

# REAL ISSUES MINISTRIES

"A Christ-Centered Publication About People and For People Addressing the Real Issues We Face"

## BEHIND THE MASK

### IT'S ALL ABOUT SEX

Western civilization is over-stimulated and oversexed, says Philip Yancey. We are thoroughly saturated with sexual images and constantly surveyed about sexual attitudes and practices. But something essential and precious has been lost. Sadly, a persuasive Christian approach to sexuality is missing that could act as a balance to secular cynicism and obsession and help believers rediscover the elements of sacredness in a healthy sexual life.

In fact the church by and large has bought into the culture's message; "its all about sex", and is both silent and/or condoning on the subject of sex.

The homosexual movement is about their right to have sex with who ever they choose, the abortion movement is about their right to have sex without consequences, the message of the culture is that everyone is having sex, it's the norm, and so can I. Sex has been reduced to physical gratification without an emotional or spiritual attachment,.

Tell us what you think?

### IN FOCUS

"God is not what you imagine or what you think you understand. If you understand you have failed"

St. Augustine

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#### On the Horizon

- Sunday, July 6, 10:30-11:30 **Men Like Us** (Atlanta Union Mission)
- Saturday, July 26, 10am-12pm, "**Breaking Free**" Confronting the Issues of Pornography & Sexual Addiction

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### WRITERS WANTED

If you have the gift of writing, consider becoming a writer for any of our family of publications

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#### THE HARDEST PART

There are many "first steps" in life, and they are usually the hardest. If you want answers to life's questions, this is your first step. The hardest part is over.

"As children bring their broken toys with tears for us to mend, I brought my broken heart to Him because he was my friend. But then, instead of leaving Him in peace to work alone, I hung around and tried to help with ways that were my own. At last I snatched them back and cried, "How can you be so slow?" "My child", He said, "what could I do? you never would let go."

Anonymous

## HOT TUB RELIGION (A Misplaced Faith) -Ron Dunn

The present exaggerated emphasis on health, wealth, and happiness is not new, nor is it biblical. Many of the values exalted in our "Christian" culture are pagan in their origin. The fact is, we have baptized many pagan values into the church and made them members in good standing. We have, for example, declared physical and material prosperity synonymous with the real Christian life. Oxford historian Jasper Griffin points to the modern cult of athletes and the revival of the Olympic Games as an evidence of this strong influence Greek culture still exercises in our world. Behind the faces of the latest fads are the old gods secular man has worshipped in one form or another for two thousand years.

All this is important for our study. J.I. Packer says, "We have grown health conscious in a way that is itself rather sick, and certainly has no precedent not even in ancient Sparta where physical culture was everything".

The result of all this is "the seduction of the sick." Believing that physical well-being is the Olympic gold of life, we have been seduced into thinking that prosperity is our divine right, that freedom from all woe is God's divine will.

The sick are seduced when they are persuaded that prosperity; health, wealth and happiness, is the highest possible good, that it is something owed them, something God wants them to have above all else. If they push the right buttons, they can escape all evil, evil being anything that interferes with either the existence of, or the full enjoyment of, prosperity. And of course, if they don't have this, their spirituality is in serious doubt. They become pariahs to themselves and to others.

The current distorted emphasis on health and wealth is pagan, not Christian. J. I. Packer dubs it "Hot Tub Religion." The ends of hot tub religion and the world are the same, only the methods are different, the world seeks prosperity by hook or crook; the Christian, by faith and prayer. Prosperity religion allows Christians to join the world in its carnal pursuits with a clear conscience, and in the name of God. Which brings us to this fact: There can be no seduction of the sick without seducers and those willing to be seduced. Have you, or someone you know, embraced their gospel? Have you unwittingly spread their message yourself?

The great seducers of history all had one thing in common: they could use the natural needs and instincts of another person for their own selfish ends. Seducers employ the language and gesture of dialogue, trust, intimacy and personal rapport with consummate skill.

Why are Christians who read the Bible and pray regularly so often no better judges of seduction than the non-Christian? Why can we not discern truth for ourselves when we have the Holy Spirit ready to interpret God's Word for us?

A key reason is that we've never learned the principles that help us compare scripture with scripture.

## SCRIPTURE BREAK

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO

**2 Chronicles 20:6-12**

Do you ever have times when you do not know what to do?  
Jehoshaphat's prayer gives us some direction.

- **What to do when you don't know what to do: You can appraise your adversaries.**

- A. Is your fear real or imagined?
- B. A knowledge of what is transpiring will help

- **What to do when you don't what to do: You can analyze your resources**

- A. After appraising their adversaries, the Judeans analyzed their resources, They did not have greater numbers of troops or superior weapons, but they did have God.

- **What to do when you don't know what to do: You can accept your deliverance**

- A. We can turn to God in worship
- B. We can turn to God with his promises
- C. We can turn to God with confidence
- D. We can turn to God with obedient dependence on him

**Conclusion:** How often does it happen that you don't know what to do? Anytime it does happen you can remember the prayer of King Jehoshaphat and make it your prayer: "O our God, we do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon Thee." I cannot promise a miracle, but I can promise you the strength of God to give guidance and help.

JOIN US IN A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF JUDE  
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