

The Great Sin of Our Generation

by Deacon Emmanuel Stamatiou

During the 1960's and 1970's parents were particularly cautious to ensure that their daughters did not engage in sex before marriage. This message did not seem to apply equally to their sons. This difference and inconsistency in standards is peculiar. Today, if what is heard is to be believed, young people of both sexes are engaging in casual sex and sexual relationships outside of marriage. Sex outside marriage is considered a serious sin in the Orthodox Church. A pure and virgin state is essential for both males and females before marriage. Today, sexual freedom appears to be accepted by some with little regard to what the Church has to say on this matter. Married persons who indulge in sexual activity outside the blessed marriage also commit a serious sin. If someone is not Orthodox and does not wish to practice the faith then what can we say to these people who willingly or through ignorance continue to live in darkness. But for those who have been Baptised Orthodox who hear the word of God and continue to pursue this sinful path then there is a grave danger of the loss of their soul unless they repent. The precondition for repentance is a heart felt sorrow which pierces every aspect of a person's being. It is a sorrow of great magnitude with the realisation or living contrary to the Will of God.

St. Paul said to the Corinthians, "godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death". We must let go of our passions which tie us to short lived earthly pleasures and the destruction of the soul and replace these with a longing for all that is good and heavenly in order to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

What St. Paul has to say

"For this is the Will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality: that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honour..." (1 Thess. 4:3).

Remember that Baptism joins us with Christ. As is chanted in our Church during the Baptismal and Chrismation service in the words of St. Paul "As many as have been Baptised in Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27).

As our body has been joined with Christ we are one with Him. Our body houses the Holy Spirit.

To the Corinthians St. Paul writes "Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body" (1 Corinth 6:13).

"Flee from sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?" (1 Corinth. 6:18).

Parents from a very young age instruct your children by your good example in regard to these matters. Ensure that virginity is highly valued and preserved so that the

Marriage is blessed as a Holy Institution from which the fruits in turn continue to hear the word of God in an unbroken chain of living Truth as is the Church.

Wherever we fall short, let us be filled with sorrow and seek the forgiveness and mercy of our Lord.

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