

much needed. That is a good enough reason without making up false ones.

3. If the boy was having difficulties, I would remember that my chief duty was to help the boy, not to condemn him.

The last point applies with equal force to any transgression. How often the premaritally pregnant girl is met with recriminations and reproach from everyone, when her desperate need is for help and support—not approval of her behavior, but affirmation of her worth as a person. Sometimes it appears that people view their task as protecting the Church from the bad influence of such girls, when it ought to be to extend the influence of the Church to them. The same could be said of homosexuals and others who have got themselves into sexual difficulties. Again, in these instances competent professional help is often an important element in the process of rehabilitation.

The case of adultery is, perhaps, most difficult of all, because the Lord has defined it as such a grievous sin. Yet research has shown that the occasion for the sin is often a lack of satisfaction with one's own marriage. No one is immune from temptation. There have been men and women who have become involved in this type of relationship while holding high and responsible offices at every level of Church government.

Even in this instance, however, the chief duty of the Church is toward the members who are in difficulty. In my own experience, a number of good people have been reclaimed for the Church through the patient fellowshipping of members who were more moved by the worth of the person than by the unworthiness of the act. When we are dealing with transgression, no less than in the case of legitimate sexual expression, an eternal perspective may make an important difference in the success or failure of one's efforts.

The Gospel philosophy of sex is in competition in the world with other philosophies which have powerful grips on the minds of men. If it is to have an impact on the morals and manners of the world, it must first be incorporated into the lives of the members of the Church. In my opinion, many, perhaps most, of the present generation are too entrapped in the negative frame of reference that they grew up with. But there is hope for the rising generation.

THIS—WORLDLY AND OTHER—WORLDLY SEX: A RESPONSE

Lowell Bennion

Carl Broderick's essay treats many aspects of sex in an objective, discreet, and interesting way which should be helpful to Latter-day Saints, both in personal and family living and also in their responsibilities in the Church.

Only in one area, in his "Gospel philosophy of sex," do I wish to take issue with him and propose a different emphasis. The author goes to considerable length to sanctify sex by making it part of man's eternal existence and also of God's nature. This emphasis on the eternal and godly nature of sex is presented as Latter-day Saint doctrine without qualification. This I wish to seriously question. It may be true, but again it may not be.

In the first vision of the Prophet Joseph Smith, God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son appeared as two distinct and tangible Beings. His description of Them was in such sharp contrast with the traditional, abstract Christian creeds that Mormon missionaries and writers immediately began to make the most of the difference. Just as Calvin had defined God as being everything that man is not, Mormons described Him as being everything that man is. Deity became anthropomorphic in the extreme. Instead of man being in the image of God, He was pictured by some in the image of man.

Joseph Smith, himself, was more modest. In describing Deity, he said, “. . . whose brightness and glory defy all description.” As were Moses and Isaiah, he was awed by the heavenly vision.¹

As I read the scriptures I find nothing concerning the eternal nature of sex nor any description of the exact nature of the spiritual creation by which we became the begotten children of our Father in Heaven. These things have not been revealed.

It is quite natural for man to envision the divine and the eternal in the light of his own mortal perspective. On second thought, how unwise to make man the prototype for God and to restrict Him in His creations to our limited knowledge and experience. This is enough to merit the rebuke received by Job.

Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?
Where was thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare if
thou hast understanding? (Job 38:2 ff.)

The scriptures declare man to be in the image of God and not He in the image of man. There is a difference. God is the prototype, the original, whose glory exceeds that of man beyond imagination or description. Man has partaken of His glory, but God is more than man. Moreover, His ways are not man's ways. Man is not the model for divine creation nor is God in the eternity and in His spiritual kingdom restricted to human procedures. Isaiah wisely speaks for His Maker,

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8-10.)

Believe that man doth not comprehend all the things which the Lord can comprehend. (Mosiah 4:9.)

Sex in its ideal expression is wholesome and beautiful and worthy of eternal life and the Divine nature. My point is that we do not know that it is eternal. As we know sex it is physical and biological as well as social and spiritual. Who can speak of the resurrected state in physiological terms with any knowledge or meaning? Why not withhold judgment and keep our minds open on issues where we are without experience and without revelation?

True, the scriptures speak of us as the begotten sons and daughters of God, but it does not follow that children are born of Deity as they are of mortal

¹See Isaiah 6 and Moses 1.

parents. Begotten is used in more than one way in scripture. King Benjamin said,

And now because of the covenant which ye have made, ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons and daughters; for behold this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and become his sons and daughters. (Mosiah 5:7.)

Sex, as interpreted in the Gospel plan and as known in a good marriage, is sanctified without its eternal dimension. It was created by God and approved by His word in the oldest creation story in scripture. Sex is good when it is expressed in ways which fulfill its purposes in mortality; when it builds the individual in his total being; when it becomes a witness of a lasting and deepening love between husband and wife and, where possible and desirable, finds even further fulfillment in the creation of children and a rich family life.

I would have been pleased if Dr. Broderick had developed the this-worldly meaning of sex more fully and had left its other-worldly meaning to the world of possibility. This he was unwilling to do. I respect his right to think as he chooses but could not resist the temptation to express another point of view.