

Teaching Teenagers on Fornication

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Many teenagers are suffering physically, emotionally, and spiritually because of the lack of proper teaching by their parents, teachers, doctors, counselors, and pastors concerning sexual intercourse. Teenagers are often improperly taught that fornication (premarital sexual intercourse) is an individual freedom to be exercised if they are "responsible." The word "responsible" is then defined as "using contraception." By this our children are taught that fornication is not wrong, only fornication without contraception is wrong. This ungodly teaching has led to an increase in fornication, an increase in pregnancies, an increase in sexually transmitted diseases, and increase in abortions, and an increase in spiritual poverty. When we abandon God's truths, we welcome misery.

Teenagers must be taught the Biblical truth that fornication is a sin with a great price. God tells us, "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, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortionists, shall inherit the kingdom of God." (I Cor, 6:9-10)

However, God does not just prohibit, but mercifully provides a pathway to righteousness: "...to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." (I Cor. 7:2) But what of the teen that does fall to the sin of fornication? God in His mercy allows for repentance: "...if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife." (Ex. 22:16) Therefore, fornication should be contemplated with all the seriousness of marriage. Teens must realize that if they are not ready for marriage, they are not ready for sex. God's word confines sex to marriage. This is the truth our children should be taught, to train their minds

so as to restrain their bodies.

Let me illustrate with a true story. A fellow Christian doctor told me about a teenage boy and girl at a Christian school in his town who fornicated. The girl became pregnant. He told me their parents arranged for the teens to marry. After they were married, the girl had a miscarriage and the child died. The doctor told me he thought it was unfortunate that they had not waited a little longer to marry, that is, until after she miscarried, because then the marriage would not have been necessary. I believe, however, that my friend is missing the point of God's teaching that fornication is a sin that requires repentance, whether or not a pregnancy or birth occurs. This teenage couple properly repented of their fornication by seeking God's forgiveness and by marriage (with their parents' consent, Ex. 22:16-17).

Biblical thinking and teaching has become foreign in today's world. Many teachers, parents, counselors, doctors, school board members, and pastors have abandoned God's word as authoritative. They have supplanted the Biblical truth that "fornication is sin" with the lie that "premarital sex without using contraception is irresponsible." Many teens have been taught this lie and have accepted its implication that fornication is wrong if you do not use contraception. So, many teens scurry off to "health" clinics or to doctors' offices for contraception. Sadly, many doctors will prescribe contraceptive medicines even without parental consent. Sadder still are the incidents in which parents bring their children in and demand contraception for them! How far we have wandered from God's truth: "Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore; lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness." (Lev. 19:29)

Another result of the lie that "premarital sex without

using contraception is irresponsible" is that many conclude that fornication is permissible but pregnancy is not. Thus, society focuses on the problem of teenage pregnancy rather than teenage fornication. To my knowledge, nowhere in the Bible is pregnancy called sin, although certainly the way some in the Scripture became pregnant was sin. Still, in these materialistic times we narrowly focus on pregnancy as the problem. We worry about the girl finishing her education so she can materially support herself. We worry about how the welfare system can materially support the baby. We worry about the physical health consequences of the pregnancy on the mother. Now, certainly, there are some legitimate physical and monetary concerns to address, but not to the exclusion of the spiritual consequences of fornication. We cannot correct the problem of teenage pregnancy without addressing the problem of teenage fornication. Further, we cannot correct either problem by divorcing their physical dimensions from their spiritual dimensions.

God is grieved by sin, including fornication. Fornication is destroying our youth and destroying the sanctity of marriage. The Bible's teaching is clear, do not fornicate. If you do not abstain, seek the Lord's forgiveness and repent by marriage. If we love our children we will teach them the truth. Our children are bombarded with worldly teaching about sex through movies, music and television, as well as by many teachers, parents, doctors, and pastors. Instead, pastors must preach against fornication. Churches must discipline fornicators and lead them to proper repentance. Schools must teach the propriety of chastity. Doctors must counsel about chastity rather than prescribe contraceptives. Consumers must refuse to support movies, television programs, and magazines which glamorize fornication or pander to lust.

All Christians must pray to God to forgive our failure to teach our children His truths, and we must pray that He will henceforth strengthen our resolve to love and teach His ways. Our children desperately need proper teaching. They have suffered too long from the silence of Christians and the boisterousness of those who have abandoned God's truths and adopted lies.

"The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness. ... They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator - who is forever praised. Amen." (Rom. 1:18, 25)