

# The Birds and the Bees

BY REV. DR. GARY ZIEROTH



## Who is teaching sex education to your child? You or someone else?

I remember the day very well. At the dinner table, my father said he wanted to talk to me about something important after we finished eating. We went up to my bedroom. I sat on the edge of my bed, and Dad sat across from me. He was about to give me “the talk,” information on the birds and the bees. He started out with the words, “When a man and a woman deeply love each other and get married, God willing, they will be blessed with children.” He then made motions with his hands explaining to me the way the male and female body parts worked together, how the sperm joined the egg and nine months later ... a baby. Wow! This was all very new to me.

At the end of the speech, he asked me if I had any questions. I didn't. I was still trying to comprehend this new information. But my parents wanted to be the first to explain it to us children, and they wanted to explain it right.

We did not live in a vacuum back in those days. We watched TV and movies. Mom and Dad regulated all that. It was the 1960s, and the sexual revolution was in full swing. Playboy magazine had been out for 15 years, sex was commercialized in the entertainment industry and the birth control pill was approved by the FDA. Now you could have sex without having to worry about the “burden” of having children. In San Francisco, the new culture of “free love” was emerging and “hippies” preached the power of love and the beauty of sex outside of cultural norms. The legalization of no-fault divorce and abortion were soon to follow.

My parents were feeling the strain of a rapidly changing cultural landscape, and other adults are feeling the same today. The biggest fear back then was the same as it is today: Who is teaching what to my child?

Today, as in the 1960s, children are exposed to many things about adult life that we wish could be deferred or even avoided altogether. Your child may ask, “Mommy, what does being gay mean?” The challenge to parents and other teachers is to inoculate our children spiritually, to instruct them biblically, to help them understand

and be protected by godly knowledge in Jesus Christ. We must recognize that younger and younger children are interacting with homosexual persons, themes and issues and are naturally confused and curious about them. So if your child asks this question, answer, “Being gay means that two people of the same sex have chosen to love each other in the way that God planned for a man and a woman to love each other. That is, two men or two women have chosen to love each other in this way.” If your child asks, “Why are some people gay?” you can answer, “We really don't understand why some people act this way. Sadly, some people choose to disobey what God and the Bible say is right.”

Letting your children know what the Bible says about homosexual acts is important. Even though the many influences of same-sex attraction and drive are complex, and many struggle with these feelings, engaging in homosexual behavior is a chosen activity. Children should be told that homosexual behavior is biblically and morally wrong. As with any sexual sin, when a person chooses to please himself rather than God, he is committing a sin.

But more importantly, the Bible makes it clear that God, in Christ, can change the behavior of all who act contrary to His will, including the behavior of homosexuals. He works this change, first by leading us to acknowledge before Him all our sin, and then by bringing us the sweet news of full and free forgiveness in Christ. This Good News of Christ, which can be applied personally over and over through Confession and Absolution, is God's power to heal and to change us. “Let him turn to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon” (Is. 55:7).

It is important to teach your children that God loves everyone. Teach them not to engage in hate speech or make coarse jokes about those who struggle with same-sex attraction. Encourage them to show how Jesus loved and related to everyone, that He loves us but does not like the things that we do that are wrong. Remind them that Jesus became a man, died and rose again to do what we couldn't and to keep the Law in our place to forgive all of us!

Perhaps it is time to have that talk with your son or daughter now ... after dinner ... upstairs in the bedroom. And may God bless your conversation as you do.

## Is your child's school system reinforcing what you, as a parent, want your children to learn about sexuality?

The New York City Department of Education, for example, has mandated that every school teach a semester of sex education beginning in the sixth grade. As part of this *Reducing the Risk* sex education program, the children are taught how to use condoms, which includes a shopping trip to the local condom vendor to understand the different varieties and usages. Our young people shouldn't be taught how to reduce the risk; they should be taught how to avoid it!

Why should we think that the government knows better than parents what to say to children about sex and when? Sex education in our society began as a social movement, and it remains a social movement. Its goal is for students to be open to just about any form of sexual expression. Sex education in the public schools is less about preventing disease and more about sexual freedom, or really, sexual license. It's about changing society, one child at a time. The fight for our children's faith today isn't about disease; it's about biblical understanding and morality.

## For more information, read:

### Failure of Sex Education

by Linda Bartlett

Two models for sex education exist. One is God's model of purity, chastity and modesty. The other is the humanist model as designed by Alfred Kinsey and used by Planned Parenthood and others. Which model is your school using?

### Love, Sex and God (boys' and girls' editions)

by Bill Ameiss

Older teens need to learn to respect their sexuality and to understand its proper place in their lives. This book encourages confidence and restraint while addressing issues such as dating and premarital sex.



## A BIBLE STUDY FOR

## The Birds and the Bees

PREPARED BY THE GOD'S GIFT OF SEXUALITY TASK FORCE



## Focusing on the Issue

Read “The Birds and the Bees.”

Begin the discussion by asking one or more of these questions:

1. Why do parents have such difficulty discussing sex and sexuality with their children?
2. What do you recall your parents telling you about “the birds and the bees”?
3. What resources have you used in teaching your children about sex? Were they helpful?
4. Do you think the church should help you teach your children about sex? If so, how?

## Focusing on the Article

Ask participants to verbalize their thoughts on the article. As they speak, record their thoughts on chart paper or some other board. Don't interrupt or suggest that any of the thoughts are wrong. Just allow people to share their ideas.

## Focusing on God's Word

1. Read Matt. 28:19–20. Does “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” include God's teaching on sex and sexuality? If so, why is the majority of teaching so negative? Didn't God create the gift of sexuality and sex?
2. True or false: Teaching children about sex is a form of child abuse. (Believe it or not, some people — even in religious circles — would suggest that it is a form of child abuse! Such thinking is certainly unscriptural.)
3. To prevent our teaching from being totally negative, what things should be taught about the gift that helps our children celebrate who they are sexually? (See Gen. 1:27–28, 31; assorted verses in Song of Songs, such as 3:1 and 7:10–11; and Heb. 13:4.) Since children learn from stories, what stories might parents share with them about the beauty of marriage?
4. The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health has shown that young people who make abstinence pledges substantially delay the initiation of sexual activity, have fewer sexual partners, are more likely to marry and have lower rates of out-of-wedlock births. How might the church facilitate such pledges?
5. Read 1 Cor. 13:4–8. Use these verses to define for our children what true love is. Make two columns — “What love is” and “What love is not” — and write down your answers.

In what way can the church, of all institutions, best teach children about sex? Including the fact that the church knows the creator and inventor of sex, why does grace and mercy — forgiveness — play such an important role in teaching? Offer a prayer of thanksgiving for children and the privilege a parent has in teaching them all things, including what God says about the gift of sexuality.