

## Boundaries and Marital Sexuality

Sexuality is intense and powerful. It can unite humanity in the most creative way imaginable; when misdirected, sex kills. Mason writes: “Marriage is the only weapon man possesses against the brutalizing passion, the primitive passion, the mindless explosiveness of the raw sex drive...The very existence of marriage heaps coals upon the head of profligacy (sexual immorality).”

I write this back in my boyhood home. 34 years ago, I first began to wander the beaches in search of anonymous sexual encounters with men. Men died for their lusts then. We infected one another with all manner of disease. Then came the AIDS virus. Even when it was named, few stopped the craziness. Our enslaving ‘liberty’ was too precious to us; we had come too far to be restrained. Most of my friends from that era are dead.

Today the gay movement is stronger than ever in my home town. It is one of three cities in California most in favor of gay marriage. The town’s sunny perversion thrives; just under half of its city officials are gay, wealthy, empowered, and without restraint.

All of us need restraint. And we need to acknowledge the shame that has marked all of our sexuality. That is not a matter of a naming a particularly perverse background. Shame shrouds us all. It resulted from the fall—Adam and Eve’s intensely felt emotion of exposure when God named their rebellion. Today we all live east of Eden.

Shame renders sexuality a mixed blessing indeed. It is either nasty, sought out furtively on the sly, or threatening—a big monstrous mess to be avoided at all costs. Even in marriage, our offering to one another may prompt more conflict than confirmation.

Boundaries have power to reclaim marriage. A union born of permanence and fidelity, protected by boundaries, challenges our shame-based reactions to sexuality. It shows us a better way. Marriage commands: “When I said yes to you for life and sealed that yes with my body, I said no to everyone else!”

Marriage provides the boundary for sexual love; our vows to each other are the basis for trust. And in the sanctuary of that trust, in the authenticity of our vows to be faithful, we find a remedy for our shame. Mason writes: “In the marriage bed, bonds of love and trust must be forged that will be strong enough to contend with the sin of shame.” The good news? We can forge those bonds. And in those boundaries we can lie down with our spouses in peace.

God has given marriage that authority to enable man and woman to once more realize what it means ‘to be naked and unashamed.’ (Gen. 2: 25) Mason again: “Marriage reclaims the body for the Lord, making pure and holy and clean again what has been trampled down in the mud of shame” John Paul II takes it further when he described sexual intercourse in holy matrimony as “an icon of the interior life of the triune God.”

I love marital sexuality; I am honored to partake with Annette of that bit of heaven on earth. Protected by the truth that our offering to one another is exclusive, sexual intercourse is redeemed from shame and confirms over and over our vows to love each other as one-flesh until death.

Honor Marriage for the good of all. Vote YES on Proposition 8.

“Reclaim our vision of sexual love in marriage, O God. Help us to see how a marriage with boundaries reclaims sexuality from the grip of shame. Free us from the myriad ways we and those we love have misused sexuality and so been subject to that shame. Grant us courage to set and keep boundaries. Strengthen the boundaries of marriage in this day, O God. Let no created thing divide what you have joined and guarded through holy matrimony.”