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“Nothing is of more importance for the public well-being, than to form and train up youth in wisdom and virtue.”

Benjamin Franklin

Chapter One

The Seduction Of American Youth

Insight #1 Knowledge helps us to accurately see the world around us, but understanding helps us to choose wisely, live abundantly and happily.

When I was fifteen, I worked in a doughnut shop with an older man who was easy to talk with. One night I asked, “What do you think about sex before marriage?”

His answer was short and simple, “There’s nothing wrong with having sex before you’re married, but there is something wrong with getting pregnant.”

The American youth--for decades--have been seduced by the idea that there is nothing wrong with premarital sex except the physical consequences: pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS. They’ve been taught how to keep from getting pregnant and what to do if they do get pregnant. They have been taught the sex drive cannot be controlled, and that there’s such a thing as “safe sex”. They have been taught anatomy, various sexual practices, every sexual lifestyle imaginable, and assorted contraceptive devices. But they have *not* been taught the emotional and spiritual hazards of sex, or the reasons and rewards for postponing sexual relations until a loving, loyal and legal relationship is established. How can we criticize the youth for the off-the-charts teenage pregnancy rate when they have not been properly informed?

The seduction came from all sides: movies, music, books. Some schools--even churches--would not consider teaching abstinence because they believed it to be unachievable. Hollywood would not consider it because it was not profitable. The sexual revolution and the free love movement tossed traditional values to

the wind. The idea of waiting until marriage changed to waiting for the next consenting relationship. Fidelity in marriage was altered to fidelity as long as everything was going okay. Being “engaged” was replaced by “living together”.

Our happiness is determined by the ideas that we believe. Ideas form attitudes, and attitudes determine behavior or actions. Bad ideas produce unhappy and unfulfilling lives; good ideas produce happy and fulfilled lives. The idea “if it feels good, do it” was a bad idea that seeded bad behavior. The idea that sex is simply a biological urge was another bad idea that seeded more bad--irresponsible, exploitive--behavior.

The sexual revolution was a national temper tantrum to avoid honor, loyalty and commitment in sexual relations. It reminds me of the spoiled girl, Veruca Salt, in the movie, “Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory.” Remember when she throws a temper tantrum and demands to get what she wants, when she wants it? Such an attitude with a child is irritating, but with a whole society it’s scary. The sexual revolution created widespread deception, distrust, disloyalty, divorce, abortion, and off-the-charts illegitimacy.

The free love movement had nothing to do with love and even less to do with freedom. Where’s the freedom when the “every man for himself” game makes us all feel threatened and scared? Where’s the love when men prey upon women, and women prey upon men?

The Counter Sexual Revolution

Lately, however, there’s an awakening in the air. A new revolution is brewing--the Counter sexual revolution. The value of abstinence before marriage and fidelity after is being reconsidered. One study shows that Americans are more worried about the loss of morals in their society than anything else. They are worried about the high illegitimacy rate--the highest in the world. They are worried about the lack of human tenderness and respect. They are worried about AIDS. They are worried about tax dollars spent on single mothers and their children. They are worried about how children will fare growing up without fathers. They are worried about the high divorce rate. They are worried that things have gone too far.

There are more than just the physical consequences of casual sex; there are emotional and spiritual consequences as well. Casual sex can inflict the deepest kind of pain and suffering for the human soul--children robbed of childhood, girls who cry in the night over

boys who never loved them, boys who must put aside skateboards to grow up too soon and too fast. The real tragedy of casual sex isn't the cost to the government, or the pregnancies, or the AIDS threat--it's the broken hearts and broken lives.

As a fifteen-year-old, I didn't really know what I was searching for when I asked about having sex before marriage, but as a fifty-year-old I realize I was searching for knowledge that would help me to make responsible sexual decisions. I wanted more than just the facts of life, I wanted understanding. Factual knowledge helps us to accurately see the world around us, but understanding helps us to choose wisely, live abundantly and happily.

I believe that there are universal and natural laws--self-evident truths--for human success. Some things do not work; other things work every time. Values may change from culture to culture, but natural laws for human happiness and success are always the same. Cooperation, service, compassion, sacrifice, understanding, honor, and integrity will always enhance the harmony in any heart, in any home, in any nation. On the other hand, selfishness, callousness, insensitivity, dishonor, and deception will always tear at the peace and harmony of any heart, of any home, of any nation.

“Consider the freedom of chastity.”

Recently, a young man told me his sad story. Two years ago Hank was in high school, a star football player with several college scholarships lined-up. Then a series of events turned it all around: his sometime-girlfriend got pregnant. They moved in together for the sake of the child, but it didn't work out. Eventually, she started going out with someone else. Hank got jealous, hunted the guy down, jumped him and beat him up. Now Hank was being charged for assault and battery.

He looked old for his young age--haggard, worn and shell shocked. He said, “You never think these things are going to happen to you. I thought I had my future all sewed up; I had everything. Now I have nothing.”

“You might want to consider the freedom of chastity.” As I said these words I could tell it was a major revelation to him. I added, “Think of it this way--you'll know exactly where your seed is at all times.”

It was obvious that Hank had never before considered the possibility of waiting to engage in sex until marriage. He thought for a moment, and then said, “It sure is, isn't it? It's the ultimate

freedom!”

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“If we have no values to transmit to our young, we need not be surprised that we live in an increasingly valueless age.”

George Roche III

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Most youth, like Hank, were never taught a better way.

“Surely, these young people cannot be blamed,” wrote George Roche III, president of Hillsdale College, “for the direction of our society. Surely, a system which produces young people, some of whom cannot read, many of whom cannot think, and most of whom lack knowledge of their own heritage and the moral values which underlie it, is a system which needs serious attention.”

(Education in America, p.5)

Decisions that Bring Lasting Joy

Often I use this demonstration in teaching: I put a candy bar, a handful of various coins, a dollar, and a hundred-dollar bill on the table. I then ask the youth, “If I were to give you a choice of these items which one would you choose?”

The answer is always, “The hundred-dollar bill.”

Then I ask, “Who has a three-year-old brother or sister?”

When someone raises their hand, I ask, “What do you think he or she would choose?”

The answer, “The candy bar.”

“But a hundred candy bars could be purchased with the hundred-dollar bill, right? What could you do to help him make a wiser decision?” I ask.

The usual response, “I could advise him to pick the hundred-dollar bill and we could go to the store and buy all the candy bars he ever wanted.”

I then say, “There are lots of choices in this life. Every day we make choices based upon what we think is the most valuable, and what will bring us the most happiness. Wouldn’t it be a shame if we, like the little child, choose what will bring immediate gratification over

what could bring lasting joy?"

Politicians have recently said to the youth, "Just say no to sex." Parents have always been saying, "Just say no to sex," but the children are asking, "Why?" As a youth, I deserved more information, and our children deserve more *now*.

The youth of America have a right to know their options. They have a right to know what ideas have seduced them into thinking that the only down sides to premarital sex are pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. They have a right to a wider view. They have a right to know the rewards of self-control and moral virtue: self-respect, freedom to be a friend and have friends, spiritual strength, honorable love and marriage, sexual fulfillment (intimacy of mind, heart, soul and body), children's respect and confidence.

They have a right to know the clear difference between having sex and making love. They have a right to know that there are other sexually transmitted diseases that affect the heart, mind and soul. They have a right to be warned of abusive relationships masquerading as love, and of the dark side of passion that seems titillatingly exciting on the surface, but leaves a deadly hangover. They need to know that pretending love for selfish conquests may lead to being unable to love at all. They need to know that they cannot use and abuse another human being without first abusing themselves. They need to understand that when conscience is shut down in order to feel good about doing bad, eventually it does just that--shuts down--leaving them without an inner guide. They need to know that there's a force that would twist the powers to love, honor and cherish into powers to hate, dishonor and despise. They need to know that the monsters who use their sexual powers to inflict pain were never born that way; monsters become monsters one step at a time.

This book is the result of a forty-year search for the answers to the question, "Why?" It answers the questions that, as a youth, I never knew to ask. It exposes the dangers of casual and exploitive sex, and explores the wealth of enlightened chastity--for the individual, friendships, marriages, families and society. It's a journey to explore insights that will assist in making responsible and ethical sexual decisions.

Ultimately, each one of us must make the decision of how we will use the god-given gift of sexuality. This decision—one of the most important decisions of our lives—deserves the journey to understanding. This book is dedicated to every curious teenager

who wants to hear more than “no” and for every parent, teacher or youth leader who must answer the question “Why?”