

GOD'S PLAN FOR SEX

Let us compare two appetites that God instilled in humans, the appetite for food and the appetite for sex - and His Plan for both. He could have made eating simply a requirement for maintaining the human body, and not given a taste to food. God, however, put a pleasurable sensation on eating in order to encourage us to do so, and also as a gift for following His Plan for the human body. While the appetite for food is natural and normal, it is not natural and normal to satisfy it any way we desire - and there are natural penalties for abusing it. Just one eating disorder - too much sugar - can cause weight gain, low energy, sleep apnea, irritability, high blood pressure, and diabetes. So the good taste of food is not the purpose for eating - it is only a bonus.

It is the same with the appetite for sex. The Mortal Sin of fornication (commonly called "free love") is the using of sex as simply an attempt to satisfy our weakened human nature's desire for sexual pleasure, rather than for the reason God created it for. God could simply have told Adam and Eve that if they wanted to have a child, they would have to engage in sex, but there would be no pleasure involved in it. It would simply be a necessary physical act that would have to be accomplished in order to conceive a child. Of course, there would then be neither a need nor a reason for sex again until the next time a child was desired.

God in His goodness, however, put a pleasure into the act of sex, and He did it for two reasons. The first was to encourage humans to "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth...." {Genesis 1:28} That includes children being conceived at times other than only when a couple "chose" to attempt to have a child. The second reason is because the pleasure involved is a bonding factor for a married couple who must live together *"for better or for worse."* It is a kind of reward for the problems and sacrifices that are necessary in living with another person for life and in raising a family. Again, the pleasure of sex is a bonus for marriage not the basis of it.

Pre-marital and extra-marital sex is probably the primary cause of unhappy marriages and divorces which prevent children from being brought up in a two-parent family of love, attention, and understanding. This disintegration of the family as the cornerstone of society has a devastating effect, which is now being felt nationwide. The abuse of this gift has resulted in artificial birth control, out-of-wedlock births, adultery, abortion, homosexuality, and the many

social diseases of which AIDS is just one.

Whenever sex is used outside of God's Plan, it is a Mortal Sin. As examples, fornication is sex between unmarried persons who have not made a commitment to God and each other for life, and who, therefore, have not earned this privilege. There are no exceptions to this, regardless of the "feelings" the couple has for each other. (More females have been seduced -and used as a sexual receptacle - by males by the words "I love you" than by alcohol. Men consider that a cheap price to pay for sex.) Adultery is sex between one married and one unmarried person or two people who are not married to each other. Both of these Mortal Sins are actions that have as their purpose the use of this unlawful physical pleasure, which also is a satisfaction of the common mental desire for "forbidden sex."

Innate desire belongs to human nature, and particular desire belongs to the phenomenon of attraction. The general or particular desire becomes lust when the mind receives pleasure from continued, willed, conscious thoughts of sex in opposition to God's Plan. Christ said, *"...anyone who so much as looks with lust at a woman has already committed adultery with her in his heart."* (Matthew 5:28)

Lust is immoral because it violates the basic element for having respect and truly caring about another person. Lust is totally self-centered. It uses and often degrades another person in its drive to seek its own gratification without regard to either the mental or physical welfare of the other person - and especially their spiritual welfare. Lust and love are mutually exclusive - they cannot both exist at the same time for the same person.

Besides the satisfaction of the sex drive only being lawful in marriage, it also has to be moral *in* marriage. God's Plan for married sex includes the principle that each act of sex has to be open to conception taking place. This eliminates oral and anal sex, even within marriage. Sex doesn't always have to be a conscious attempt for that - only that it is *possible*. When a couple does not want the sacrifices involved in having a child, then the only moral action is to trade for the sacrifice of not having sex a few days a month when the woman can conceive. When a couple practices artificial birth control, they are basically telling God, "We want our plan for sex - whenever we want - without the *possibility* of conception taking place. We do not want your Plan of every act of sex to be open to the transmission of life."

Every illicit act of sex outside of God's Plan - is a Mortal Sin. That includes fornication {I Corinthians 6:9}, adultery {Matthew

15:19}, divorce and remarriage {Luke 16:18}), masturbation {1Corinthians 6:18}, homosexuality {Leviticus 20:13}, and sodomy {Leviticus 20:15}. There are also Mortal Sins of mental fornication and mental adultery. This is to have willful thoughts and desires of any kind of sex except with your own spouse.

Of course, Satan has the opposite standard. His is: "If it feels good, go ahead and do it." So obviously, Satan approves and encourages all illicit sex- and especially any pornography, movies, television shows, and magazines that promote it. Just as eating outside of God's Plan has natural consequences, so does sex outside of God's Plan. That's why there are more than thirty sexually-transmitted diseases. No virgin who marries a virgin, and are both faithful to their spouse, ever gets even one of them.

According to the entertainment industry - with the 100% approval of Satan - sex has no other purpose than simply being another way to "have fun." Whereas a good night hug and kiss was formerly considered an option at the end of most dates, especially a first date, television shows and movies now portray sex as the natural end of all dates. A constant diet of this promotion of not only illicit natural sex - but also illicit disgusting perverted sex - leads to the breakdown of morality in a society - which is exactly what has happened in this country, especially in the last 60 years.

God has a different plan for sex than Satan, and his partners in the "sex for anyone and everyone regardless of age and gender - and regardless of consent or force."

Sex outside of marriage can bring on anxiety, unhappiness, guilt, depression, despair and even suicide.

None of these problems, however, individually or collectively, can compare to the LOSS OF ONE SOUL for all eternity. When the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared at Fatima, she said, *"More souls go to Hell for sins of the flesh than for any other reason."* Because of our modern world's obsession with sex, and the commonness of fornication and adultery, it is easy to believe the truth of that statement.

One famous sports hero bragged that he had sex with 20,000 women. Even if he had that many, if he died without being sorry for every one of them, he is burning in Hell - and he is not bragging about them now. However, it doesn't take any number more than one Mortal Sin - with no sorrow and no forgiveness - to earn the same Hell and for the same Eternity. (Even on a different level of Hell.) That's a mighty high price for a few - or many minutes of illicit pleasure.

An analogy of Eternity may be helpful. Let's say there is a sphere the size of the Earth made of diamond, and every million years a bird would fly by and brush its wing against that sphere. By the time the sphere was reduced to nothing - Eternity would just be starting.

Now an Eternity in Hell seems (to us humans) to be an excessive punishment for one unforgiven Mortal Sin. However, that Sin was committed against the Laws of Almighty God, our Creator. Now until death, any number of and any kinds of Sins can be forgiven by God who is All-Merciful. After our death, however, the time for mercy is over, and God's being All-Just takes over. And since not even one Mortal Sin cannot be forgiven after death, the punishment remains in effect for all Eternity.

Now even though each of us is born in Original Sin, and Baptism takes away the stain of it, it does not take away the effects of Original Sin. And it does not stop Satan from tempting us to commit Mortal Sins in the area of illicit sex. In fact, because it is a natural weakness in the desire to satisfy the sex drive - especially the much greater one in men - that Satan places a concentration of temptations in this area of weakness.

This present obsession with sex is not natural - although the desire for sex after puberty is natural. The beginning of it being an obsession starts even before puberty. Most likely, it starts with sex education in schools.

Any sex education should come from parents - as instruction in that area should always be directly linked with religious beliefs, and principles. So too often, parents concede the teaching of sex education to others, ignoring the fact that those others may often teach this subject without a mention of moral values - especially sex education classes in schools. (Even starting in the First Grade.) Many parents have an unnecessary self-consciousness in this area or have been intimidated by "experts."

The best "expert" on a child, however, is the child's parents. Sex education is easy to teach if a few principles are always remembered. The first is that children (as well as teens and adults) have much more need of moral education than sex education. Besides a few natural facts on the physical and mental changes in boys and girls at puberty, and the most basic information on the conception of a human being, little else is needed to be taught - or should be taught - before the eve of one's wedding. More information than that usually only leads to curiosity and experimentation. It

becomes a case of "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, and more knowledge only leads to more danger."

Children get their values about procreation from their parents. If the parents think that sex is "dirty" or "shameful" then that will be their child's impression of it. If the parents think that is "good and beautiful, but only according to God's Plan," then this will be their impression. One easy way for this to be expressed to older children at the right time is the comparison previously made about the appetites for food and for sex. It should be stressed that God has given us a great privilege to join with Him in creating new life.

Purity, chastity and modesty must be cultivated from a very early age and continued to be reinforced. (It is never too early for youth to cultivate a practice of saying three "Hail Mary's" every day for purity.) If pre-teen girls show off half their bodies or wear tight clothes before puberty, they cannot expect to attain the virtues of shame and modesty after they have suddenly attained a womanly figure after puberty, and have the extra temptation of liking to be stared at by boys. If adolescent boys look at pictures of naked women and read books about sex, they cannot expect to control their passions when they start single dating - especially with girls who have no shame or modesty. If you play with boiling water, you will always get burned.

It is necessary for all of us, then, to avoid the occasions of sin, the circumstances in which these sins can easily be committed. The first step (besides the good example and teaching of parents = and the teaching of amoral sex education in schools), is to continually reinforce yourself in order to be better able to avoid those sins when placed in dangerous circumstances. Another very positive reinforcement is to read the "Lives of the Saints," in order to give yourself good heroes to model yourselves after, rather than the glory-seekers and pleasure-seekers who get all the publicity today. Saints had temptations and weaknesses, too. They were not Saints because they always found it easy to be perfect. They became Saints by overcoming their weaknesses and temptations, and never giving up because they failed at times.

Of course, the only way to accomplish a life of chastity - regardless of what your vocation in life is: single, married, or religious, is to continually focus your goals on the only thing that is really important in this life - to get to Heaven. It is only when this is forgotten, or put on the side, that the temporary pleasure of illicit sex becomes an attractive option. As always, it is a matter of making a choice and then doing whatever is necessary to accomplish that

choice - no matter how difficult it is.

How can the correct impression and attitude about sex be given to small children? When they are small, it is simply by talking to them about the goodness of God and the beauty of His Plan, starting with the pollination of flowers, and the birth of baby animals. It is important to gain their trust and confidence by showing a personal interest in talking to them when they are small children. This will make it much easier for them to have trust and confidence in you, and God, when they are older. Parents should also remember that the words they use are not as important as the feelings and beliefs they have when talking to their children. If they are positive, and loving, then the children will easily follow advice and suggestions when told, "This is a private matter, and not one to be discussed with your friends or even your brothers and sisters. If you have any questions, please come to me and we will talk about it together."

After some beginning talks to growing children, some questions can easily be answered, "We'll talk about that another time." Don't burden them with too much all at once, or all at the same time. All of this has to do with the moral education that children and teenagers need, which is to increase their happiness in this life, and to better attain the perfect happiness in the next life.

It is good to remember that when small children ask a simple question, all they want is a simple answer. That is all that should be given. There is an old story about a six-year-old boy who asked his father, "Where did I come from?" The father sighed and then went into detail, starting from the birds and the bees and ending up with human reproduction. When he finished, he asked his son what he thought about it. His son paused and then said, "That's interesting. But my friend is from New Orleans and I want to know where I come from."

The final thought expressed after every discussion should be a reminder that as long as people use sex according to God's purpose for it, individuals and families are happier, and society is strong morally. Outside of God's plan, sex brings personal misery, unhappy marriages, divorces, and a breakdown of society. Remind them that the choice is theirs as to what they want their life to be, and what they will want to have to answer for on their Judgement Day.

Judgement Day and the Eternity that follows should always be kept in mind.

One man told St. Padre Pio that he didn't believe in Hell. He was told, "You will when you get there." Now if someone claims to have no fear of Hell, then before indulging in the next act of illicit

sex, he should go to his stove and put two burners on high. Then he should put his hands on them for just five minutes. If that feels good, then Hell may not be that bad for him. (Of course, in Hell it's the whole body and for Eternity - instead of five minutes.) Is it worth taking that chance?

The bottom line is whether to choose either to live with no sex at all, or sex only in marriage, which is one of the main paths to Heaven - or choose illicit sex of any kind, which is a major path to Hell.

As always, the choice is yours.