

MEN'S SEMINAR

24 October, 1998



MELBOURNE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Why is this man not afraid to view pornography?

4. Does he not fear God?
5. Does he think that no one will know? Does this demonstrate that he is only concerned with putting on a good show? Is he a man-pleaser and not one who seeks to please God?
6. Does he think that he is not viewing people but just images and therefore it is sanitised and will not hurt?
7. Does he not fear that he is grieving the Holy Spirit?
8. Is he not afraid of the burnout that this will produce within himself?

Why has he forsaken personal self discipline?



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this seminar in which we will be discussing important areas of manhood. The pressure in the world to destroy manhood and deviate sexuality have highlighted the need for a seminar such as this. The areas discussed will need careful meditation and it will be necessary to follow through on areas of difficulty with your pastoral leaders. Fathers who have brought teenagers are urged to spend time with your son(s) explaining and discussing the relevant topics.

PROGRAM

9:00am	INTRODUCTION – PASTORAL OVERVIEW Stephen Hall
9:30am	MAN’S ESSENTIAL BEING AND SEXUALITY - David Hall
10:30am	MORNING TEA
11:00am	GUARDING MALE SEXUALITY Graham Pomery
12:00pm	LUNCH
1:30pm	SEXUALITY - CORRUPTION& RESTORATION Stephen Hall
2:30pm	GROUP DISCUSSION
3:30pm	AFTERNOON TEA
4:00pm	CLOSE

THE WANDERING EYE

To look on a woman with lust is to commit these sins:-

- Uncleaness
- Capitulation to temptation
- Without self control
- Not growing up - maintaining childish attitudes and behaviours
- Self indulgence

Voyeurism is symptomatic of these evils:-

- Gratifying unholy appetites by:-
- Indulging in sexual fantasies
- Not controlling youthful curiosity and imagination
- Gratifying youthful irresponsibility
- Refusing to be self disciplined
- Gratifying the lust for power
- Seeking to possess another
- Gratifying the desire to be overpowered or seduced

A DESCRIPTION

Looking lustfully is described as uncleanness or impurity. When a man is impure he cannot serve God. To properly serve God every faculty needs to be made a servant of righteousness so that the man can sanctify himself to the work, which God has called him to do.

“So now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.” (Rom 6:19 NRSV).

Where temptation to lust is accepted there is a very real danger of losing salvation.

“No fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.” (Eph 5:5).

Note these things about lusts:

- **They are deceitful.** When Satan proffered Eve god-like identity through indulgence, she did not gain anything in identity, instead she lost identity. *“The old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,” (Eph 4:22).*
- **They result in death.** *“But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.” (James 1:14 –15).*
- **They are destructive.** *“Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.” (I Peter 2:11).*

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On this fundamental issue he is wrong, because the treatment he gives to the pornographic fantasy is the same treatment he is giving to all women, particularly his wife and daughters. By demeaning womanhood by pornography he equally demeans real womanhood in his wife and daughters.

This is Corruption

- Corruption by power - to take another and use them against their will
- Corruption by fantasy - to live in unreality
- Corruption by ecstasy - use of others for ecstatic/erotic experience

SEDUCTION

Seduction is the powerful principle being poured out in the world today.

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;” (1 Tim 4:1).

A Christian man needs to be armed with two decisions if he is to overcome:

- He must determine that he will seduce no one to satisfy his will but rather he will give place for each person to express their own identity in freedom.
- He must determine that he will not be seduced as a trade for identity validation and so become enslaved.

If he does not make this decision he will become prey to voyeurism or pornography. With voyeurism, when a man looks at a woman with lust he has already begun down the road of seduction because he has not allowed her the freedom to be who she is, he has instead made her what he wants her to be. In the very same instant the man is seduced because he is finding identity validation by the rush he gets when he indulges himself on what he sees.

Pornography is just the next step down the corrupt path. The man is overpowering imaginary women while at the same time being seduced by them.

When identity becomes weak through corruption the bigger problem is that a man wants to be seduced so that he can feel valid as a man - a sexual man. This is his delusion.

How do you overcome?

Prov 5.15-23, Job 31.1, Prov 6.32-33

FATHERHOOD - THE KEY

Reformation of identity is the only eternal and successful answer to the destruction caused by sexual obsessions that have created deviance

MAN'S ESSENTIAL BEING AND SEXUALITY

David Hall

MAN AS PREDESTINED

Each individual has been given form and identity by the heavenly Father. Ecclesiastes¹ and Isaiah² both tell us that God has formed and is forming us in our identity. The complete fulfilment of this identity is only possible in the new birth. This is the first part of call in our learning of true offering. The presentation of ourselves as a 'living sacrifice'³ unto God is the beginning of true offering. Presenting ourselves in complete reality requires an honest recognition and acceptance of the predestination of the Father toward us in Christ, and presenting ourselves a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable because we are 'of God'. We have been, and are being formed by the Father, receiving the life of Christ, godliness, in our flesh. The presentation of this reality is when we give back 'of His own.'

It may be helpful to list some things that He has not given us regarding individual personhood:

- Our own carnal projections and idolatry - These project an image of ourselves that is unreal and unrelational (often non-negotiable) attempting to appease the idol of our own self-image. Where at times we can be ambitious for a position (ie. ministry), or self-effacing (poor me), in a 'bruised position', or peddling nice religion, the idol of our heart opposes reality and the cross. These things are clearly not 'of the true God', yet for a time we can convince ourselves that they are. False expressions (or even rejection) of manhood or maleness are carnal projections. The 'putting on' of a 'pseudonym' (ie. a different name) other than that 'named' by the Heavenly Father⁴ is a projection. These are described by such social definitions as 'macho', 'S.N.A.G.' etc.
- God has revealed Himself in His name to all who will come into His name and find relationship. He has not revealed Himself as a 'god' of disorder, without a household or family. Rather, He sets

1 Eccles 6:10

2 Isa 45:9; 64:8

3 Rom 12:1-2

4 Eccles 6:10

FANTASY IS NOT GENUINE

How is it that a man can have erotic sexual fantasies, but when he gets home the fantasies evaporate? It's not that his wife is not capable of erotic love, it's that his wife is real, and reality and fantasy can never meet. Where sexuality goes down the track of fantasy it becomes unreal and unhelpful. The greatest damage is in that the sexuality of the man becomes unhinged from reality and therefore unhinged from himself.

When a man genuinely meets his wife the once isolated sexuality is now engaged in a real relationship. Fantasy is not the legitimate place for the expression of sexuality, rather real love in giving and receiving, genuine caring and open communication is its proper place. Fantasy does not develop the marriage relationship, it demeans it. When the unreal heat goes out then the true honouring of the wife as a person begins.

Too often Christian men believe the world's message that sexuality is not an integrated part of a man's being, but that it is something outside of himself and just something he does.

Sexuality is not **just** expressed in actions that are sexual. Sexuality is expressed within our gender identity and all the roles that we have in life. It is an undergirding motive within life that is found in manhood and womanhood as a part of a set of motives, which help maintain the bounds and bonds of all holy relationships.

Sexual fantasy leads to sexuality that is relationally unattached. When a man is in proper relationship with his wife he does not fantasise about wildly erotic interludes with her - he doesn't need fantasy because he already has a healthy relationship with his wife. His sexuality is firmly embedded in his identity so that he can express himself intimately with her in a holy and healthy manner.

WEAK MANHOOD IS THE GROUND FOR ABERRANCE

If a man is weak in identity he will escape to a fantasy world where he can indulge himself in sexually intimate imaginations without ever having to meet anyone or give himself to anyone.

When sexuality is expressed in isolation it becomes aberrant, this is because it is the expression of sexuality without relational limits. It was never intended to be expressed as a motive or action in isolation. But when it does find a way to be activated without relational limits, it appears as a highly energetic force or frenetic, uncontrollable passion. It actually is not energy on its own, but rather normal human energies that are misdirected.

Proverbs describes it as; *"springs scattered abroad, streams of water in the streets?" (Prov 5:16).*

Of all sexually alienated activities, fantasy is the most frenetic. Fantasy is the dream world where output of sexual energy can seem to

capacity is seen in its infancy throughout the school years where a young man learns to discipline himself, being diligent at school, standing in identity and learning to meet his parents and others in true relationship etc. This capacity should then mature through each phase of life as relational contexts change and as he grows in capacity to manage his sexuality with faithfulness and dignity.

MAN AS A UNIFIED BEING

Man's emotional, mental, physiological and spiritual state and relationships are all effected by his sexuality. Further, his predestination as a Son of God is defined in part via the gender given to him by the Heavenly Father. A son of God is male or female according to the predestination of the Father.

Man as a total being expresses and experiences life and its effects through aspects of his physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual make-up. **Each aspect of life is affected by the others.** For example, as a man grows older, he may find that he is physically less able than he was in his youth. Knees give out, blood pressure boils, arthritis and back trouble slow him down. This has a large impact on a man's emotional and mental state. He may pretend to be young, acting like a 'peter pan', he may pine for his youth or pretend not to notice. Note: The problem may essentially be physical, yet he is also affected emotionally and psychologically. So called 'middle age' impacts on man at the point where he is in disunion with himself as regards the reality that the Father has called on him. A man can be at odds (disunion) with his own mortality, denying the physical and emotional reality of the aging process and its effect on his mental and spiritual state.

Again, each aspect of life is affected by the others. A man's sexuality affects the rest of his being. How is this so? Sexuality touches the whole of a man's maleness, headship and identity. He cannot operate relationally as anything other than a male. If a man's sexuality is corrupted, his essential being is compromised; he is de-worthed, condemned and lost. If his sexuality is expressed within the order of headship and true relationship, he is able to worth himself and others, able to give and receive in every area of life as God intended.

SEXUALITY AND BEING (IE. IDENTITY)

We have said that man is a unified being. Therefore in approaching the understanding of 'being' and 'sexuality', we must be careful not to divorce or disassociate sexuality from the total package that is man's 'being'. This disassociation results from the separation of the physical function of the sexual act, from man's total being and sexuality. It is this **compartmentalisation** of life that leads to the false claim that activity in the sexual area does not impact on oneself and one's relationships.

thing he worships. Because he worships sexual objects, he himself becomes a sexual object, driven, like a brute beast by sexual instincts.⁵⁰

For such men, sexual expression is the fulfilment of what they imagine they want to be sexually. They give their worth to this image and so become degraded in their sexuality. This is a primary cause of corruption in a man's identity. It not only corrupts the correct development of his sexuality it also corrupts his masculinity and finally his whole identity.

HOW THE CORRUPTION WORKS

When a man looks lustfully on a woman he is taking possession of her for his own self-indulgence. His imagination runs corruptly to fantasy. **In his mind** he makes an unholy alliance with the body of a woman and takes possession of her. This is not just a harmless diversion by which the man derives a little pleasure in life; it is the promotion of a corrupt way of relating to people, particularly women. It is not just the evil of relating lustfully, but it is the far greater evil of relating with another person without giving respect or honour to them. In the area of sexuality this is particularly bad because this same disrespect then overflows towards a wife, a sister or a mother. Where such attitudes are not truly repented of, then the same disrespect is imposed on the members of Christ who are female. This dishonours Christ's headship in His Church.

This is one of the most common sins that men indulge in. Why is this so? It is because men have not disciplined themselves to take control of their natural sexual responses. Most men think that they can indulge this appetite harmlessly and without anyone knowing, so they let their eyes lead their heart.⁵¹

The Bible describes this as an impurity that leads to bondage. *"For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification."* (Rom 6:19 NRSV).

FATHER'S HELP IS VITAL

In all cases fathers need to give their sons the skills of personal self-discipline with regard to their sexuality. When a young man reaches puberty, his sense of sexuality begins to come forward in his consciousness. He is curious about the opposite sex and wants to look at them. This is not evil in itself, rather it is an expression of his awakening sexuality. This part of his identity needs to be brought within the bounds of proper attitude and behaviour by the exercise of personal self-discipline. This self-discipline can only effectively be taught under the disciplines of a father.

the washing of water by the word'.¹³ Headship in marriage guards the processes of sanctification and cleansing, ensuring that in the family's whole of life experience garments are kept white.¹⁴

We must define Christian love as being 'other centred' rather than 'self-centred' in order that each might be able to give themselves in love to meet the needs of the other. I Cor 7:2-5 is one of the clearest passages in the bible concerning this subject.

"Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. {3} Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. {4} The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. {5} Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control." (I Cor 7:2-5).

These Scriptures teach us that God designed man and woman with sexual needs and desires that should be fulfilled in marriage. In marriage, one's body belongs to the other, or more positively each must look after his partner's body. Each must be 'other centred' in his expression. Again this applies to his whole of life expression, but regarding his sexuality it means that because of his love he is self-controlled and does not just seek his own pleasure via sexual union. He is firstly a relational being and as such guards the relationship against his own self-centredness.

We are warned that neither partner should refuse to meet the needs of the other, except during fasting and praying, then coming together again lest Satan tempt either one. From this we can deduce that there are very real sexual needs in both man and woman. God thoroughly understands the sexual drive He created in mankind. 'It is better to marry than to burn'. Why? Because there is one legitimate, God-ordained method for releasing the natural pressure He created in human beings - the act of marriage. It is God's method for release of the sex drive. He intended that husband and wife be totally dependent on each other for sexual satisfaction. We have already noted however that 'sexual pressure' is not to be the governing factor or reason for intimate interactions between husband and wife. The physical relationship in marriage is the closest expression of the 'one flesh' miracle of marriage and as such is other centred.

From adolescence, the single man must begin to come to terms with the physical and psychological changes that take place, and discipline himself in order to maintain a godly testimony and lifestyle in the midst of God's relational order. Instruction is needed regarding the regulation of sexual pressure, the covenant of the eye and other themes in order that he might continue to present his members 'holy and acceptable'.

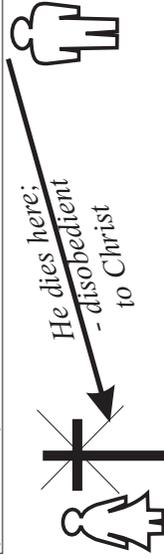
⁵⁰ Rom 1:23; Jude 10.

⁵¹ Job 31:7.

¹³ Eph 5:24-5.

¹⁴ Eccles 9:8.

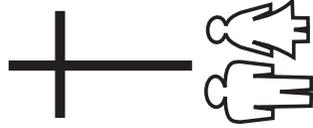
If a man puts his wife's demands ahead of Christ, he is submitting to an alternative cross that she has offered. His submission to her demands, means that he has sacrificed his life on the altar their marriage and his wife's perceptions of how he should provide for her. This is **not** "laying down his life for his wife".



Or

The man takes up his cross and lives in obedience.

And the man calls his wife to take up her cross and live in obedience with him.



Under headship the husband and wife express the glory of God and so live in the true identity that God has given to each of them. The result is abundant life for them and the family.

MALE SEXUALITY

Graham Pomery

CORRUPTED SEXUALITY

When Adam and Eve were created by God "in the image", though physically naked they knew no shame because they were clothed with life and identity from God Himself.

"And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." (Gen 2:25).

When man disobeyed God and fell from this place of being in God which clothed him, he became self-conscious and aware of his nakedness. Man knew shame. He became insecure and inferior ("I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."¹⁵). He set about trying to clothe the nakedness of his fallen position with an identity of his own choosing – he fathered himself.

Shame can therefore be defined as the driving force behind self-fathered identity.

Sexuality is an integral part of our identity, or essential being.¹⁶ When man fell, he forfeited the life of God and the glory of fathered identity. In the process, his sexuality was also corrupted. This corruption of identity left him empty and he was now driven by covetousness to satisfy the appetite of the empty, aching void within. His sexuality was also subject to this same basic drive of covetousness, or lust.

Lust

Lust is simply strong desire – to set the heart upon and long for something. It is not wrong in itself and can be positive if used rightly. For example, we have a strong desire to satisfy the natural appetites of the body such as hunger and thirst. Our hunger demands to be satisfied with food. To eat to satisfy our hunger is not a sin, but we can sin in eating if our heart is not right (if, for example, we stole someone else's food!).

Lust is therefore initially amoral. It only becomes sin at the point of accountability when the desire of the heart is not handled responsibly. Sin then is conceived when lust stems from an impure heart, or put simply:- Sin = Lust + Heart motive.

¹⁵ Gen 3:10.

¹⁶ Man's Essential Being and Sexuality – Dave Hall (Bris).

that bring the proper direction to the marriage. **His mouth must be open. He cannot remain silent**, but must call his wife to the obedience of the cross.

On the other hand the believing wife **must remain silent**. She cannot restore the marriage back to the place of God by calling her husband to obedience. She must believe that in simple obedience to Christ her Saviour she can exemplify the qualities of true godliness of the redeemed. This obedience is the vehicle for the gospel of the glory of God to be seen.

Where a believing man does not speak, he gives no opportunity for his wife to hear the word of faith and so find deliverance from oppression. The effect of Eve obeying Satan was that oppression took hold. This oppressing will lead to demonizing where a wife refuses to obey her husband. She will offer him an alternative way that avoids the cross of Christ. His loving response can only be to speak to her what he knows is God's way. By this means alone is he able to bring light and deliverance into the home.

What then is the reason for Adam's action?

Adam knew that the marriage was almost dead because their ongoing relationship would be strained across the gap between them. What would have happened to their marriage if Adam had not eaten the fruit? He would have been sinless while she was sinful. Only God could know the answer to that. Whatever the reasonings and suppositions, they are now of not much importance. We know that Adam capitulated to sin.

Her offer of the fruit was that he should join her and die for her. It is within God's mandate of headship in marriage that a man "*lay down his life for his wife*", but to do that against God's will is rebellion. To lay down one's life for one's wife can only ever be effective if the man is first submitted to the headship of Christ. Her offer was that he lay down his life as an action of headship that was to be independent of God.

For a man to properly lay down his life, he must lay it down for his wife as an action of obedience to God. He must not lay down his life for his wife as an action of obedience to her will.

Adam took a vicarious position when he presumed that his headship could bridge the gap created by his wife and her disobedience. He did not understand that he was about to relinquish his headship place and come under the power of sin and Satan as a result of accepting his wife's offer. The presumption of men ever since has been that by means of independent headship men can conform a wife to their will.

This vicarious action is the ultimate expression of independence and presumption.

It is interesting to note that when Adam moved to this independent position, his curse was unending labour and loss of rest. True headship functions in faith and therefore rest, but many independent men

"...those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed..." (1 Peter 2:10).

A man who is locked into fantasy is therefore denying his own headship accountability. His deliverance will require him to be restored in headship to live accountably as a man.

Restoring our sexuality

When a man meets Christ, he is called to no longer walk this "way of the Gentiles."

"... you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to licentiousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." (Eph 4:17-19).

He is to set aside all uncleanness. Any sexual impurity that arises out of a heart of covetousness is not consistent with being a saint.

"But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints." (Eph 5:3).

The warning to not do so is made very clear.

"For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God." (Eph 5:5).

Herein lies a dilemma. Man may be born again, but if he has not put off all sexual impurity arising out of his covetous heart, then he has no inheritance in the kingdom. He may see the kingdom, but he cannot enter. How does he resolve his predicament?

Frustration of prohibition

The first response of the Christian man with a new code of behaviour is generally to try and combat his problem with prohibition. His aim is to overcome his problem by changing the circumstances which produced it. He tries to hurry past any pornographic material on display, lest he be trapped. He drops his eyes to avoid gazing intently on a beautiful woman. He tries to set his mind on things above¹⁷ rather than allowing his mind to engage in fantasy. He tries to break old sexual habits about which he feels guilty (e.g. masturbation).

But this never works. He invariably lapses back into his old ways of impurity or fantasy. He is overcome with guilt feelings, feels condemned and becomes more insecure in who he is. He may attempt to cope with this by disassociating himself from his sexuality – he tries to live a 'good' Christian life by excluding his aberrant sexuality from his essential being and placing it in a separate compartment of life. He tries to make his sexuality what he does rather than who he is. However, being locked into fantasy reveals the gaps in his identity as a man.

Prohibition does not work because it just replaces one law with another, slightly better, law. There is no power to change in legalism – flesh cannot drive out flesh, no matter how strongly we are motivated.

17 Col 3:2.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS IS THE CRUCIBLE OF PROCESS.

When a man is ambivalent about what the way of the cross demands, it indicates that he is not prepared or willing to stand for the way of Christ in his marriage. Mostly this is because he feels pressured by the unresolved nature of things and fears the conflict that may arise if he presents his wife with such a radical demand. The most common conflict that men face is the conflict about the direction that the marriage is taking. When a man constantly avoids the contentious issue it indicates that he has no heart for headship.

The questions that have to be asked are:- Has he stood for Christ himself? Has he taken up his cross? For if a man has genuinely taken that step then already he knows the richness of God's love and grace toward him. Such a man is willing to face any conflict to see his wife find the same richness that he has found.

For a man to refuse to weather the conflict that headship often incites demonstrates that he loves himself, or his wife, more than Christ.

To truly find the life and joy of Christ in his marriage, a man must take up his cross and then call his wife to take up her cross so that their marriage can be "in the cross".

When he takes up his cross it will be manifest by his obedience to Christ in relationship to the elders and by his willingness to call his wife to the same obedience.

If she takes up her cross, it will be manifest by her obedience to him.

FALSE SACRIFICE

Where a man does not confront his wife's refusal to take up the cross, it shows that he is putting her ahead of Christ. This shows that he loves her more than he loves Christ. He is capitulating to his wife's demand that, he should lay down his life for her as an expression of his love for her.

This is a false sacrifice and has fatal consequences. He is being crucified on a cross other than Christ's cross. He has made his wife his idol and he is worshipping her and her demands. By looking into the face of his wife rather than Christ, he becomes subject to her perceptions and demands of how the marriage should run. He is powerless to be the instrument of change for her.

Why does a man allow himself to be crucified on his wife's cross?

THIS PROBLEM BEGAN AT THE FALL

The events of the fall caused not only each individual to fail, it also causes relationships to fail. By examining the events of the fall we can see that every marriage has been damaged and needs to be restored

a commitment of how to look to see and meet a woman without taking from her.

"I have made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I look upon a young woman?" (Job 31:1).

He protects a woman from his own wandering eye by turning away and refusing to violate her person-hood. He sees as Christ sees with eyes that are never drawn.

He treats the woman in the street exactly the same as his own daughter – she is, after all, someone's daughter herself, and he regards all people of equal worth and value. He does not take what is not given nor does he set out to conquer. The other person is not his to own but belongs to the Lord.

- He is relational, being submitted to Christ in his devotional life and to the elders and home group leaders. He no longer lives by rules and regulations, but by faith working through love.²¹ Sanctification becomes a lifestyle of relational obedience and not a matter of a moment of consecration, or a series of experiences.

Living victoriously

All is from God and we can only live what God gives. But only as we live it out can God give us more of His life. The gift to each of us becomes the task – it is only as we walk by the Spirit that this becomes powerful in overcoming the lusts of the flesh.²² We can believe to live an overcoming life, dwelling in sanctification and honour.

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honour," (I Thess 4:3-4).

A man lives by self-control from the life of Christ operating within, such that he is able to possess (control) his own body. "In sanctification" speaks of what he is – set apart for God to be holy. "Honour" speaks of how he relates to others, giving them worth and value. Note that if he is not sanctified, then he cannot honour.

To look sexually on a woman is to defraud her – she is mentally undressed and deprived her of her rights as something is taken from her without her knowledge or consent. To look beyond her sexuality and meet her as a person of value and worth is to ensure that she is not defrauded.

"that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter," (I Thess 4:6).

"For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness." (I Thess 4:7).

This is bringing holiness to its predestined end, that we may grow as sons to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ²³.

²¹ Gal 5:6.

²² Gal 5:16.

²³ Eph 4:13.

POINTS REGARDING THE CROSS IN MARRIAGE

Stephen Hall

HUSBANDS SET THE DIRECTION IN MARRIAGE

There is a time in every Christian marriage when the husband has to declare where he stands in relationship to the cross of Christ and where his marriage should stand in relationship to the cross of Christ.

- Will he take up his cross?
- Will he call his wife to take up her cross?
- Will the marriage be lived out in the way and life of the cross of Christ?

If a man will not call his marriage to be a relationship based on the cross then he abdicates headship to his wife. This is because a man's headship can only function by the power of the cross under Christ. He therefore can only effectively be the head of his wife if he has taken his place "in the cross".

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word." (Eph 5:25-26).

How is it possible for a man to establish a marriage that is blessed and where each individual is developing in true freedom of being and self-expression? It is only possible when a man calls his marriage to the way of the cross, then he and his wife walk in true sanctification in their identity.

To put this more simply:

- To be sanctified to his call and be the proper husband and father that he should be, a man must live in the way of the cross himself, and then command his wife and family also to live in the way of the cross.
- A woman cannot be the wife and mother that she should be unless she obeys this call by her husband to live in the way of the cross and so be sanctified to her call.

When this is established this as the guiding principle of the marriage then it can be said that the marriage has come on to its proper foundation.

The point of this argument so far is to establish that in our sonship in Christ, our **gender** is part of the **calling** to which we are obedient. The cross cuts us free to be renewed in our basic maleness and femaleness. Our salvation grants us two elements from God – we are renewed in the image of the first man (the natural man, who is male or female) and as well as this, we receive the new creation. The old man is not renewed; he has to be crucified. Of course, our male/female being is not part of the old man, but the **first** man. Our true identity now involves the first man, the original fathered image, with the addition of the new creation through Christ. **Simply, this means that one is either a born-again male, or a born-again female.** The identity, glory and calling of male and female are not the same within the new creation, the body of Christ. The man, as we know, is to develop headship and fatherhood; the woman is to develop as a helper and in motherhood. **Relational obedience involves this call to be fully male or to be fully female.**

Sexuality

We have shown the link between basic identity and gender. Gender as male or female is not distinct from, but essential to, our individual identity. We now need to introduce the term 'sexuality' into our definitions.

Thielicke in his 'Ethics of Sex'²⁷ confirms our thought that sexuality must first of all be seen as part of the indivisible whole of mankind. Then he adds the thought that sexuality is the meeting point between essential being and function. By this he means that sexuality is 'one step out', so to speak – it is part of our being, but leans toward our function or functionality as people. (Our functions include such things as labour, skills, relationships and sexual functions). To illustrate the point, he goes on to show that others should never be viewed only as function bearers, but rather in terms of their 'authentic being'. To look at someone only as a sexual object is demeaning to his person. If sexuality were only a remote function, then partners could be exchanged at will as in some sections of the animal kingdom.

Sexuality then is an expression of identity, therefore tied to identity, not disconnected from gender identity as if to have no impact on identity.

While many 'functions' of the identity will be part of the new heaven and earth, the functions of sexuality toward procreation will not be part of the order of the resurrection. It is in this regard, and **only** in this regard, that we will be like angels.²⁸

The gap between identity/gender and sexuality can be illustrated in the following way. Sexuality is part of our essential maleness or femaleness. However, while we are always expressing maleness and femaleness, we are **not** always expressing ourselves sexually toward others.

²⁷ Thielicke, Helmut, "The Ethics of Sex", James Clarke & Co Ltd, 1964.

²⁸ Matt 22:30.

involved with one's sexuality, but do not have to be seen as 'sexual' acts of expression, either toward oneself or toward another.

This is crucial, because we acknowledge that acts of sexual union belong only within the context of marriage as God intended, and that any communication of the sexual being outside of the marriage context is immoral, breaking covenant with God and His household.⁴¹ Self-regulation through masturbation should then be viewed as a personal and accountable discipline of gender accountability, to be undertaken by the male to relieve the physiological pressure of semen build-up if necessary.

In practice then, while some may find relief via nocturnal emissions, where these are not adequate or are having a negative effect, (ie. condemnation) a better program of self-regulation needs to be discussed and taught from father to son. The ideal for some is to allow nocturnal emissions to provide the physiological release while the young man diverts his sexual energy into other activities such as sport, hobbies or work. Where these mechanisms are insufficient to keep his sexual responses on an even keel, it may be appropriate to use self-regulation.

The self-regulation program, and particularly the understanding of what is happening over the years of development, needs to be conveyed to the young man via discussion with fatherhood. This will need to take the form of counsel from father to son to ensure that the covenant of the eye, and the father-son covenant is intact. Problems with lust and condemnation will only be broken via an interaction with the 'eyes of fatherhood' and the re-establishment of the Father-son covenant.

The crucial principle is this: if the young man stops growing under fatherhood, the only things that do grow are his obsessions. Many illustrations of this have been seen in practice. If father-son relationship is not attended to, the obsessions of the young man will grow, but he will himself cease to mature in other areas of his life. Only an interaction and covenanting with fatherhood can break this obsession and habitual sin. The interaction with fatherhood serves to strip away the fantasy and pleasure seeking, and invoke the covenant of sanctification (headship).

Some Guidelines

In summary, let us list some specific guidelines that must form part of instruction for the young man.

The overall aim of the individual's program of self-regulation is that he control and direct his sexual desire or else it will control and direct him.⁴² His aim is to keep himself pure in the way he relates to his world as a male, and in the way he looks at the opposite sex.⁴³

41 cf Notes by Stephen Hall – from seminar above.

42 Prov 25:28

43 I Tim 5:22

copied with the discipline of study. Sexual fantasy is also a form of escape, arising from the fact that one is not clear and responsible in identity and relationship, and therefore cannot interface confidently with sexuality. When identity becomes 'wishy washy' through laziness and rebellion, then sexual fantasy becomes more and more compulsive, seeking more and more unusual forms of satisfaction. This is why Christian men, even married men, become overtaken with fantasy, perverted behaviour, and voyeuristic interest in pornography and Internet 'virtual reality' – practices that you might assume would never trouble Christians. The problem is not simply lust, but rather a collapse in the fundamental identity and responsibility areas of life.

There are several simple guidelines which should be taught to teenage boys, and which become the basis for being able to interface confidently with sexuality through adult life.

The first key is to remember that the 'other' I am looking at is **not mine**; she does not belong to me; she belongs to the Lord and her sexuality belongs in covenant to her heavenly Father (this is still true even if she is unconverted and immoral). She is a vessel of eternal **worth** (worth-ship) for whom Christ died. She is someone else's daughter, and I should protect her as if she was my own daughter. I can control my attention, because after all, if this was my own sister or mother, I would not look at her sexually.

The second key is similar: I covenant not to take what is not given, or to conquer the other. Even if the sexuality of the other is being flaunted, as if disconnected from her being and 'up for grabs' so to speak, I will not take what is not given in covenant commitment.

"One **should** be able to look at all other sexual beings and worship, without being drawn either to view sexually or to express oneself sexually. In the same way that doctors and other professionals discipline themselves to interface with sexuality with no fantasy or intrusion, so we should be able to interface with others, without any sense of intruding on the holiness of another, and with no sense of being overpowered by the element of sexuality."³³

The role of fathers

A wise father will teach his son from a young age to be accountable as a young developing male. As the son comes toward puberty, (the age of accountability) the father will need to interact in an even more vital way, for the son must now learn a new accountability towards himself physiologically and emotionally, and towards others in his relational context.

This interaction takes the form of discussion, constraint and discipline concerning gender responsibility (ie, how to be a man). His father teaches him how to be a male towards other young males and females and how to look at others, particularly females, in the right way. The father encourages his son that **this awakening is part of God's design** and calling on him as a man. He does not have to be

33 From 'The Cross in the Marriage', Hall and Wylie.

giving worth to the other, not taking, conquering or possessing the other in a self-seeking manner.⁴⁰

Only by covenanting this way can a man overcome in the area of 'passion of lust' to possess (keep) himself in sanctification and honour, and be able to take another, at the appropriate time, in sanctification and honour.

CHRISTIAN SELF-REGULATION

Again we take up the subject as to whether there is a place for self-regulation within the overall program of Christian self discipline. How does an unmarried Christian man deal with his sex drive? Note first of all that this drive is not just physiological but also has emotional, mental and spiritual components. Hence our first conclusion is that the answer is not just physiological. If it were only physiological, then physical release would be the only issue, and the means by which this took place (whether nocturnal emission or masturbation) would have no bearing on other identity matters. This is not the case. This is why fatherhood communication is needed to help the young man with the whole matter of **his emerging gender communication with his world**. Fascination with female functions is a part of emerging gender communication with which the young man is going to have to deal. The way in which he first learns to interact with his world (at the onset of puberty) is quite crucial. If he **begins** well during his teenage years, wholeness of identity and communication will follow him into married life. If he doesn't learn to cope within a sound, fathered context, then it is possible that guilt, introversion, aberration and identity dehumanisation will follow him.

Nocturnal Emission

From puberty onwards, it is a physiological fact that the male produces and accumulates a build-up of semen. Some semen is released into the urine; much more is released spontaneously by the body itself through emissions that we call nocturnal emissions or simply, 'wet dreams'. Semen can also be released by self-regulation (masturbation).

In the first instance, masturbation may only be discovered as a pleasurable experience. Later, it may become linked with self-comfort, and then increasingly with escapism. Sooner or later, it will become associated with sexual consciousness, mental images, fantasy and even pornography. At some point or other, and by some means or other, it will become linked with shame, guilt, and other manifestations of the fallen nature. Where there is no open communication to give understanding and help deal with this shame, masturbation is likely to become habitual and compulsive. It is then likely that another person, real or imaginary, is taken into the heart and used as a means to sexual gratification.

⁴⁰ I Thess 4:1-8.

- Can masturbation, as self-regulation, be a legitimate exercise of Christian self-control and thus serve these aims?

Past debate

Before these questions can be more fully addressed, it is necessary to consider questions that have arisen in debating this matter in the past.

Extremes of advice in this area have left many young men confused and destroyed. On the one hand, legalism has proposed that self-regulation is just the same as fornication. Naturally, this has produced tremendous guilt and alienation, and even led some into fornication itself. On the other hand, advice that has excused the practice has often resulted in compulsive fantasy which has led to further aberrations, becoming more serious even after marriage.

Both these results declare that it is imperative to have a clear practical approach to these matters.

The questions often addressed are:

- Must masturbation be seen as a 'sexual' act, or is there a place for the young Christian man to understand his own growing sexual awareness, and to moderate and manage his bodily functions, thus keeping himself from impurity and the miscommunication of his sexuality?
- Must this act be looked upon as 'solo sex' as some texts suggest, or can it be self-regulation motivated by faithful self-control ?
- Must masturbation necessarily be directed to 'the other', thus making it the outworking of libido as a 'sexual' act? Must it be automatically linked to lust and fantasy towards others? Must it, because of the pleasurable sensation that is unavoidable, necessarily be self-directed and indulgent? Or can the aims of sanctification, guarding of one's sexuality, and honour of the 'other' actually be served through Christian self-regulation?
- More fundamentally, what does Christian self-control mean? Must it mean abstention from even self-regulation, or does it mean moderating one's God-given sexual drive by self-management as one also manages other areas of life in faith towards the up-building of identity and relationship?

In what follows, it will be shown that self-regulation genuinely can be a non-sexual activity and it can be an appropriate help to the young man asking the four questions above, without sinning against himself and others.

Adultery of the Heart

Before looking at the Christian approach to self-regulation and its outworking, another issue must be defined.

It is the matter of the link between sexual fantasy and masturbation and the question of adultery of the heart.

Paul gives instruction in I Corinthians 6:16-20 concerning adultery, explaining that when one becomes 'one body' with the harlot in the physical act of adultery, that such acts of immorality are sins against one's own body – not to forget the sin against other relationship and against the Lord Himself. True adultery is a physical act, sinning against oneself, by joining flesh to flesh outside of right and true covenant (marriage). The question arises that if voyeurism and use of pornography do not make 'one flesh' with another, are they the same sin as adultery?

In teaching about adultery, Jesus said, *"But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."* (Matt 5:28). We must concede therefore that there are cases where fantasy and aberration can and do become adultery in the heart. It would be legalistic and unhelpful however to suggest that every stray look and thought is an act of adultery. Young Christian men, as with all young men, are having to learn to relate to their world in which sexuality plays a very real part. Fascination with the female body, together with sexual imaginations are both large elements in maturing in gender relationship and responsibility. It is in these areas that young men need open communication with fatherhood, so that they can normalise and simplify these areas of growth, and avoid the kind of corruption that can increase.

Purity and Guarding Sexuality

Having said this, it must be said that there is no place for fantasy in the operation of self-regulation. The reason a young man may use self-regulation as discussed below, is to avoid fantasy and voyeurism.

If intention takes over, and the young man intends to take a woman into his heart and employ masturbation in a conquering sexual act, he is guilty of impurity, at least, and perhaps even of adultery. Self-regulation would become sinful and destructive of identity and relationship. But it need not be so.

The Christian Approach

The first thing to say in approaching the questions mentioned above, is that we believe that if the issues are taken up from the viewpoint of accountable Christian manhood rather than self-seeking, **the whole focus shifts from the issues of pleasure and 'sex' to the essential focus of accountability.** Every Christian man is accountable to manage his libido and sexuality, so that these are kept or directed in the proper order. Self-regulation can be an exercise of accountability. (This self-management approach is the subject of the later sections.)

The second thing to say is that there is a relational context necessary for accountability to be constructively outlived. The whole area must be taught and monitored by fatherhood. **There is no specific 'yes' or 'no' answer for a particular individual. The overall program of self management,** which relates to a young man's overall identity

development, involves a whole range of disciplines, and must be individually addressed by fatherhood.

FATHERHOOD AND MAKING COVENANT

The Covenant of the Eye

The concept of the 'covenant of the eye' is introduced in Job 31. The content of the chapter describes a covenanting with God concerning how a man will look at a woman. To 'look upon' or 'gaze intently' (lit. Hebrew) on a woman, describes a manner of looking that takes from the other that which does not belong to him. There is an inherent lie in voyeurism and pornography – viz. that it does not hurt either party – the one looking or the one being conquered.

Job clearly illustrates that the one looking in this way receives destruction and disaster as his inheritance. Doug Watt³⁶ defines 'inheritance' as the lines and boundaries of identity. These 'lines' of identity are described as pleasant places of inheritance, where the life of the LORD is our lot.³⁷ Note: the word 'predestination' can mean 'to mark out the boundary of.' The Proverbs teach us not to remove the landmarks (boundaries) of the fathers.³⁸ These boundaries help us know our identity as fatherhood speaks to us concerning who we are. Further to this, the Proverbs instruct us not to go into or possess the land of the fatherless.³⁹ These ones, even though they are fatherless, have been given boundaries of inheritance (identity) that the 'looker' is admonished not to take or possess.

Making Covenant

Each man begins to make covenant in this manner when he stands up to be the identity named by the Lord God. In so doing, he will begin to relate to, and even collide with, fatherhood - with those who will help him to define the boundaries of his real identity, pointing him to the fatherhood of God in order to inherit identity as a son. Responding as a son, a man will open himself to be confronted by the eyes of fatherhood in teaching him how to look without possessing, and to submit to constraints as a son.

When a person stands in the new born identity that is his inheritance, he is able to give worth and respect to others. This will cause him to stop invading or possessing another with the eye. Rather, he sets his eyes in two important ways. Firstly, he looks into the eyes of fatherhood, and makes a covenant of sanctification within the order of headship. Secondly, he uses his eyes to perceive the **worth** of the other. This action of giving worth to the other as a person, as an identity created by God, breaks the addictive power of pornography and voyeurism. How is this so? Because the one who is looking is

36 Unpublished Paper – "Failure to Inherit." Doug Watt, June 1998.

37 Psalm 16:5,6.

38 Prov 26:28.

39 Prov 23:10,11.

ruled by guilt and shame, but he can learn to rejoice in the calling God has on him to be a godly man.

The father teaches him what it means to make a 'covenant with the eye'³⁴, first of all in the way he looks toward and responds to fatherhood, and then secondly in the way he looks at a female; (he learns not to look on others sexually). We will discuss this further on.

The importance of sexual knowledge

The father teaches his children that sexual knowledge is important. This is a cardinal point that has often been overlooked in Christian circles. The false assumption has been that sexual knowledge should be limited in case it leads to sin. However, knowing about sex is not the same as engaging in the mystery of sexual union. Union belongs exclusively to marriage. But the Christian young person should seek understanding, without pursuing the mystery of union. Parents should not forbid knowledge in the fear that it will lead to curiosity and experimentation. In fact, the reverse is what will happen. If sexual knowledge is not taught by the parents in a straightforward and godly way, it will be sought and gained in the wrong context.

Sexual awakening

What is the nature of this 'awakening' that takes place in a young man? Approaching puberty, he begins to 'notice' that there is another sex in a manner in which he has not noticed them before. In the past, 'girls' were identified as a different gender with physical differences. But the awakening of the libido (sex impulse) now focuses his attention more toward the fulfilment of the desire for union. Again, this desire is not wrong in itself, for it is part of God's creation. God acknowledged this desire in His creation of man when He said, it was not good for him to be alone.³⁵ So we accept from the outset that man is created with this libido, and the nature of this impulse is that it seeks union with a partner. It is directed towards the other, not fundamentally toward self - although we soon discover that this drive seeks self-gratification.

Self-regulation?

Puberty and sexual awakening are accompanied by the production of semen. This is linked with heightened libido and enhanced sexual drive. Before long, the young man discovers nocturnal emission and in many cases also discovers masturbation (we will mostly use the term 'self-regulation'). The central questions are:

- How can he keep his life pure and guard his sexuality to be expressed in its God-given time and relationship?
- How can his management of his sexuality be constructive toward his identity and relationship with others?

³⁴ Job 31:1.

³⁵ Gen 2:18.

The wet dream can also be linked with sexual fantasies that are recalled and which produce shame and relational complexity; (i.e. vivid dreams about someone will affect fellowship). This is one of the primary variations between individuals, and is the reason why an individual approach must be taken to this subject. Some young men can be simply encouraged that 'bad dreams' bear no relationship with reality, and the content of them can be ignored. Some young men then find that the 'wet dream' gives adequate relief from the build-up of sexual pressure, and never feel the compulsion to masturbate. Others have dreams that produce guilt and embarrassment no matter how much they are advised and helped. Others find that the lack of having any deliberate control over the cycles of sexual build-up leads to day-dreaming and repeated emotional attachments to young women.

Guilt can result both from the lack of understanding in a developing male, and from the memory of the explicit images. The shame and guilt should be read as pointers to the kinds of corruption that will proceed to grow if the young man does not make this a point of interface with fatherhood. Through communication, he will learn to divide what is sin and what is not, and thus grow in maturity. If these pointers are left unattended, these will only be perpetuated and beset the young man.

Whatever the individual circumstance, the aim is clear – that is, to be able to feel in control of one's sexual drives, rather than controlled by them.

Self regulation

Again, the physiological factor, i.e. the build-up of semen, belongs to the design of the heavenly Father. It is a reality that a physiological build-up occurs and needs release. It would seem to be ideal if this release could happen for every young man as a **non-remembered wet dream**. However, this is not necessarily ideal in every case. The Christian ideal is that each young man have an understanding of himself, gained through relational interaction with his father, and that he take up a pro-active approach toward the control and regulation of this physiological pressure. Thus he will 'keep himself,' and guard his sexuality as an accountable discipline.

Some young men may find that as an action of gender accountability and guarding of their sexual expression, they need to practice self-regulation in a limited way. In this case, their practice will be an expression of gender accountability, not a sexual act. The fact that this self-regulation may be physically pleasurable is not denied. However, the fact that these are actions of accountability before the Lord outweighs the issue of pleasure. These are actions of accountable manhood rather than self-seeking. They are not actions of communication away from the self (therefore involving some other party through fantasy), nor are they self-directed as pleasure-seeking or self-indulgence. These are actions of responsible self discipline, within the covenant of sanctification. Such actions are of course

This is the cardinal and central point. We are to govern how, when and where we express ourselves sexually. The discipline of how we express ourselves sexually is part of the covenant we make with God and ourselves. We either possess our 'vessel' (and then take another vessel in marriage) and express ourselves in sanctification and honour, or we express ourselves in an immoral manner.²⁹ Simply, our gender is automatic – **our sexuality is the area of expression for which we are responsible and which we must govern and control.**

HEADSHIP GUARDING SEXUALITY

As Christians we make a covenant as to how we will express ourselves. We make covenant as to how we will relate to our world, as regards sexuality. To use Job's words, we make a covenant with the eye as to how we 'look' at the opposite sex.³⁰

We make a covenant with ourselves in these matters, because moral sin is a sin against our own being.³¹ We covenant to express **ourselves in sanctification**. We also make a covenant toward **others** to show **honour** in the way we look at the world around us.

We cannot avoid interacting with a world where sexuality is removed from essential being, and emphasised in promiscuous and dehumanising ways. As Christians we have to be able to interface with sexuality, in both the positive and negative aspects, with confidence and without constantly being plagued with fallen responses.

How do we do this? The first thing we do of course is to avoid putting ourselves in tempting situations unnecessarily. However, prohibition, i.e. prohibiting ourselves from ever seeing the wrong things, is not the answer, just as other forms of prohibition only arouse sin rather than preventing. Prohibition is of 'no value against indulgence of the flesh', and does not bring deliverance.³²

The real problem and real issue relates to identity and fantasy. If we know who we are, both personally and relationally, then we discipline ourselves in relational obedience. Thus we avoid the fantasy of 'goofing off' for a few devious moments in which we become something else - for example a popular 'sex symbol', a lustful worldling, or an unmarried man who is free to fantasise toward another woman.

Controlling fantasy

Fantasy is a form of escape from the responsibility and pressure of remaining true and real in identity. Hence fantasy in all its forms, is most common where we are not coping with the burden of responsible identity; for example when students day-dream because they are not

While he accepts that sexual images will come to his mind at times, he trains his imagination to avoid fantasy and compulsive thinking, with a view to refusing to conquer or possess someone else as an object of gratification. He must learn to give worth and appreciate others, being secure to interface with the world and its preoccupation with sexuality without fear or obsessive thinking.

The young man should not become enslaved to masturbation as a habit. The frequency of his need of release will not have to exceed the natural process of release through wet dreams.⁴⁴

Conclusion

The Christian young man who desires to avoid fantasy, which may produce guilt and shame in relationship with others, maintains a better sense of self-control and freedom in relationship if he understands his own physiological make-up and regulates himself in such a way as to remain free of emotional infatuation and sexual fantasy.



29 I Thess 4:4.

30 Job 31:1.

31 I Cor 6:18.

32 Col 2:23.

44 Wet dreams can occur 1-3 times per week. To masturbate more often than this would be emotionally, not physiologically, driven.

GUARDING MALE SEXUALITY

Graham Pomery, Murray Wylie,
& David Hall

IDENTITY, GENDER, SEXUALITY

Identity and Gender

In our essential being and identity, each of us has been created as male or female.²⁴ Each is essentially male or essentially female. Many of the modern philosophies teach that there is a level of being that is deeper than male and female. This has led on further to the suggestion that we can choose our gender, regardless of our physiological make-up – ie that we can choose to lean toward our ‘feminine side’ or our ‘masculine side’. It is even alleged that parental and environmental conditionings have been wrong in pressing individuals toward stereotypes of male and female. As Christians, we totally reject these worldly philosophies. When we teach from the Scriptures that we are created male or female, we mean that there is no common form of being (deeper than our being male or female) that is sexless, or unisex.

Rather, we accept from the Scriptures that our gender is part of our formation ‘in secret’ before the womb, when ‘all the days’ of our predestination were written.²⁵ In relation to the **new** creation as **sons** of God, Paul says that there is “*neither male nor female*” for we are all “*one in Christ Jesus*”. (Gal 3:38). What he meant was that in Christ, just as there is no discrimination between slave and free in belonging to the new creation, there is no discrimination between male and female. We are all born of the Father and receive adoption into Christ. This ‘neither male nor female’ is to do with inheritance in the adoption, and is a completely different issue from the issue of sexuality. Elsewhere, the apostle Paul goes to great pains to show that ‘in the Lord’ the unique glories of male and female that God intended ‘in the image’ in the beginning, are still applicable.²⁶ As we were to be uniquely male or female in the image in the beginning, now our salvation ‘in the Lord’ brings us back on track with this predestination.

24 Gen 1:27.

25 Psalm 139:14-16; Eccles 6:10.

26 I Cor 11.

WHAT IS THE FOUNDATION OF A MARRIAGE?

There are many different kinds of foundation that people accept in marriage but only one foundation can provide a solid basis for a family to become spiritually blessed and productive. That one foundation is Jesus Christ.⁴⁵ His crucifixion for us brought deliverance and salvation not only for people but also for their relationships. His way of living and overcoming through the cross trial-blazed a way for us to live our lives in the same kind of victory. The successful way for our lives and our relationships is to live in the way of His cross. To live this way is to build our lives and relationships on the Rock, on the foundation of Christ.

To live on this solid foundation takes deliberate and ongoing effort, it doesn’t just happen by itself. Taking Paul’s statement about this: we **build** on the foundation with **durable, worthwhile** materials, this means that our approach to life and relationship is thoughtful and active. It is impossible for two people to **live** together in harmony without humbly accepting the God given place for resolution, that is the cross. This is the only one place where division and contention can be reconciled. This is the only one place where true unity and heart-to-heart meeting can be maintained.

For a marriage to be properly established, the married man must take the initiative of stating clearly and firmly that the marriage will be established on the foundation of the cross of Christ. He must then live out his obedience to Christ and by that means show leadership to his wife so as to encourage her to follow in the same way. Where a man and woman walk in the way of the cross in their marriage they find God’s blessing upon them and their children.

If a Christian man will not call his marriage to be a relationship based on the way of the cross, he has abdicated his headship under Christ and left his wife without a lead as to the way the marriage should go.

The common response of most wives is to set their own agendas for the marriage and then set about fulfilling them. This way of hers becomes a defacto leadership of the home. This leads to fearfulness on her part because the burden of providing authoritative leadership in the home is more than she can cope with.⁴⁶

When it comes to headship and its authority the wife is weak because God will not give grace to her for that.

A man will be just as weak in his leadership of the marriage if he refuses to live in the way of the cross under Christ’s headship. This is because his headship can only function by the power of the cross under Christ. He can only effectively be the head of his wife if he has taken his place in the cross.

45 I Cor 3:10-15.

46 I Peter 3:8.

“Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations - These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.” (Col 2:20, 23).

Prohibition becomes the fruit of fantasy because it tries to deny the reality of sexuality all around us and therefore locks us even more into unreality. The answer is to find identity in God and be sanctified.¹⁸ Sanctification does what legalism can never do.

Sanctification

In the Old Testament, that which belongs to Yahweh is holy. To sanctify anything is then to declare it as belonging to God.

In the New Testament, to sanctify is to consecrate or set apart. A saint is a sanctified one who belongs to Christ, just as the sanctified priest or offering belonged to Yahweh.

Practically, how are we sanctified?

- Man’s first reality is to accept his own created being – his God-given gender, his manhood. In total appreciation of his own sexuality, he is fully aware of sexuality around him – this is reality. He does not try and deny the sexuality of others, even if it is flagrantly offered. Only where we meet sexuality with fantasy does it become unreality and a problem. A doctor, for example, interfaces with sexuality but does so professionally and without fantasy.
- A man turns to face Christ as his head and the veil of living by law is lifted.¹⁹ As conviction comes, he is accountable for his state of sexual depravity and sees this as part of his self-fathered identity. He owns and confesses his deeds, and reckons the passions of the old man to be crucified with Christ²⁰ as he puts on the new man which is Christ Himself. *“That you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.” (Eph 4:22-24).*
- He stands in his own headship, guarding his sexuality as part of the Father’s purpose for him. He is sanctified to God and to his place in life which includes his sexuality. He accepts that until fully mature, he is always capable of being drawn by fantasy.
- He makes a covenant with God about the way he expresses himself and the way he looks at a woman. When he looks at a woman, he respects the holy ground of her sexuality and is able to look beyond her sexuality to meet her as a person, affording her dignity and worth as a sister. He makes a covenant with his eye -

¹⁸ I Thess 4:3.

¹⁹ II Cor 3:18.

²⁰ Gal 5:24.

to proper order if it is to know God’s blessing. Marriages do not come into proper order without obedience to Christ and the commitment to apply His word to the marriage. In Genesis 3:20-21 we see Adam and God declaring the way that a marriage should run. The submitted wife is the mother of godly children, whom God is willing to own and clothe.⁴⁷

Adam and Eve

Note these events and their sequence:

- Eve ate of the forbidden fruit. At that moment she died. (She was **dead in sin**)
- She offered Adam the fruit **after she** had eaten it.
- Her offer to him was that he die with her.
- There was no longer any human hope. The only hope was in God’s mercy. His answer to her disobedience was **the cross of Christ**.
- But Eve was offering Adam a different way. A way outside of God’s will, an alternative cross on which he could suffer and therefore, supposedly save her. (But only Christ *“is the Saviour of the body” (Eph 5:23)*. The command of God is that we **die only with Christ**, not with any other.) The element of that command (to die to all others and live to God’s will) was present in the garden. Adam was not ignorant of these principles, he would have known what his choices were. *“Adam was not deceived” (I Tim 2:14)*. But he chose to disobey God.
- When he followed his wife’s lead he died to God, became a sinner and lost the headship he had exercised under God.

The issue is this: only by returning to headship under Christ can a man have any capacity to restore his marriage. Only then can he call his wife, marriage and home to godly sanctification. His responsibility under Christ’s headship is to call his wife to join him in the way of the cross and by that means establish their marriage on the sure foundation, Christ the Rock.

Adam was silent when the snake and Eve were in discussion. He was also silent when Eve made her offer to him. He should have spoken up and given the direction to his wife that she needed. Things are much the same today, men are silent when they should be speaking and wives are speaking when they need to be silent.

If a man has not spoken to his wife to call her to obedience he cannot blame her for the disarray in the marriage. In his obedience to Christ he finds what it is to be sanctified to his proper identity and role in the marriage. In the capacity of headship he is able to establish the proper foundation for the marriage and so lead his wife in the way of Christ.

In order to restore the marriage back to God’s plan a man must take account of his responsibility to Christ to hear from Him and by

⁴⁷ Mal 2:14,15.

We fall into sin as we wrongly dwell on this desire and allow it to reign in our heart and mind.

"Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts." (Rom 6:12).

A sinful act then is an activity which results from lust dwelling in an impure heart. Sin is defined not by the act, but by the attitude of the heart. The same act can be sinful when expressing an impure heart but not a sin when the act is an expression of being accountable.

We need to distinguish between the act and the heart attitude. This becomes an important distinction when we discuss masturbation. If a man masturbates with lust in his heart, it clearly is a sinful act. This is quite different to a man who uses it in an accountable manner to regulate his sexual responses without lust in the heart. This accountable approach is self-regulation, which could be defined as masturbation not driven by self-gratification and not accompanied by sexual fantasy.

Fantasy

Every sexual sin begins in the imagination of the mind as a fantasy - lustful desires which when taken hold of, give birth to sin.

"But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death." (James 1:14-15).

Thus:- Lust → Sin → Act → Death. Note that the fruit of sin is alienation (separation from God) even before the act is committed. To be cut off from the life of God is to die.

"But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you." (Isaiah 59:2).

We can see then that fantasy is an escape from being responsible in who we are and how we live. Fantasy is being non-accountable. Sexual fantasy begins when the imagination invades and conquers another person sexually, using that person for self-gratification.

Fantasy can be passive where no-one else is involved (voyeurism, pornography), or invasive (adultery, fornication). It involves a taking from others, often without their permission, rather than being given relationally to them.

Fantasy becomes an escape into an erotic experience, looking for fulfilment in euphoria but in the end, it never brings lasting satisfaction. The person involved is therefore locked into repetitive acts searching for elusive fulfilment in a vain attempt to find some personal validation. He is seeking to find who he is through these sexual areas. Rather than find identity, he loses it as he becomes dependent on his sexual aberration.

The behaviour becomes obsessive and addictive. He is not necessarily sexually deprived, but it never meets the need. He substitutes intensity for intimacy because he can not relax in the closeness of a relationship, and can never truly meet another. He lives contrary to family order, despising the authority of headship.

exhibit the symptoms of "restless headship". They do not, and cannot, deal effectively with their wives because they presume to exercise headship from another cross, a cross that the marriage has inaugurated.

They have not fundamentally submitted to the headship that Christ gives to men through the means of His cross. Their independent cross has made them enemies of the cross of Christ.

Headship has built within it the accountability of being a provider of the relational ground (holy ground) on which the wife can live and serve. Adam stepped presumptuously into the area of **provision of life for his wife** who was now dead. But he could not create this ground for her.

Why did he think that the giving of his life would provide any answer to the problem? At the present time we do not know.

The lesson is that a man can never provide a place of redemption for his wife, only Christ can do that. When he tries to make an independent ground for them both all he succeeds in doing is to provide a ground outside of God's will so that she can continue live according to the fall. Headship that is separated from Christ's headship makes a man presumptuous and blind. Adam demonstrates this by worshipping at Eve's altar instead of calling her to the ground that God had provided.

Note

Christ has brought redemption to us on the basis of the offering God provided. He has, by obedience to His Father, been able to unite us with Himself, even though at present we are still troubled by sin and failure. We have been espoused to Christ, **but** our continuing relationship with Him is dependent on the cross – if we are not crucified with Him we are not joined to Him. *"If we died with Him we shall also live with Him". (II Tim 2:11).*

Often the family is troubled because of an idol. A man's career can become the place where he expresses himself towards the idol of success. He cannot call his wife to the obedience of the cross because he himself is not obedient. If she is also disobedient she will accept his idol as her own and gratify her desire for position through him. When he repents he needs to be clear with his wife about the changes that he has made, the reasons he has changed and the way he expects that he and the marriage will change. He cannot presume that she will accept this. She may have supported all of his former career goals, but that was because she traded on them, now she is being asked to die to those former ways.



SUMMARY

- Identity, maleness (gender) and headship are sourced in the Heavenly Father.
- Other identity expressions other than those predestined by the Father are carnal projections.
- Sexuality is integral to man's total being, as he is male and a vessel of headship.
- All aspects of being (eg. physical, mental, emotional and spiritual) impact on the others.
- 'Sexuality' and 'being' cannot be disassociated from each other.
- Sexuality becomes a ruling appetite when personhood breaks down.
- Christian love is 'other centred'.
- Marriage is the only context for sexual activity to take place.



SEXUALITY

Stephen Hall

"To look on a woman lustfully." (Matt 5:28).

"Each of you should know how to possess his body in sanctification." (I Thess 4:1-8).

"One is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed." (James 1:14).

"Exhort ... older women as mothers, younger as sisters, with all purity." (I Tim 5:2).

"An evil bird can fly over the tree but it should not be allowed to roost in its branches." (A wise man's saying)

INTRODUCTION

In this paper we will look at how a man should conduct himself in regard to his wife and other women. We will examine the destructive impact of voyeurism⁴⁸ and pornography. We will also investigate answers to some common problems that men face with regard to maintaining sexual purity.

With the advent of TV, computing and the Internet, the modern world has seen an alarming increase of voyeurism. Pornographic sites are amongst the most popular sites on the Internet. Because it is private, in the home, viewing pornography on the computer screen has become widespread. What is alarming is that this behaviour becomes exceedingly addictive.

CORRUPTION

Jesus said: *"If your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you." (Matt 18:9).*

A man's faculties have been given to him to be used in service for God. If he misuses his faculties he destroys the possibility of being transformed into Christ's image. He has forsaken his place of service under Christ and become a servant of his lust and covetousness. Paul describes him as an idolater.⁴⁹ In the case of the misuse of sexual faculties, the man who is seeking to find his identity in sexual activity is worshiping the idol of sexual desire. This depraved behaviour warps the mind and heart, and forms the man to become like the

⁴⁸ Voyeurism. To derive sexual gratification by looking at sexual organs or sexual acts. *Aust Pocket Oxford Dictionary.* 1e To look at pornography.

⁴⁹ Col 3:5.

Sexuality is the meeting point of a person's 'being' and 'function'⁸. 'Being' is the real identity of a man, formed and predestined by the Heavenly Father, lived and expressed in Christ among his brethren. When living in this real identity, a man 'functions', having an impact on the relationships around him. In the worldly view of sexuality, 'function' is magnified at the expense of 'being' and true meeting. Viewing it thus, the partner, potential partner, or stranger is perceived only functionally, rather than as an 'authentic being' (identity) also formed by the Father. The identity and worth of the other are demeaned while physical function and physical appeal are used and abused.

The communication of the sexual being (any physical or psycho-sexual act), outside of the context of right relationship, sins against relationship and personal dignity at the deepest level.⁹ Wherever a person's dignity is denied, the area of sexuality becomes as nothing more than some kind of an animal function. When sexuality is reduced to a functional/physiological act only, then the uniqueness and wholeness of the individual is lost.¹⁰ They are no longer perceived as a person, but an object to be used for selfish fulfilment. The discernment of the 'mystery of the other' and respect for the other are lost via this sinful activity.

"Wherever there is a breakdown in the wholeness of personhood, the aspect of sexuality always falls out of its true relational context, and becomes a ruling appetite. The overwhelming sexual preoccupation of the world is a result of the loss of personhood and of God-given wholeness."¹¹

Sexuality becomes a ruling appetite as the result of a man's denial of his own identity as God intended and the headship of God toward him and in him. This denial is initiated in order that he might participate in the alienating deeds of sexual mis-communication. Rejecting headship rejects the element of authority by which sexuality is protected, therefore dividing action (the deed) from accountability.

THE CONTEXT FOR SEXUAL EXPRESSION

God created man and woman in His will and intended that they should 'cleave together' in marriage, to find comfort and enjoyment with one another, for the bearing of children (godly seed) and for the bonding together as 'one flesh'. This is a very real and practical participation in a prophetic shadow of the union between Christ and His bride. It is for this reason that a man is to find a wife in 'sanctification and honour'¹² and love her 'just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with

Fathers do not often address this issue in their sons and so it becomes an undisciplined part of their life. Without fatherly discipline, what in a boy begins as healthy curiosity will generally become an uncontrolled and overbearing obsession to look at women as sexual creatures who are available to be used to stimulate him as his sexually.

The thing to be noted is that this behaviour creates habits that become deeply ingrained in the minds of young men and form the basis for a way of knowing themselves in relationship to things sexual.

We need to train our teenage boys to see young ladies their own age as sisters, and to give honour to them as people who are worthy of respect.⁵²

TAKING POSSESSION WITH THE EYES

A normal man does not look at his mother as a sexual object, neither does he look at his daughter as a sexual object. And interestingly, neither does he look at his wife as a sexual object. (He looks upon her as a person, a helper, his wife, a carer, and mother of their children.)

Why then does he look at another man's daughter or wife as a sexual object? One thing is certain, he is not looking at her with respect so he cannot meet her in a proper or respectful way. This behaviour robs a man of the capacity to meet a woman simply and openly because he does not meet her as a person, but rather treats her as an object when he takes her with his eyes. He has an unstated agenda in the relationship toward her that has to do with the visual impact of her body on him. He has no right to this activity because he has made no holy commitment to her and by his actions he is destroying his ability to maintain the holiness of his covenant of marriage with his own wife.

DEHUMANISING EFFECT

When a man looks lustfully he is not treating the woman as a person but as an object of desire. The object being body parts by which the imagination is titillated. He takes the body with his eyes⁵³ and uses it for impurity. This becomes endemic to his lifestyle so that no woman is exempt from this treatment. All are objects and therefore all are dehumanised - all are devalued.

When you dehumanise another person you dehumanise and degrade yourself. This explains why good men seem to lose their way in life. When a man is overcome and suffers the degradation of personal self worth he loses his capacity to take initiative in life in the areas that really matter.

8 Op cit.

9 M Wylie, *Foundations for True Personhood*, Sept 1986. From "Sound Doctrine".

10 M Wylie, *Foundations for True Personhood*, Sept 1986. From "Sound Doctrine".

11 Ibid.

12 I Thess 4:4.

52 I Tim 5:2.

53 II Peter 2:14.

the fatherless and orphans in families and reveals Himself in and through that order for life.

- A gender choice. It is a part of a man's physical and psychological make-up to be male. The reality of the composition of our physical bodies alerts us to the truth that God has designed our maleness as part of our essential being. To rebel against our maleness is to reject the reality predestined for us by the Heavenly Father.

MALENESS, HEADSHIP AND SEXUALITY

As men, the heavenly Father 'named'⁵ our predestination as:

1. Sons of God – Male in identity
2. Male – headship
3. Male – as regards physiology and sexuality.

Predestined Identity

Son of God - Male



Maleness



Headship



Sexuality

Sexuality results from and expresses our identity as sons, our maleness being integral to that identity as predestined by the Father. Man as a vessel of headship, operates the capacity of headship firstly toward his own life and sexuality by protecting and worshipping his own and other identities, recognising and honouring true relational order and maintaining godly disciplines in his own life.

Our sexuality (whether we are single or married) is fundamental to who we are and is the reality planned for us by the Father. Rebellion against this reality has led some men to imagine another reality other than that of the Father's predestination, and to

seek to change the 'laws'⁶ of personhood and nature through corrupt means. (ie. effeminate, homosexual, transvestites, etc).

All men who are 'born again' have exercised faith obedience toward the reality that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who died for us, and through Him and in Him we also can be sons of God. Recognition of the lordship (headship) of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is the first step in discovering the capacity for headship that every man has in Christ.

A man's sexuality is protected and expressed by his own active headship, within the order of headship. 'Headship' is "the element of authority and relationship that guards the form, the order, the identity and glory of what God intended."⁷ From his youth, a man first learns to exercise headship towards his own life and sexuality. This headship

be very high because of its intensity. But actually the energy is being wasted because it is being put to no good purpose. Such a man can become lost in his sexual fantasies but he can never make a commitment to a wife as a person whom he can value. He just uses a wife as an object upon whom he can vent his sexual feelings while fantasising about someone or something else. His sexuality has become so detached from true identity that he cannot **meet** his wife intimately, he can only cater for his frequent fantasies by using her as the object for his self-indulgence.

If a man wants to repent and find deliverance from this crippling bond, he must first make amends regarding his relational isolation and alienation from his wife. He needs to discover a whole new view of her, based on genuine love that accepts the reality of who she is. He cannot base his love for her on a fantasy of what he once expected her to be, or what he wishes she should be now. Rather, he needs to learn how to give his wife true worth for who she is. He needs to rejoice in the things that he sees as different from what he expected when he first married.

The reason for the drying up of the love between a husband and wife is because of his non-acceptance of her as she is. He tries to force her to become what he imagines that she should be. She reads this vote of no confidence in her and so is discouraged by it. As well, when she tries to reach him, she cannot meet him because she is not being what he demands that she should be. The circle of love in genuine giving and receiving is not in such a marriage.

For the man who does not repent, he has damned his marriage to become a place where there can never be true sexual fulfilment only the fulfilment of deceitful fantasies.

PORNOGRAPHY - THE NEXT STEP DOWN

The damage caused by pornography is very wide ranging. It is very addictive because the man is indulging in uncontrolled basic sexual instinct in the mistaken belief that he is finding sexual fulfilment without affecting anyone else.

His runaway sexual appetite continues to promote the alienation within himself, leading to greater and greater isolation within his voyeuristic world. The misplaced energy drives him further and further into corruption because he wants to see and imagine some new and different sexual event.

Instead of sexual energy being used for strengthening his marriage, it is being used to destroy his marriage.

This is a description of Jesus' statement about the effects of sin and rebellion, "where the worm does not die."

This misuse of another individual for arousal is as much a sin of misuse of power as it is a sin of impurity. This is the fundamental element of pornography. It is to take another person and use them for self-gratification. It is excused in the mind of the pornographer as a sanitised action because he is not actually meeting the person that he is fantasising towards.

⁵ Eccles 6:10

⁶ Dan 7:25 – NB – This reference is intended to show the 'spirit' behind such activities as against Christ and relationship.

⁷ Victor Hall and Murray Wylie "Lift Up Your Heads" (Vision One Inc. Samford Q. Australia.) p2.

and sexual aberrations. The warp in a man's soul is too bad to try and repair. He needs reconstruction.

All undisciplined sexual behaviour and deviancy can be rectified and normalised where fatherhood is applied and accepted. This is reconstruction. God has ordained that human reconstruction can happen when one comes under the formative discipline of the Father. This can only happen in relationship with Christ our redeemer and God our Father as we live in the Church. In the process of salvation the newborn identity stands up and doesn't need validation through conquering or being conquered. Rather through prayer in the Spirit and feeding on the Word of God in obedient relationship, a man can come to deliverance. From there he can grow up in identity under fatherhood and learn what are the riches of the victory that Christ has won through His cross.

Married men

Control your sexuality and direct it only towards your wife. This is a matter of growing up.

Young men

You must be taught to properly control your sexuality and keep your minds pure by growing up in true disciplined identity.

WHY IS SEXUAL LUST DESTRUCTIVE?

It defiles and corrupts the mind and heart of a man.

The corruption occurs in these ways:-

- By the sin of impurity.
- In the misuse of your body - use of your eyes and mind for self gratification.
- As theft - by looking lustfully a man takes possession of a woman with his eyes and misuses her.
- By dehumanising the person you look at lustfully. This happens because you devalue that person by, in your mind, making her nothing more than an object.
- In dehumanising yourself by devaluing your own worth. This happens when you depreciate your capacity to relate honourably with others.
- By becoming a person whose sexual motivation functions only by instinct.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Jude 1:10.

- **Men of faith reject lustful lifestyles - cynics don't.** *“Scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts.” (II Peter 3:3).*
- **Men who accept fatherhood overcome lusts.** *“For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life - is not of the **Father** but is of the world.” (I John 2:16).*

QUESTIONS THAT MUST BE ASKED

Why does this man not find satisfaction with his wife?

Note Proverbs 5

1. Is he so weak in identity that he cannot genuinely or properly meet with his wife in conjugal love? Is he concerned only with his own personal gratification and so uses his wife's body as one would a chattel? Is this the reason that he never finds relational/sexual fulfilment in his marriage and is therefore prone to erotic temptation and masturbation?
2. Is he pursuing his own selfish ambitions and so habitually using people for his own advancement - including his wife? By this does he dehumanise all his relationships? Does he then devalue his wife and therefore his relationship with her so that intimacy and fellowship are not part of the sexual intercourse? Is this the reason for the apparent starvation of healthy sexual relationship and the seeking for satisfaction sourced in unreality and emptiness. For example; voyeurism and pornography etc? Does this lead finally to dehumanising of himself? Is the end result of this to live as a beast, that is, to live by urges and instincts?⁵⁵
3. Is he bitter in his heart towards his wife so that he cannot or will not maintain his commitment to her? Does this lead to a sexual relationship that is only self-gratifying, relationally unholy and filled with tension?⁵⁶ Does he then voluntarily drop his self-discipline with regard to his sexuality and petulantly indulge himself?⁵⁷ Is this what Proverbs means when he says that a man's cleanness is poured out onto the street, i.e. that which is meant to be holy is poured out into smut and dirt? Is the end result to become a blot in the agape meal?⁵⁸

55 II Peter 2:12.

56 Col 3:19.

57 Heb 12:14,15.

58 Jude 12.

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