

Telling a Better Story About Human Sexuality

1. The Carnage of the Sexual Revolution

- Louise Perry: feminist case vs sexual revolution¹
- Sexual assault and rape
- The damage casual sex does to women
- People as products
- Pornography,
 - sex trafficking, under-age girls, drug abuse
 - Male impotence due to porn use
 - Reduced ability to empathise
 - Ever decreasing 'returns', ever more degraded desires.
- Slavery to lusts
 - Eliud Kipchoge: 'Only the disciplined in life are free. If you are undisciplined you are a slave to your moods and your passions.'
- Broken marriages and families; damage to children
- Abortion
 - 209,817 in 2020 in England and Wales. Highest ever. 18.2 per 1000 women.
 - World Health Organisation Statistics²
 - 73 million induced abortions p.a.
 - 55.4 million deaths of any cause p.a.
- The Sorcerer's Apprentice...
- A ruined city
 - Almost impossible to understand and love the real reality of human sexuality

¹ See Perry, *Case Against the Sexual Revolution*.

² <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/abortion>; <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/the-top-10-causes-of-death>.

- The Challenge: How to recover in our imaginations the sense of the loveliness of the innocence, security and wonder of Gen 2:23, 25?
- And how to recover a sense of the tragedy of Gen 3:7-8?

2. Components of a Better Story

- There is such a thing as reality and it's really real
- Learning to pay loving attention to reality and to grow to love it

Why do you have a body?

Why do you have sexual organs?

Why is sex pleasurable?

How would our culture answer these questions? How would you answer these questions?

2.1 Bodies

- A human person is a body
 - I don't merely *have* a body; I *am* a body
 - Crashing into your car vs running over your foot...
 - Non-reductionist (humans are body-soul unity)
 - Established in creation
 - Gen 2:5-7
 - Eternally confirmed in the resurrection
 - 1 Cor 15

- Not merely a soul, or an “I” temporarily linked with a body
- Nor an “I”, a “self” arbitrarily trapped in a body
- Not merely a biological organism or machine
- The human body is fully personal
 - Your face and eyes

2.2 Bodies in Creation: Your Body (Yourself) as a Gift

- Your body (your whole self) is a good gift from God
- Your body (your whole self) as male or female is a good gift from God
- God gave you this gift so you would give yourself sexually
 - Fully (which includes permanent in this life)
 - Reciprocally
 - To your spouse...
 - ...and for the sake of children
- Stable loving families, rooted in stable loving marriages are the foundation for stable loving societies

[Marriage is] a pattern of human fulfilment which serves the wider end of enabling procreation to occur in a context of affection and loyalty³

- Also true for celibate people...

2.3 The Effects of Sin

- Lust and shame *shatter* the communion of persons which is the deepest meaning of our male and female bodies
- Shame: Adam and Eve hide (Gen 3:7-11)

³ Oliver O’Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order* (2nd edition; Leicester: Apollos, 1994), 69.

- They hide their sexuality from one another, but also in covering themselves instinctively express it
- Sexual shame as hiding our vulnerabilities from each other
- Therefore:
 - Instead of giving ourselves fully and reciprocally to another person as a *person*, we *use* other people's *bodies* for our own gratification
- Pornography: 'an assemblage of body parts'
 - Reducing men (and especially women) to just body parts
 - Reducing the user to just a couple of body parts

2.4 What About Singleness?

- 'Singleness' an odd term...suggests isolation/separation from others
 - Virginity, Chastity, Continence
- Marriage roots our sexuality in creation
- Virginity points to its transformation in the resurrection
 - Sexual purity bears witness to our glorious hope!
 - Continence for the kingdom of heaven (Matt 19:11f)
 - Celibacy in this life is a sign of the life to come
- What will resurrected life be like?
 - No marrying and giving in marriage (Mk 12:25)

- Marriage and procreation belong exclusively to this world

- And yet, we shall be raised, bodily, as male and female

- And, together, as the bride of Christ, we will give ourselves (body and soul) fully to God in union and communion when we see him face to face

- We will give ourselves (including our bodies) fully to the Saviour who gave his body fully for and to us

- In this way, we'll discover in the fullest possible way the true meaning of our bodies as mutual, personal gift

Further Reading

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* Zanchi, Girolamo. *The Spiritual Marriage between Christ and His Church and Every One of the Faithful*. Translated by Patrick J. O'Banion. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2021.