

Sonshine FM
Heather McEwan
Growing Families / Purity Paradigm

25.5.06

Most parents listening would likely agree that we live in a culture **intent on promoting sensuality**.

There's an **ancient love song** most likely written by King Solomon about 3000 years ago (strangely enough called "The Song of Solomon"). It's interesting for a lot of reasons, but my purpose in mentioning it today is to do with a stanza that is considered **significant** enough to be repeated three times throughout.

Speaking to the daughters, it asks them to promise **not to arouse or awaken love** until it's the **right time**.

This verse indicates several things... namely here that it is possible to awaken that side of our selves too early and being that it's a warning not to allow that – there must be some good reasons.

I thought today we would take a look at **just one aspect** of the way our culture awakens 'love'. Whether that 'love' is in an emotional or physical sense hardly matters as they can be equally damaging. There also will **not be a physical expression** unless the **heart/emotions have been led** in that direction, so learning to "guard the heart" is the first step to physical purity.

Possibly the most valuable tip we learned early in our parenting was this... **"BEGIN AS YOU MEAN TO GO"**.

If raising our kids pure is important to us, we as parents need to **gauge everything** we do in accordance with the **end goal** and when we are so **convicted** of the place we are heading (because of love for our children), making those decisions along the way suddenly becomes much easier!

We are better able to live consistent lives when we make our choices by **conviction rather than restriction!**

Television and entertainment is of course a major influence today.

Before I use the word **conservative** I want to cover my bases! I used to equate the word conservative with the word conventional but when we see the meaning of the word 'conserve' and relate that to our kids – it **comes alive**.

Conserve means to protect, preserve, use carefully or sparingly and to avoid waste.

The purpose is **not to squash** a person's sexuality but to be very careful of it **on behalf** of our children – teaching them to manage it well, giving them every reason to do well and choose well. A child's **whole self** is worth every word of that definition!

Some months ago a friend gave me a **newspaper clipping** citing research from the "Rand" research group. This research brought a cheer from the US family groups whose writing I had read previously as this research is already a couple of year old!

This research didn't say anything terribly surprising but it was possibly the first research stating these findings so clearly.

Among other things it showed that adolescents who **watched a lot of TV** with sexual content were twice as likely to initiate intercourse than those who watched the least. It included innuendo, **depictions and implied activity** in its definition of that content.

One catch cry I've heard is that "*you didn't really see anything*" as if that makes it OK. Anyone who watches any amount of TV knows (if they're honest about it) that the **camera angles** etc are often precisely **about** the very thing you are NOT seeing on screen! <http://www.rand.org/health/>

This research shows results for the **most** and **least** TV content but it would have been interesting to see research on teens who saw **no** TV! (There are still some around!!).

Next time you're watching TV just count the number of times in an hour that there will be some form of innuendo or implied activity!

If we still want to cling to TV not affecting choices why do advertisers spend their billions on 30 second commercials!

Personal illustration: Drive in... "Chips ad"

This research is also not talking about what **most people would define as pornography**. Just **regular** TV.

What can parents do?

- Think through where the family level of acceptance has been and if that can be enhanced!
- Set clear limits – the younger the better
- Teach children the skills of discernment and critical thinking in their entertainment (*that's another session*) and
- Teach them to make active decisions.

I return to **conviction**.

Why would I turn off a program that I am mostly enjoying and that the innuendo etc that I say "does not affect me?"

First I would question it having no effect (*that's another session too*)

But secondly because...

- We *are* an example. It might as well be a good one!
- It demonstrates thought, prioritisation, discernment, decision, action, "otherness", value (that which has great value can be greatly DEvalued) - and honour. It's the lack of honour that's the real problem. To an area of Life that should be treated with the ultimate care and respect.

We've made the personal choice **not to have TV** on from Monday to Thurs at all! But here is where conviction for something better kicks in! This decision is **not so much to keep influences out** as it my conviction that **children need to play!** Play is really important and there are just not hours enough in the day to watch afternoon TV and play as well!

The type of play changes according to age and season but they need that down time. Play teaches interaction, initiative, imagination, communication, conflict resolution, contentment, focussing.

I want for our kids to remember climbing trees and splashing in puddles, riding bikes and being creative with REAL people – not watching little people in a box!

What **young people are reading** also matters greatly. There has been a shift to only caring THAT kids are reading and less to caring WHAT they are reading! I'd ask the question... do you know what your children are reading???

I'd like to encourage these groups of people... (much crossover between these groupings)

Dads.

Fill your children with confidence and security that you really believe sexuality is to be cherished, respected honoured and protected.

Mums

Use the TV wisely. Plan it and choose it only around the more important things of the day. I'm not saying that all TV is bad – just that we need to exercise care and think long term facing the fact that that sometimes that means not doing what's easiest. There are times when we lean on the telly for babysitting – but more often through videos chosen with care and in time slots that are either not delaying them from more important things (like play) or that are helpful to me... gaps after bath time till dinner...sickness... preparation...

Those new to this thinking

Consider your hearts goals for your family and set your course accordingly. Explain, teach discernment, apologise if needed, don't leave a void – replace, and baton down the hatches and prepare to stick to your new course!

Those who think this is 'old hat'

It's dangerous to be complacent and think we've 'made it'. Stay open to continuing assessment of what you family accepts and continue renewing your mind. Also understand that others are coming to a standard from a different place than you and consequently their course may look different to yours.

Those feeling things are pear shaped

Keep your eyes on the goal. Be faithful to what you know is right and best. Stay informed about your kids lives – friends, where they go who they're with and what they do, their school viewing and reading, their interests. Don't give in to getting tired and don't ever give up

WEB VERSION
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