhood, expressed through the willing support of her husband as the leader, and the bearing of children, turned into an overdependence on him for emotional support.*

-*She would also have a fear of labour pains*

-She became *over-concerned with trying to please her husband* (or men generally) in order to regain his respect and acceptance as his equal. In today's world, this is often achieved by the overuse of cosmetics or by a need to prove herself through professional roles in society.

-She begins to perceive her *husband as a competitor* and her *family as a hindrance to her self-fulfillment.*

It is telling that traditional and contemporary Christian literature have both taken the *consequences of God's* curses and *taught* them to His people as *biblical rules*. When this occurs, sometimes, disastrous consequences follow in Christian homes.

## Examples

### 1.

Preachers (most of whom are men) often teach wives to submit and to be possessive of their husbands to the extent that many Christian women do not want to take the initiative to obey God for themselves. Yes, they must love their husbands, but nowhere in Scriptures does the Master teach wives to submit themselves to their husbands till the husbands take priority over what God wants the wives to do for Him. I can assure you, with a bit of experience and wisdom gained through middle-age, that if God wants a certain wife to obey Him in an area of her life, He will not cause a broken marriage to bring about that obedience. If the husband is not ready for her to follow the Lord in a particular way, *what she needs to do is to pray and quietly wait for him to grow up till he sees His point of view. Here is where patience is needed.*

### 2.

Even Christian men often perceive their wives incapable of making crucial decisions. Once they have children, he thinks that her main role is related to the family and sex related functions. Generally, few couples function as equals

in decision-making processes, whether Christian or not. This problem may be accentuated in Christian homes where many Christian men make use of the distorted interpretation of Ephesians 5 to ensure that their wives relinquish the responsibility of making major decisions (at home) to them.

However, where the effects of these curses have been cancelled by the grace of God, whether in society, church or home, the harmonious relationships in men-women teams is beautiful to behold. Before the fall of Adam and Eve, there was no mention of "who does which job" in the Garden of Eden. Presumably, each did his/her part without arguing over what God has assigned for them to do creatively.

**Factors that help in the development of one's gender identity for a sense of manhood or womanhood (i.e. feelings of masculinity and femininity)**

- a. How Father and Mother relate to each other.
- b. How boys and girls are treated by their parents or other significant adults of both genders. Herein lies the key to the children's understanding of their sexual and gender identities.

- c. How brothers and sisters relate to each other.
- d. How a person relates to peers of the same sex.
- e. How a person relates to peers of the other sex.

Acceptance and love of self is affected by the above factors in a healthy manner where family members' roles are clearly defined, even if members should exchange tasks sometimes. Their identities will be deeply damaged if the sexual boundaries are broken emotionally and/or physically as in sexual abuse. <sup>5</sup>

### **Examples of Verbal Sexual Abuses**

- a. *“I wish you were born a boy so that there will be someone to carry on my business and my family name ...”*
- b. *“You Cha-Bor-Kan (slave girl in Hokkien) ... it's useless bringing you up only to be someone else's property!”*
- c. *“You Cha-Bor Heng (sissy in Hokkien) ... why can't you act tougher like your brother?”*  
This happens especially when the son is a more “feeling” person in temperament.

This feeling is in itself a good gift from God.

- d. *“Ayooooo ... you are so fair-lah ...  
I wish you were a girl ... Mummy wants a girl  
so much ... !”*

### **Examples of Sexual Abuse**

- a. Incest - sometimes between of the relatives of the same gender. The sense of betrayal cuts especially deep when those supposed to protect them end up cheating them of the rightful ownership of their bodies.
- b. Rape - especially when the victim is blamed or misunderstood by those she hopes could act on her behalf. Anger is harboured with the pain of the wounds and shame.
- c. Being placed in boarding schools too young, especially around puberty where experimentation is common among peers of the same gender, especially boys.
- d. Poverty, where children use their bodies to help parents survive. The sense of loyalty to family seems to be stronger than the sense of morals in such circumstances.



## **Therapy for renewal of the mind in Christ regarding His gift of sexuality**

*We want to* accept our sexual identity with joy, irrespective of the past, and to be more human as God's community, growing into the mature personhood of Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord. Increasingly, by discipline and God's grace, our distorted gender identity will coincide with our sexual identity like it was meant to be at creation.

Therefore, the direction of healing is towards the harmonious sexual and gender identities that existed in Adam and Eve before the fall.

### **How Do We Do That?**

#### A Suggestion

[Note: Though I use the feminine pronoun below (for a change), the same pointers are meant to apply to men as well.]

If you sense a need to sort out your gender confusion somewhere in your inner being,

1. Tell your heavenly Father about it.
2. Have a prayer partner who keeps secrets.

3. Ask for help from pastoral counsellors, etc.
4. Read books which are biblically orientated.
5. Journal your memories.
6. Forgive those who have affected your gender identity negatively, if you know the person(s).
7. Remind yourself that God has never stopped loving you all through your confusion. Do this by meditating on His word in e.g. Romans 8.
8. Remember that God is still transforming you. Therefore, there is hope of being the woman or man He meant you to be e.g. Romans 12:1,2.
9. Begin where you are and work on doing the things you ought to do as a woman or man, even if you do not feel like it. One day, you may be surprised that old confusing gender feelings have been replaced by a new and right sense of being a woman or man i.e. your sexual identity and gender identity are harmonising! Praise the Lord our Creator God who has both masculine and feminine qualities in His Being!
10. Give thanks to Him daily for every little improvement.

## Reflection

Take your time to Reflect, Journal and Pray during your daily communion with God alone. You may like to share with a confidant later on and pray together.

1. Have you changed your views of who you are as God's son or daughter after reading this chapter?

If yes or no, in what ways?

2. Have you accepted the sexual and gender identity assigned for you by the Creator? Why?

## **Part II**

### **Understanding Boy-Girl Relationship (BGR)**

**Target group of readers for Part II are those 13-17 years old.**

**[This section is not about marriage.]**

It is about God's purpose in creating and ordaining an earthly temporal family structure with parents - children and husband - wife relationships to teach us to eternal two eternal relationships:

- God as Father to us His children  
(The Lord's prayer, John 17)
- Jesus as Bridegroom to us His Bride  
(Ephesians 5, Rev. 19:6-9; 21)

We need to bear this in mind as we talk about BGR in gender and non-gender related types of relationships. If we do so, then, when we will be able to see one another from God's perspective, we will have His direction for brainstorming. Otherwise, let us "*drink and be merry for tomorrow we die*"; since there is no existence after we leave this world, there is no accountability too. But we do know that there is Someone in charge to whom we must answer for how we live our lives on earth. Therefore,

**1.**  
**How do you generally relate with  
others of the opposite gender?  
Ask yourself three questions to  
assess yourself:**

**a.**

*What does it feel like when you freely enjoy your friends' company in a group of both boys and girls and yet without the tension of wanting to be near a person in particular, while fearing that someone else will take him or her away from you?*

**b.**

*What are the questions or ideas in your mind when the topic of BGR is mentioned?*

**c.**

*When does a teenager start getting interested or actively involved with BGR matters (wanting exclusive friendship with one person of the opposite gender and guarding that friendship jealously) even at the risk of losing real good friends?*

## 2. Four Possible Relationships Outside Family Circles:

- a. Acquaintance?  
Chance meeting, no follow up, casual
- b. Casual friend?  
May see again but of no consequence  
what happens.  
Have no shared secrets.
- c. Brother and sister?  
May miss if not seen a while but no  
jealousy. May share secrets if mutual  
trust developed but remain platonic  
(brotherly/sisterly close friendship  
which is not sexual)

Most relationships remain at a.-c.  
levels of relationship

- d. BGR level?  
Jealousy creeps in unaware, desirous  
to share secrets and know more  
about the other person impatiently,  
the attraction may be one sided, day  
dreams about person. If allowed to  
develop such feelings, may lead to  
→ eros (romantic) type relationship.

### 3.

#### **Differences between male and female emotional and mental make-up**

Boys: more thinking people, object and product orientated, make decisions according to facts, less relationship centred; but if feelings are hurt, can be disastrous too because he is on unfamiliar grounds and therefore are less able to handle own feelings when e.g. infatuated jilted.

Girls: more feeling people, relationship orientated, make decisions according to whether how it will affect others' feelings and relationships, facts not so important though they may not be lying.

Boys: sexual intercourse can be unrelated to true love, more for physical and emotional gratification-quick come, quick go. Therefore, may promise true love just to have the physical experience.

Girls: sexual intercourse is part of the true love she longs for the other person. Therefore, will allow physical experience in order to receive true love, assuming it is a sign of true love ... which it is not, if out of a committed marriage.

## 4. Infatuations

Very few teenage *falling in love* relationships develop into marriage in years to come. But for those that do so, it's does not mean that the two love one another more just because they know one another longer. Marriage is a mutual commitment to hard work, no matter how long the courtship has been.

So what is infatuation or "puppy love"? (Some adults have not grown out of this due to unmet emotional developmental needs.)

### "Puppy love" ....

- an unreasonable attachment of strong liking for one of the opposite gender
- usually, connected to an impatient desire to be in the other's presence,
- longing for visible signs of love.
- seldom lasts more than a few weeks/ months,
- may change overnight
- is usually very possessive of the other person
- can sap one's emotional, mental and spiritual energy, if prolonged



## Practical

*In the author's teenage experience, the face of a boy kept popping up in school books. It distracted her focus from her studies for one year. Then .... just overnight, the 'addiction' disappeared after a teacher talked to her and she felt understood in her loneliness.*

**Q. How and Where to draw line before infatuation /eros type feelings develop?**

**1.**

**Understand your stage of growth ...  
strengths and weaknesses ...  
background/soil where BGR takes  
place.**

Teenage years:

From about 11-20 years of age, you are going through a time of rapid changes and adjustments in every way - physically, emotionally, mentally, socially & spiritually.

These changes are good and necessary in order to become a child to grow into a mature adult. You will have to deal with your:

*yoyo of moods as expectations and demands from others and self increase*

*need to be independent* in decision making and yet you are still dependent in emotions and funds on parents

*need to balance* instinctual drives vs external (e.g. running from temptations) and internal controls (e.g. values, morals) as your hormone levels keep swinging to prepare you an adult body for adult responsibility of becoming a potential parent one day.

*need to establish inner identity* which does not change with external changes  
(read *The Eight Stages of Life*)

## 2.

The less physical contact you have when you are too young to get married the better. Why? It is known that those who have even just held hands, compared with those who only write letters to each other, hurt much more when a BGR turns sour. Group outing is more sensible, enjoyable and safe without the girl and boy strongly wanting to touch each other to express their feelings. If on their own, this is a temptation they may find too difficult to ignore.

## Remember

*“Life is a process .... not an instant gratification factory ... ”*

Most men and women do not marry the first person they are infatuated with in childhood. Therefore, take BGR matters lightly and enjoy more platonic friendships at school, societies, clubs and in your local neighbourhood. Less teenagers will be hurt overall and you would have done some good to our society by not adding to the statistics of having wounded someone unnecessarily. The author has had friends who courted for years before they married and then divorced soon after. It is commitment that keeps a relationship strong and healthy, not how close you are physically, especially before marriage.

As the adolescent ventures into the wider world, he needs to establish new relationships outside the home. This involves a deeper sense of equality and an acceptance of his own needs and others' needs. The prerequisite for such wider and newer involvement is to have a strong sense of identity. If you are patient, you will find that your perspective of finding a future life partner widens as you mature into an adult. Most

adults do not marry the first man or woman they are attracted to or they think they love.

But there is nothing to stop you from praying for a life partner after God's purpose for your earthly life, young though you may be. Then leave the matter with Him and carry on your teenage years confident that He will answer your prayer one day.

### **3.**

#### **How to avoid sexual experiences outside marriage**

*As God's child and as Jesus' Bride (Revelations 19:6-8)) keep yourself pure for Him alone ... through singlehood or marriage.*

*Ecclesiastes 12:1*

*Remember Your Creator's design for you, which includes your body.*

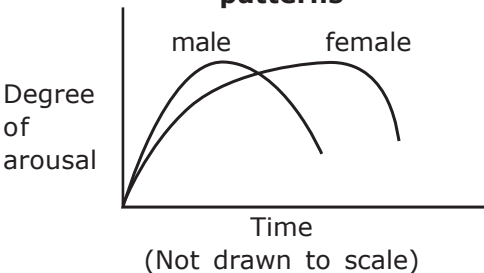
*Take diligent care of yourself for His purpose for you in this world.*

It is natural that, with increasing sexual desires (partly due to hormonal changes in his body), the adolescent has to struggle between being physically too close to a person of the opposite sex and

isolating himself from those of the opposites sex altogether. If the isolation is temporary, it may only appear awkward e.g. at parties; if prolonged, it may become a phobia.

In this respect, I would like to show you a simplified graph to illustrate the different rates of sexual arousal in the male and female human being. This is shared with the hope of deterring physical sexual activity before marriage. Many teachers and parents express the deep concern for single boys and girls, men and women, who are trapped into sexual intercourse with their dates even though they started off with the intention of abstaining. The disastrous results of such actions leave deep marks in one's life, family, society, nation and world. *“O, when will we ever learn?!”*

### **Difference between the normal human male and female arousal rates and patterns**



Ignorance of the differences in the bodily functions of girls/women and boys/men is one factor that may cause dating couples to go beyond their own limits of better control and fall into sin (sexual intercourse outside marriage).

Girls are physically more fragile and reach a climax at a slower rate.

Boys reach a climax at a faster rate and are able to overpower the girls, with regret on both sides just a few minutes later.

Both are responsible for their actions, unless in rape, and both will have to help each other to set a limit to their physical closeness.

If we read Genesis 2:18-25 carefully, we will note that human sexuality is a wonderful gift from our Creator God. All the thinking and the feeling associated with our maleness or femaleness, therefore, are good and clean when used according to His rules. But in our brokenness, we have a high tendency to misuse this gift. Just as the wild energy of a waterfall needs to be harnessed by proper control to produce hydroelectric power for good use, the power of our sexuality needs to be harnessed by the holiness and the love of God.

Therefore, even if you have to push the other person (male or female) away to prevent physical closeness that may lead to sexual intercourse, you must do it, for the Lord's honour and yours, as you are His beloved child.

*Paul the apostle, in 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8, urged the believers ...*

*“It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honourable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men from all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you His Holy Spirit.”*

## **Dating as a couple**

Most Asians’ view:

Date to find out more about the other person with the view of marriage one day.

Most Westerns’ view:

Date just to have fun/friendship mostly without the view of marriage yet.

Personally, I believe that there is no need to go dating the western way when there are many opportunities these days to mix with a wider group and have fun or just to relax and be friends. Nothing is lost and much to gain since most people do not take advantage of others in front of friends in terms of sexual harassment or "accident".

Even if you wish to date with the view of a deepening friendship and later marriage, it is wiser to take precautions and decide beforehand what you want to do and what you definitely do not want to do e.g. Will a girl allow a boy to hug/kiss her at all, especially in private? Will a boy allow a girl to seduce him more than what he can bear before he reaches the sexual arousal level emotionally and physically? Only you can make that choice.

When you have at least sorted out the purpose of the dating and the other person knows your limited intention also (e.g. to get to know each other but either one can stop the dating process if he/she finally discovers he/she is just not the person to marry one day), then it may be time to date.

For most mature human beings who respect others, it is overall better to date only if you have some liking for the



other person as a future spouse. What's the hurry, after all? If the girl/boy is God's will for you in the end, no one can take her/him away from you. If not, the less intimacy the better. However, email/give presents/call over the phone all you want, in order to find out who the other person is, really!

I have known of men who call off their steady relationships with their girlfriends because they lose respect for them when the ladies give in too easily to the men, wrong though they are. Many girls allow their men friends to have sexual intercourse with them when blackmailed with instant and short-lived promises of "*true love*". If their love is so true, they can wait, right?

Nevertheless, no matter how closely you have known the other person through dates, only marriage itself will enable you to know each other realistically. Therefore, it is not the amount of promises or experience of physical intimacy that holds a husband and wife together but their commitment to each other for better or for worse. It does not matter how old they are when they get married. That is why many, if not most, match-made marriages do work rather well in the end, especially with family and friends' encouragement.

If you really have to date, avoid physical contact in public or private until you are at least 75% sure the other person may make a good life partner.

Holding hands is enough unless ready to go steady/seriously considering engagement or marriage. However, due to the power of touch, one action may lead to another and you may throw caution to the wind if not disciplined enough to stop at a certain stage of physical closeness. Many hearts are broken due to an over-estimate of one's self-control. Some girls have conceived while innocently sitting on the laps of their boyfriends!

#### **4.**

### **Guidelines for developing healthy platonic (brother-sister) friendships ...**

- Accept one's sexual and gender identity with joy and thanksgiving. Be yourselves as God's community, growing into the mature personhood of Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord. Increasingly, by discipline and God's grace, teenage yoyo feeling and thinking will stabilise and become more mature as you become young adults who will be taking on your responsibilities in this world.

- Acknowledge your strengths and weaknesses and seek God's help to use your giftedness for His glory and others' good, while controlling your weaknesses by the power of the Holy Spirit so you won't harm others or yourselves.
- Think about who you are in relation to:
  - God
  - self
  - parents
  - siblings
  - friends
  - teachers
  - pastors and church members
  - those under your care e.g. church families' children, other young people
- Think about how to build each relationship in order of priority.
- Later teens ... Think about God's purpose for you, what your personality and spiritual gifts are, and how to match them to the work you feel is right for you. It is not too early to think about what type of life partner you might have who will be able to work with you to build a godly home and to serve Him together. Commit your heart's desire to Him and carry on with your day to day duties for God alone.

- Write these thoughts down.
- Read books which are biblically orientated.
- Look for someone you admire/trust and discuss what you have written with that person. Many adults are more willing to help than teenagers think they are. Just approach them politely - they do not usually bite! If they cannot help, they may know someone else who can.
- Have a prayer partner who keeps secrets.
- Tell your heavenly Father all about your infatuations or any problems you have
- Remind yourself that God has never stopped loving you through all your confusion. Do this by meditating on His word in e.g. Romans 8. Ask His forgiveness where you have gone astray in some areas of your young life, know cleansing, seek to obey Him out of gratitude for His unconditional love for you.
- Remember that God is still transforming you ...
- Give thanks to Him daily for your new life in Jesus Christ.
- Read up about God's purposes for marriage and family.

## **Reflection**

1.

Take your time to Reflect on what you have read thus far, Journal and Pray during your daily communion with God alone. You may like to share with a confidant later on and pray together.

Journal your thoughts.

2.

Decide regarding how you would approach the issue of Boy-Girl-Relationship (BGR) at your stage of life.

## **Part III**

### **Sexual Trauma**

#### **WHY HURTS SO MUCH AND LASTS SO LONG ... ??**

Ref: "Healing of Memories"  
by D.A.Seamands

#### **Three Basic Reasons**

1.

Without a body, we are not wholly human because the Creator created us with a body each. That is why He now ensures that if we trust Him and come home to Him, one day He will give each of us a new body like that of Jesus when He resurrected. The new body will probably have no gender difference as we know it in this world (Matthew 22:30). However, for now and while still in this earthly body made to be either male or female, our sexuality is all wrapped up in our identity. Our human sexuality forms part of our human identity. Just as we express our personality to each other through our bodies, so we express our sexuality to each other through our physical bodies.

Therefore, when someone touches our bodies, especially the areas defined for sexual activities, and makes use of us for their sexual gratification, we consciously or subconsciously feel that something

has been stolen from us. We feel the mental and emotional shock of having suffered a deep abnormal loss somewhere; a loss that we can “never” again recover though we may recover from the shock itself. If, truly, sexuality forms part of our true self, then our identity has been truncated. (Other types of damage done to our bodies may be through diseases, etc.)

It is in our bodies that sexual traumas occur, whether it is being forced to watch pornographic movies with our eyes or being molested or raped. The aggressor has stolen something delicately precious to the victim. Sexual abuse by known individuals is much more painful as betrayal of such childlike trust cuts deep.

### **Examples of consequences of sexual traumas**

- a. Harbour hatred of self (“Why am I so stupid as to let him do it to me?”)
- b. Harbour hatred of men (commoner for girls and women to be sexually abused than boys and men)
- c. Have high tendency to transfer anger and revenge to others who are similar to the aggressors, even if they are caring spouses.

- d. Have a subconscious need to be repaid what has been emotionally cheated from them.
- e. Rarely, a desire to break others' marriages.

## 2.

Sexual feelings is an intense and strongly emotional potential dynamite. These powerful emotions need a certain amount of character maturity to handle them. Therefore, when a child is forced to experience such powerful forces within him/her before the stage of life when they understand the implications of such feelings, many distorted views of sexuality may develop to cause eventual harmful lifestyles and life choices.

### **Example**

After a young male professional was engaged to a lovely lady, she discovered that he would not let her touch his chest. Through pastoral counseling, he revealed that when he was about 13 years old, his father's man friend would secretly take him aside to pinch his nipples and molest him.



### 3.

When a young person experiences these strong emotions without understanding where they are coming from, it is confusing enough. Yet, added to the “*pleasurable*” feeling is the secrecy and threats (especially in incest, which is known to be commoner than sexual abuse by strangers) about the whole experience(s). The younger the child when abuse occurs, the deeper is the wound and the harder to heal. Why? This is because the little girl or boy cannot understand why such a good feeling has to be kept a secret from those who love him/her. If he/she has a wonderful gift of a new toy or box of chocolates, he/she would show everyone how happy he/she is. Why not for this event? This confusion may develop into a subconscious ambiguity about his/her sexuality which is likely to cause serious problems in later marriage life.

#### **Examples**

- Non-consummation of marriage.
- Repeated affairs/infatuations by a spouse even though the couple love each other deeply, thus causing more damage to others and self.

Counsellors always feel rewarded if they could help couples know God’s healing grace before they get married.

## **Suggestion for Help**

If you have been sexually abused in some way before OR suspects there could have been such past abuse, due to current symptoms:

- Please look for someone to talk it out.
- If you cannot think of anyone you trust, talk to God and ask Him about your pains and suspicions. Ask Him to show you someone who may be able to listen to your questions, doubts and heart cries and pray with you

OR

- Simply ask God to forgive the aggressors, whether known or unknown, heal you from the past wounds and fill you with His Holy Spirit to renew your mind so that you may walk and live the abundant God wants to give to you for your good and His honour.

Remember:

God's acceptance of you is always the same, whether you have been abused or not, whether you have been sexually damaged or not. He wants to make you new and whole like Jesus, His Son, so you will enjoy His eternal

undeserved mercy more and more. Read Romans 8 where God, through Paul, assures us that He can and will make all things (good and bad) work together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. Isn't that great news!

### **Example**

Miss A was a diligent and efficient church worker any pastor would want as an administrator. Her effectiveness would remove a heavy burden from him. However, for many years, Miss A easily became emotionally attached to men friends. When certain brothers in the congregation showed some concern, she would feel infatuated and could not focus on her work. This upset her deeply, especially when the brothers marry someone else. In the midst of counselling, it was discovered that she had a strong urge to feel romantic with the men she knew in spite of her having tried her best to control herself.

During one session, she sobbed uncontrollably as she related how she was addicted to masturbation though she hated the action. She frequently felt terribly guilty after each episode, especially when she was a much respected youth counsellor in church. It

was then discovered, through thorough history taking, that when she was a small girl, one of her older brothers had repeatedly touched her private parts. Though she knew something was wrong, she had got used to the pleasurable feelings of sexual stimulation. Later in adulthood, having become a Christian and wanting to be pure in thought and action for the Lord, she tried to kick the bad habit but repeatedly fell, though she prayed and repented again and again. This led her to harbour a defeated Christian life of hidden guilt.

### **Interpretation that brought her out of her trap ...**

Her constant desire for romances was a result of her transferring the love-hate relationship with her older brother (whom she admired and yet hated due to the molestation) to especially older men. On one hand, she needed their acceptance while on the other hand, she was angry with them for not returning her approaches. Confused, she threw her anger at her pastor and his wife. Finally, she had to resign and leave the church. Thankfully, God reached out to her to forgive, cleanse and heal as she also released forgiveness to the brother who offended her at a tender age and left a

deep sense of betrayal and uncleanness in her life. She later found victory through insight, prayers and much hard work on her part. Currently, she is able to exercise self-control over her sexuality, with God's help, and enjoys Jesus' promised abundant life more and more!

### **Reflection**

Take your time to Reflect, Journal and Pray during your daily communion with God alone. You may like to share with a confidant later on and pray together.

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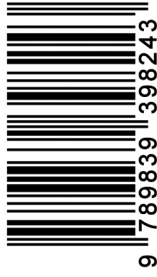
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