



LOVE vs. LUST

President
Spencer W. Kimball

Devotional
Young Adults
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LOVE VS. LUST

My dear young people, the youth of Zion:

How pleased the Lord must be tonight to see a gathering of this nature and of this warmth and of this sweetness. As you sing "Shall the Youth of Zion Falter," I thank the Lord when you say, "No, we never will falter. We'll move forward and we will acquit ourselves like ladies and gentlemen." I wonder if we have ever had this large a choir, as you sang lustily and with great power and, I think, great feeling. I am sure the Lord is pleased with you here tonight.

This is a grave responsibility, to take this half hour of this many people's time. I am conscious of it, and I pray that the Lord will help me to say something that will touch the hearts of each and give you additional strength and power.

I love youth. I really love youth, and I have been watching you now for a long time, and I am proud of you and happy with you. It is a great world in which we live. If we could only contrast your lives with the lives of many young people your own age in many other places in the world, I am sure you would be grateful, too.

I rejoice when you grow up clean and stalwart and make tall shadows. I sorrow when misfortune comes and we have remorse and troubles.

Numerous disasters have occurred in mid-ocean by collisions of ships with other ships and sometimes with icebergs, and numerous people have gone to their watery graves.

Soon such a thing will not be possible, for ships will be equipped with radar equipment which will alert ships' officers should a collision be imminent. A tape will be played automatically, booming from the darkened bridge: "This is an alert. This ship is approaching an object. This is an alert. This ship is approaching an object." And the voice will not be stilled until the mate comes to the radarscope and turns the recorder off. This will enable ships to alter their courses and save lives.

I believe our young people are wholesome and basically good and sound; but they, too, are traveling oceans which to them are at least partially uncharted, where there are shoals and rocks and icebergs and other vessels, and where great disasters can come unless warnings are heeded.

And, as a leader of the Church and in a measure being responsible

for youth and their well-being, I raise my voice loud and strong to say to the youth: "You are in a hazardous area and perhaps in a period of your lives when there are some dangers. Tighten your belts, hold on, and you can survive this turbulence."

Let me quote here the Lord, saying,

If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. (John 15:22)

He reminds us again that, when we have been warned, we should listen and put the warning into our lives and be sure that we avoid the shoals and the rocks and the danger points.

May I speak first for a moment of words and relate them to my theme. There is magic in words properly used. Some people use them accurately, others sloppily.

Words are a means of communicating, and faulty signals give wrong impressions. Disorder and misunderstandings are the results. Words underlie our whole life and are the tools of our business, the expressions of our affections, and the records of our progress. Words cause hearts to throb and tears to flow in sympathy. Words can be sincere or hypocritical. Many of us are destitute of words and, consequently, are clumsy with our speech, which sometimes becomes but babble. It was Paul who said:

Except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. (1 Corinthians 14:9)

In touring foreign lands, one comes to realize his utter helplessness without understandable words and symbols.

The workmen engaged in building the Tower of Babel were craftsmen, skilled in their trades. Take away their tools: they can replace them. Take away their skills: they can learn them again. But take away their means of communication with one another and the building of the tower has to be abandoned. (Royal Bank of Canada Letter)

Words which are synonyms have much in common but still have peculiar application, such as "child" and "urchin," "hand" and "fist," "misstatement" and "lie." Now, note the difference in the four-word sentences: "John looked at Mary"; "John glanced at Mary"; "John gazed at Mary"; "John glared at Mary."

A true definition of style is "Proper words in proper places with thoughts in proper order."

The plain way of writing conceals great art. As you avoid pomposity, ambiguity, and complexity, you attain simplicity, which is the greatest cunning. It conveys proper meaning into the minds of others straightaway, without effort for them. They get a feeling of sincerity and integrity, for who can be suspicious of the motives of one who speaks plainly? "Sour notes do not become sweet because the musician is in white tie and black tails."

Words should be kind and gentle or firm and bold, according to the need of the moment. Words which betray are unkind, and words which befuddle are frustrating.

Some people have excellent ideas, but their thoughts either beat around aimlessly in their heads, finding no communication package in which to emerge, or they come out distorted and in fragments.

It is reported that a Russian child has a primer of two thousand words in the first grade and of ten thousand words in the fourth, while his opposite number in the United States has a primer of eighteen hundred words; and that the Russian child is reading Tolstoy while the same-aged child in the United States is working his way through a book entitled *A Funny Sled*. This charge is made in an article in the magazine *Horizon*.

Even examinations now in many cases do not require expressions by students, who may place an "X" in an appropriate square and avoid intellectual effort in marshaling thoughts and expressing them. They have about a fifty percent chance of guessing right.

Now, you may wonder why I have introduced my talk with the subject of words. May I lead you out with a few four-letter words to think about: fine and fire; good and grow; home, hide, hell, and help; tire, tide, tell, and toll; wilt, wish, weak, worn, and weep. Then there are these: limp, life, live, lurk, love, and lust.

Ah! here I have finally found the two words on which I wish to dwell: love and lust—words strong and powerful, words which are life-and-death words—love and lust.

Let me begin with a story which I have told before:

Across the desk sat a handsome, young nineteen-year-old and a beautiful, shy, but charming eighteen-year-old. They appeared embarrassed, apprehensive, near-terrified. He was defensive and bordering on rebellion. There had been sexual violations throughout the summer, intermittently since school began, and as late as last week. I have had these kinds of visits many times, but what did disturb me was that they seemed to feel little, if any, remorse. They admitted they had gone contrary to Church standards but quoted

magazines and speakers who approved premarital sex and emphasized that sex was a fulfillment of human existence.

Finally the boy said, "Yes, we yielded to each other, but we do not think it wrong because we love each other." I thought I had misunderstood him. Since the world began, there have been countless immoralities, but to hear them justified by Latter-day Saint youth shocked me. He repeated, "No, it isn't wrong because we love each other." Here was one of those misused four-letter words.

They had repeated this abominable sin so often that they had convinced themselves, and a wall of resistance had been built, and behind this wall they stubbornly stood, almost defiantly. If there had been blushes of shame at first, such had been neutralized with their logic. Deeply entrenched were they in this rationalization. Had they not read in some university papers of the new freedom where premarital sex was not forbidden? Did they not see the looseness in every show, on every stage, on TV screens, and in magazines? Had it not been fairly well established, then, in their world, that sex before marriage was not so wrong? Did there not need to be a trial period? How else could they know if they would be sexually compatible for marriage? Had they not, like numerous others, come to regard sex as the basis for living?

And then a proverb came to my mind:

Such is the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness. (Proverbs 30:20)

I remembered Peter had said:

There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies . . . and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

And many shall follow their pernicious ways. (2 Peter 2:1-2)

And here they are, false teachers everywhere, using speech and pornographic literature, magazines, radio, TV, street talk, spreading damnable heresies which break down moral standards, and this to gratify the lusts of the flesh.

And the Savior said that the very elect would be deceived by Lucifer if it were possible. Satan will use his logic to confuse and his rationalizations to destroy. He will shade meanings, open doors an inch at a time, and lead from purest white through all the shades of gray to the darkest black.

This young couple looked up rather startled when I postulated firmly and with positiveness, "No, my beloved young people, you did not love each other. Rather, you lusted for each other." And here was the other misused word.

Paul told Titus:

Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate. (Titus 1:15-16)

I am sure that Peter and James and Paul found it unpleasant business to constantly be calling people to repentance and warning them of dangers, but they continued unflinchingly, and so we, your leaders today, must be everlastingly at it; if young people do not understand, then the fault may be partly ours. But if we make the true way clear to them, then we are blameless.

In Ezekiel we read:

If when he [the watchman] seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people;

Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.

He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.

But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand. (Ezekiel 33:3-6)

That, of course, is why we, the watchmen, your leaders, are so interested and so intent upon letting the warning be trumpeted loud and long—so that no young person can trip himself and not be warned or wonder why we strive so hard to point the way.

The boy and girl sat still. I was not sure if they were comprehending.

Now we talked again about words—"lose" and "gain," "fall" and "rise," "open" and "shut," "lure" and "save," "live" and "dead," "hell" and "home"—and, again, "love" and "lust." The beautiful and

holy word of love they had defiled until it had degenerated to become a bedfellow with lust, its antithesis.

As far back as Isaiah, deceivers and rationalizers were condemned. Listen to them:

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! (Isaiah 5:20-21)

This young couple had excused and justified their transgression on the grounds that they loved each other. Is there a word in the dictionary more misused and prostituted than the word "love"?

Again the great Peter said:

Dearly beloved . . . abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. (1 Peter 2:11)

Surely every soul who has reached the age of accountability, and especially those who have received the Holy Ghost after baptism, knows the difference; but so often we hear what we want to hear and we see what we want to see.

Paul charged the Corinthians:

Flee fornication. . . . He that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. (1 Corinthians 6:18)

And in order to avoid the disasters, Paul cautioned: "[Do] not . . . company with fornicators. . . . Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." (1 Corinthians 5:9, 13)

Oh, if our young people could learn this basic lesson to always keep good company, to never be found with those who tend to lower their standards! Let every youth select associates who will keep him on his tiptoes, trying to reach the heights. Let him never choose associates who encourage him to relax in carelessness.

We must repeat what we have said many times: Fornication with all its big and little brothers and sisters was evil and wholly condemned by the Lord in Adam's day, in Moses' day, in Paul's day, and in 1974. The Church has no tolerance for any kind of perversions. The Lord has indicated his lack of tolerance, stating:

For I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance. (D&C 1:31)

Yet he loves the repentant one and forgives when adequate repentance is in evidence.

Paul lashed out against the “works of the flesh . . . adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,” and then he added “that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Galatians 5:19, 21)

Jude says they are

raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame. (Jude 13)

These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts. (Jude 16)

Let it be remembered that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever and that the Church is not softening its standards, nor abandoning its God-given tenets.

Such transgressors

are led about by Satan, even as chaff is driven before the wind, or as a vessel is tossed about upon the waves, without sail or anchor, or without anything wherewith to steer her; and even as she is, so are they. (Mormon 5:18)

My young people were still listening, and I reminded them of the statement of Mormon regarding the Nephites, guilty of fiendish, abominable acts, who had taken prisoners the daughters of the Lamanites, and, “after depriving them of that which was most dear and precious above all things, which is chastity and virtue” (Moroni 9:9), they tortured and murdered them.

When the scriptures are so plain, how can anyone justify immoralities and call them love? Is black white? Is evil good? Is filthiness purity?

As I looked the boy in the eye, I said, “No, my boy, you were not expressing love when you took her virtue.” And to her, I said, “There was no real love in your heart when you robbed him of his chastity. It was lust that brought you together in this most serious of all practices short of murder.”

I continued, “If one really loves another, one would rather die for that person than injure him. At the hour of indulgence, pure love is pushed out one door while lust sneaks in the other. Your affection has been replaced with biological materialism and uncontrolled

passion. You have accepted the doctrine which the devil is so eager to establish—that the sex relation is justified on the grounds that it is a pleasant experience in itself and is beyond moral consideration.

“When the unmarried yield to the lust which induces intimacies and indulgence, it is called fornication, and they have permitted the body to dominate and have placed the spirit in chains. It is unthinkable that anyone could call this love.

“In order to live with themselves, people who transgress must follow one path or the other of two alternatives. The one is to sear the conscience and dull the sensitivity with mental tranquilizers so that the transgression may be continued; the other is to permit remorse to lead to total conviction, repentance, and eventual forgiveness.”

My two young visitors were quite devoid of conviction.

There is no forgiveness without repentance, true repentance, and one has not repented until he has bared his soul and admitted his intentions without excuses or rationalizations. He must admit to himself that he has sinned without the slightest minimizing of the offense and admit that it is as big as it really is; then he is ready to begin his repentance. He must not call it an ounce when it is a pound; he must not call it an inch when it is a yard; he must not call it a dozen when it is a hundred; he must give it its full truth.

We were in Los Angeles years ago, Sister Kimball and I, when the news broke out of the illicit affair of a certain movie actress—you all knew her, you all saw her many, many times—from which sin she had become pregnant. Because of her popularity, it was big news in heavy headlines in every paper in the land. We were not so surprised at her adultery; it was reported to be common in Hollywood as well as in the world generally. But that such dissoluteness should be approved and accepted by society shocked me. The Los Angeles papers took a poll of the people—clubwomen and ministers, employers and employees, stenographers, teachers, housewives—and almost without exception, as though it were a child's indiscretion, these community leaders found little fault and criticized as “puritanical” and “Victorian” those who disapproved. “Let her live her own life,” they said. “And why should we interfere with people's personal liberties?” Toleration for sin today and for many years is terrifying.

That the Church's stand on morality may be understood, we declare firmly and unalterably it is not an outworn garment, faded, old-fashioned, and threadbare. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and his covenants and doctrines are immutable. When the sun grows cold and the stars no longer shine, the law of chastity will

still be basic in God's world and in the Lord's church. Old values are upheld by the Church, not because they are old, but rather because through the ages they have proved right. It will always be the rule.

When your grandparents and your great-grandparents were on this earth, remember that the law was the same; and when you are great-grandparents, it will still be the same in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints because it is right, because it is true.

I continued with the young couple, saying, "The youth of today are seeing too many 'adults only' movies which exploit sex. There are too many open dormitories on too many campuses, too many mattress parties for adolescents, too many girls with extreme dresses, tight sweaters, calling attention to sex. And there are too many young men with tight, suggestive attire. There have been too many parked automobiles. They have read too many novels where sex is the central, dominant theme."

"What a world would it be," I asked these young people, "if this sin which you have done were pure?" We are not speaking of a sex-free world any more than we are speaking of a sexy world, for a sexless civilization would die in one generation, if indeed it could be born. A sexy civilization will die of its own rottenness when it is ripe in iniquity.

In ancient days, one city or one civilization could disintegrate without seriously disturbing other parts of the world, but today our communication and transportation facilities make the whole world one community.

Sexual encounters outside of legalized marriage render the individual a thing to be used, a thing to be exploited, and make him or her exchangeable, exploitable, expendable, and throwawayable.

And when we come before the great Judge at the bar of justice, shall we stand before him as a thing or as a person, as a depraved body of flesh and carnal acts or as a son of God standing straight and tall and worthy?

My young couple were still excusing themselves, and I said again, "Every kind of sex exploit for the unmarried from the first lustful stirrings of passions is a sin."

Sex exploitation promises what it never can produce nor deliver. So, outside of good marriage, improper sex life can bring only disappointment, disgust, and usually rejection.

Illicit sex is a selfish act, a betrayal, and is dishonest. To be unwilling to accept responsibility is cowardly and disloyal. Marriage is for time and eternity. Fornication and all other deviations are for

today, for this hour, for this "now." Marriage gives life. Fornication and adultery lead to death.

The eighth of the Ten Commandments says: "Thou shalt not steal." Yet the immoral act is exploitation and robbery in its worst expression. It is taking, with or without permission, the most priceless, the most unrecoverable, the most unreturnable possession of an individual—chastity and virtue. In one dark, unglorious hour, lives can be shattered. In a long lifetime, health lost may possibly be regained, wealth lost may someday be accumulated again, freedom lost may be fought for and possibly recovered, but chastity gone is gone forever, and virtue stolen cannot be returned. Is not this one of the prime reasons why this forbidden thing is so heinous, like murder? Neither can ever be wholly compensated nor returned nor undone.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery" (and we add its twin, fornication, which is for the unmarried) and also "Thou shalt not kill" came ringing down from Mount Sinai. One can take a life, but he never can restore that life. There must come the time when the fornicator or the adulterer, like the murderer, wishes he could hide—hide from all the world, from all the ghosts and especially from his own—and there is no place to hide. There are dark corners and hidden spots and closed cars in which the transgression can be committed, but to conceal it totally is impossible. There is no night so dark, no room so tightly locked, no canyon so closed in, no desert so uninhabited that one can find a place to hide his sins from himself and from his Lord. Eventually one must still face himself and his great Judge.

Cain had difficulty hiding. The Lord had asked, "Where is Abel thy brother?" and Cain had boldly replied, "I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?" Did he think he was deceiving the Lord or himself? The next question was no simple inquiry, but an accusation and a condemnation:

What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground . . . which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.

. . . a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear.

Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth.
(Genesis 4:10-14)

That was true of murder. In a lesser degree, it is true of illicit sex,

which, of course, includes all petting, fornication, adultery, homosexual acts, and all other perversions. The Lord may say to offenders, as he did to Cain, "What hast thou done?" The children thus conceived make damning charges against you; the companions who have been frustrated and violated condemn you; the body that has been defiled cries out against you; the spirit which has been dwarfed convicts you. You yourself will have difficulty throughout the ages in totally forgiving yourself.

After looking down at the crumpled body at his feet and especially after the torments of hell began to persecute him, Cain must have wished that he could give Abel's life back. The Lord did not curse Cain; it was Cain who, breaking eternal law, cursed himself. And every man or woman who is guilty of moral misconduct may look down upon defiled bodies, his own and others.

After creating man in his own image, male and female, God then performed the holy marriage ceremony for eternity for Adam and Eve. And in this beginning, he established a pattern of consistent sex life and propriety. In that first marriage, the Lord commanded these two beings, who were complementary to each other, to multiply by being fruitful and bringing children into the world. That was the reason that the Lord placed sex in the lives of men and women. Cain and Abel were only two of their many sons and daughters. This command did not give license to merely satisfy biological urges, for God followed it with this command:

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. (Genesis 2:24)

It would be of value probably to those who have been married to emphasize to them how strictly they should keep the law of chastity in their married life.

To cleave is to adhere closely, to cling; and the Lord gave as the purpose for their cleaving, the peopling of the earth. There was high purpose in the creation and in the proper associations of husband and wife, but intimacies could never be defended outside of marriage.

The premarital sex act is a deception. It is a lie. The Lord asked:

If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he . . . give him a serpent?

Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? (Luke 11:11-12)

Bread is the staff of life, while a stone is lifeless, indeed, sometimes death-dealing. The fish as food builds and sustains the body, as does the egg; but the serpent and the scorpion destroy life and are the symbols of death. Love is promised and is delivered in true married life.

Proper sex functions bring posterity, responsibility, and peace; but premarital sex encounters bring pain, the loss of self-esteem, spiritual death, unless there is a total, continuing repentance.

What are the fruits of immorality? Instead of multiplying and replenishing the earth, every effort is made to avoid conception and the birth of progeny with abortions, sterilizations, and so on. Since Adam, no soul has ever been made happy by transgressing, and until the last soul comes to the earth, no one ever will be made happy through transgression.

Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. (Matthew 7:19)

And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees. (Matthew 3:10)

The warning is repeated:

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. (Matthew 7:15)

And as you read the media of today and listen, be sure that you are wise and select the truth from the evil things that are told.

Our great accumulated scientific knowledge about our bodies and their functioning, and our minds and their operating, seems not to have been translated into righteousness. As an example, all that we have learned of late from research about the ill effects of tobacco has done little to discourage its use, even as the holy revelations were ignored. And all that has been said from a medical and scientific standpoint about the social diseases which are everywhere in our land seems to have deterred people very little from their immorality. For, in a recent local paper, we read of the great increase in VD in the big cities of our land.

It is not so much what we know but what we do about what we know. Dr. Jenkins of the Utah State Health Department is quoted as saying that gonorrhea and syphilis epidemics are raging at this very moment in many of the nation's largest cities.

We live in a sterile age, or so it seems—an age when young people turn to sex to escape loneliness, frustration, insecurity, and lack of

interest. "What can we do?" the youth complain. They are little interested in reading and family associations and youth socials and the community dance. They must have something more exciting. Long ago they ceased making their own entertainment, which could be as clean and worthy as they wished to make it. Today, then, they look at television and go to shows in town and to the so-called passion pits, where they are overstimulated sexually. Oh, for a generation of youth who would move back to simplicity, away from the "canned" programs in most of which are ingredients to stimulate and stir the human passions!

When we talk of sex, our first thought is of adultery and fornication; but our second one, and close on its heels, is the sex stimulation to self and others sometimes called "petting." It is a damaging and a damnable transgression in its own right, and then, of course, it is also the gateway to the final acts of fornication and adultery.

And the world will go on a-dying—destroying itself until people begin to use words in their true meanings, "calling a spade a spade" and a spoon a spoon, calling "petting" a deep sin and not a harmless diversion—until we rip its disguising mask from its ugly face and strip from its lustful body the sheep's clothing with which the vicious wolf has concealed his mean self.

The young man is untrue to his manhood who promises popularity, good times, security, fun, and even love, when all he can give is passion and its diabolical fruits—guilt complexes, disgust, hatred, abhorrence, eventual loathing, and possible pregnancy without legitimacy and honor. He pleads his case is love and all he gives is lust. Likewise, the young lady sells herself cheap. She asks him for a fish; he gives her a serpent. He asks her for bread, and she gives him a stone. She reaches for figs, and thorns are pressed into her hand. He would have grapes but would get a bramble bush. She asks for eggs, and he stings her as with a scorpion. The result is damage to life and canker to the soul.

And still this young couple talk of love. What a corruption of the most beautiful term! The word is prostituted also in the realm of homosexuality. Both are in the realm of taking, not giving; killing, not saving; destroying, not building. The fruit is bitter because the tree is corrupt. Their lips say, "I love you." Their bodies say, "I want you." Love is kind and wholesome. To love is to give and not to take. To love is to serve, not to exploit.

Undoubtedly Potiphar's wife flattered Joseph and expressed her alleged love for him at first. When this failed, she tried force and intrigue. Failing there, she tried to cover up with blackmail. With

such a clear conscience, Joseph's dark dungeon must have been to him a very pleasant prison. At least here he was safe from exploitation and contamination. She said to Joseph, "I love you." What she wanted was not Joseph but his handsome, appealing body.

What is love? Many think of it as mere physical attraction, and they casually speak of "falling in love" and "love at first sight." True love is not wrapped in such flimsy material. One might become immediately attracted to another individual, but love is far more than physical attraction. It is inclusive and comprehensive. Physical attraction is only one of the many elements, but there must be faith and confidence and understanding and partnership. There must be common ideals and standards. There must be a great devotion and companionship. Love is cleanliness and progress and sacrifice and selflessness. This kind of love never tires nor wanes but lives through sickness and sorrow, poverty and privation, accomplishment and disappointment, time and eternity. For the love to continue, there must be an increase constantly of confidence and understanding, of frequent and sincere expression of appreciation and affection. There must be a forgetting of self and a constant concern for the other. Interests, hopes, objectives must be constantly focused into a single channel.

For many years I saw a strong man carry his tiny, emaciated, arthritic wife to meetings and wherever she could go. There could be no sexual expression. Here was selfless indication of affection. I think that is pure love. I saw a kindly woman wait on her husband for many years as he deteriorated with muscular dystrophy. She waited on him hand and foot, night and day, when all he could do was blink his eyes in thanks. I believe that was love.

I knew a woman who carried her little unfortunate child until the body was too heavy to carry, and then she pushed her in a wheelchair for the following years until her death. The deprived child could never express appreciation. It seems to me that might be love. Another mother visited regularly her son who was in the penitentiary. She could receive nothing from him. She gave much, all she had.

If anyone feels that petting or other deviations are demonstrations of love, let him ask himself, "If this beautiful body which I have misused suddenly became deformed or paralyzed, would my reactions be the same? If this lovely face were scarred by flames, or this body which I have used suddenly became rigid, or this keen mind which I have enjoyed were suddenly to become blank, would I be such an ardent lover? If senility or any of its approaches suddenly

fell upon my sweetheart, what would my attitude be?"

The answer to these questions might test one to see if he is really in love or if it is only physical attraction which encouraged the improper contacts. The young man who protects his sweetheart against all use or abuse, against insult and infamy from himself and others, could be the expression of love.

But the young man who uses his companion as a biological toy to give himself temporary satisfaction—that is lust and is at the other end of the spectrum from love. A young woman conducts herself to be attractive spiritually, mentally, and physically but will not by word nor dress or act stir nor stimulate to physical reactions the companion beside her. That could be true love. That young woman who must touch and stir and fondle and tempt and use knows not love. This is lust and exploitation.

Speaking to my young couple, I said again, "No, it is not love if it manipulates; it is selfishness; it is irresponsibility.

"If sex relations merely become a release or a technique and the partner becomes exchangeable, then sex returns to the compulsive animal level.

"Immorality brings generally a guilt deep and lasting. And this is a factor certainly not to be overlooked. These unresolved guilt complexes are the stuff of which mental breakdowns come, the building blocks of suicide, the fabric of distorted personalities, the wounds that scar or decapitate individuals or families.

"And a question that surely arises when that vital moment comes is, will we stand before the great Judge and be proud or ashamed, satisfied or frustrated? And no normal youth or adult who has received the Holy Ghost can conscientiously claim that he did not know that these things were transgressions.

"Premarital sex affairs are wrong, not because the Church declares against them, but the Church declares against them because they are wrong and because they hurt and destroy people who are God's children."

The young couple still were sitting before me. They mentioned a possible future marriage, apparently thinking to impress me, and were a bit startled when I said with positiveness, "You should be married and immediately." And I quoted this scripture:

And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife. (Exodus 22:16)

And again:

If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found;

. . . she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days. (Deuteronomy 22:28-29)

These two folks were “damaged goods.” They had prostituted each other. They had toyed with each other’s bodies. But now they were almost horrified at the suggestion of immediate marriage, and he remonstrated: “Why, we couldn’t marry. We are not ready for marriage. We haven’t completed our education. We have no employment. We are not prepared to buy clothing, pay rent, buy cars, employ physicians, buy groceries, pay hospital bills. We are not ready to assume the responsibilities of parenthood.”

And then I asked, as kindly as I could, “Then why did you precipitate yourselves into that situation? Why did you do the act which would make you parents? Why did you engage in the associations that would demand a home, employment, status? Your very irresponsible act identifies you as most immature. You do not know the meaning of responsibility, but you have pushed yourselves prematurely into adulthood. You should now meet the responsibilities as best you can. You are hardly able to walk alone as little children, and yet you are likely now to be parents. You made the choice when you broke the law of chastity and gave up your virtue. That hour, freedom was replaced with tyrannical fetters. You accepted shackles and limitations and sorrows and eternal regrets when you could have had freedom with peace.”

King Benjamin said:

And now, I say unto you, my brethren, that after ye have known and have been taught all these things, if ye should transgress . . . that ye do withdraw yourselves from the Spirit of the Lord. (Mosiah 2:36)

Now, it would be wholly improper to so completely condemn sex and its sins without explaining to those who may already have yielded to these temptations and have defiled themselves that there is eventual forgiveness, providing, of course, that there is commensurate repentance. “The way of the transgressor is hard,” and tough and long and thorny. But the Lord has promised that for all those sins and errors outside of the named unpardonable sins there is forgiveness. But many people misunderstand the principle of repentance and have the misconception that a few prayers can bounce them back in moments or hours the long distance that they skidded over months and possibly years.

The Lord has said, "I will remember their sins no more," and "thou shalt forgive them." But sometimes it takes longer to climb back up the steep hill than it did to skid down it.

And the prophet Jacob said that those who resist repentance would "stand with shame and awful guilt before the bar of God." (Jacob 6:9)

A basic thought which none may overlook is the statement of the prophet Amulek:

And I say unto you again that he cannot save them in their sins [but only from their sins] . . . and he hath said that no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore, how can ye be saved, except ye inherit the kingdom of heaven? Therefore, ye cannot be saved in your sins. (Alma 11:37)

This means there must be total repentance and change of life.

The Lord says:

Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more.

By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them. (D&C 58:42-43)

He confesses to his bishop, changes his life, and proves his repentance.

I hope fervently that I am making clear the position of the Lord and his church on these unmentionable practices.

Masturbation, a rather common indiscretion, is not approved of the Lord nor of his church regardless of what may have been said by others whose "norms" are lower. Latter-day Saints are urged to avoid this practice.

James Allen again says:

Man is manacled only by himself: thought and action are the jailers of fate—they imprison, being base; they are also the angels of freedom—they liberate, being noble.

Sometimes masturbation is the introduction to the more serious sins of exhibitionism and the gross sin of homosexuality. We would avoid mentioning these unholy terms and these reprehensible practices were it not for the fact that we have a responsibility to the youth of Zion that they be not deceived by those who would call bad good and black white.

This unholy transgression seems to be rapidly growing. If one has such desires and tendencies, he overcomes them the same as if he had the urge toward petting or fornication or adultery. The Lord condemns and forbids this practice with a vigor equal to his condemnation of adultery and other such sex acts.

Again, contrary to the belief and statement of many people, this sin, like fornication, is overcomable and forgivable, but again, only upon a deep and abiding repentance, which means total abandonment and complete transformation of thought and act. The fact that some governments and some churches and numerous corrupted individuals have tried to reduce such behavior from criminal offense to personal privilege does not change the nature nor the seriousness of the practice.

Peter said:

I beseech you . . . abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. (1 Peter 2:11)

And James says:

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Do not err, my beloved brethren. (James 1:13-16)

May we return to words. In my Bible concordance there are 550 listed references pertaining to love. They do not interpret it as carnal, sexual, handling, fondling, petting, perversions, nor fornication. In the same concordance there are 53 references to adultery, and not one of them seems to connect this condemned sexual act with any real affection which is love. I also found 32 references to fornication, but I found none which identified the forbidden act as a holy, sacred love.

Paul made this clear when he said:

Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. (1 Corinthians 6:13)

And Paul further gave to the Corinthians a stinging lashing when he indicated these sins must be overcome:

Be not deceived: neither fornicators . . . nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

And the inference, of course, is that there will be a total repentance. This is much harder than many people think.

I do not find in the Bible the modern terms "petting" nor "necking." I could not find the term "homosexuality," but I did find many places where the Lord condemned such a practice with great vigor.

Man is created in the image of God. He is a god in embryo. He has the seeds of godhood within him, and he can, if he is normal, pick himself up by his bootstraps and literally move himself from where he is to where he knows he should be.

We realize that the cure is no more permanent than the individual makes it and is, like the cure for alcoholism, subject to continued vigilance. To such a man we say, "Physician, heal thyself," and promise him if he will stay away from the haunts and the temptations and the former associates, he may heal himself, cleanse his mind, and return to his normal pursuits and a happy state. The cure for this malady lies in self-mastery, which is the fundamental basis of the whole gospel program.

And then I found the 550 references to love. They had related generally to pure, holy love. Sometimes it was called charity. Lust and carnal desires were never more made a part of it.

Paul contrasted the two four-letter words of Timothy: "Flee also youthful lusts." (2 Timothy 2:22) And Ezekiel contrasts these words of love and lust:

The people . . . hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. (Ezekiel 33:31)

As we speak of real love, a new concept comes into our minds. The Lord said:

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. (John 13:35)

In none of these quotes is the slightest implication of bodily contact, of lust, of desire, of passion. Certainly, this is the test of love. It is honor and integrity and obedience.

And Paul, speaking to the Saints, said, "Husbands, love your wives."

This is no carnal commandment. There is no sex in this command, for they were already legal partners. And then he continues:

Even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it. . . .

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

For no man ever yet hated his own flesh. (Ephesians 5:25, 28-29)

And as Paul continues, he says:

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. (Ephesians 5:31)

The proper sexual life between husband and wife is only a part of this important commandment. When a man and a woman love the spouse as they love themselves, only rich and wonderful fruits come from such a tree. God will judge that man or that woman who is unfaithful.

And Paul, speaking to Titus, exhorts

the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children.

To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands. (Titus 2:4-5)

Can you see anything vulgar, destructive, earthy, fleshly, or carnal in any of these teachings? They loved their husbands and they loved their children. This real love has no lust involved. And then, we have the great examples.

And now, my dear young people, I have spoken frankly and boldly against the sins of this day. I hope not to give any offense to any person but to make it clear where we stand. Do not ever excuse yourselves, my beloved young friends, in any illicit, illegal, improper, or lustful petting or any of its associations. Remember what the Lord said:

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not commit adultery:

But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust

after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.
(Matthew 5:27-28)

And if there has been lust, repent of it, keep your minds clean,
and convict yourselves of serious evil.

Be wise in the days of your probation; strip yourselves of all un-
cleanness; ask not, that ye may consume it on your lusts, but ask with a
firmness unshaken, that ye will yield to no temptation, but that ye will
serve the true and living God. (Mormon 9:28)

As I close, may I summarize: Love is holy, but lust can be very
evil. Alcohol, tobacco, drugs are evil. Adultery and fornication are
tools of Satan; homosexuality and other forms of perversion are
from the lower world; petting and other physical intimacies are most
destructive sins. Abortion is vicious, and most divorces are inspired
by selfishness. Our final words are those of a prophet:

Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord. (Isaiah 52:11)

Brothers and sisters, we love you; we are proud of you. Most of
you have lived beyond reproach. We are grateful for that. If there are
any who have had problems, they are solvable. We ask the Lord's
blessings upon you all the days of your lives. We love you and leave
with you the blessing of our Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus
Christ. Amen.

