

5- Sexuality Redeemed and Renewed



The Son, the Eternal Word of God, came to us clothed in the complete human nature, that is, with a perfect human body and a perfect human spirit. The divine nature and human nature were united in the Lord Jesus and divine life was able to flow into human nature for the first time since the fall. Without this, human nature could not have been delivered from the bondage of sin, healed from the scars of sin, reconciled to God, or to have the Spirit within it.

What happened to the believer through the marvelous redemption was diametrically opposed to what had happened to him at the fall.

We will try to reveal how the Lord Jesus redeemed man with all his various attributes including sexuality. We will learn that sexuality has entered the baptismal font and been anointed with the Holy Chrism. It was purified and elevated to serve human life and to renew it.

The Characteristics of the Believer after Redemption:

1- The Integration of the Individual:

The individual (**both man and woman**) has returned to God's embrace and the wall of enmity with God has disappeared. The believer is open to God through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (*1Cor. 6:19*) through Whom, the corrupt nature of the believer is removed (**the old man**) through the sacrament of baptism (*Rom. 6:4-6*). The deformities caused by man's separation from God disappear, the imprint of sin vanishes, and the fractures and tears in his spirit are healed. The Holy Spirit works in the believer who returns to God with all his heart and the individual who was divided becomes whole. The conflicts that raged in his depth become lighter and the Christian (**whether male or female**) becomes a whole and integrated individual who desires God with all his mind (**intellect**), emotions (**heart**), and his strength. He becomes a vessel for the Holy Spirit within him and a member in the sacramental Body of Christ (*1Cor. 6:15*). The Holy Spirit bears the fruits of genuine divine life within him (*Gal. 5:22*), so that it is not restricted to self but extends beyond "**self**" to others in a practical, generous, and sacrificing love. Through redemption, the divided individual becomes a whole person through the work of the Holy Spirit, on condition he really repents and truly believes.

2- The Integration of the Human Entity:

In the beginning, God created humans as two halves or two genders, a man and a woman who complement each other (*Gen. 5:1*). The two united in love were changed into two hostile halves after the love and unity between them were lost. Each turned in on himself or herself and the "**we**" fellowship was lost to be replaced by the isolation of the "**I**". However, the redemption of Christ began with the reconciliation of the individual to God, followed by the reconciliation of the individual with himself. It extended to a reconciliation of the two halves of humanity, the man and woman through the additional work of the Holy Spirit in the awesome sacrament of marriage in which the young believers who have been reconciled to God together begin their walk in the path of salvation towards eternity.

During the sacrament of marriage, the two believers bow under the priest's hand; they are anointed with holy oil, and are breathed upon with the breath of the Holy Spirit. Thus they become "**one whole complete human**", that is they become one human Christian entity. They become a sacramental invisible "**one flesh**" through the work of the Holy Spirit. "**So then they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no man separate**" (*Mt. 19:6*).

In the sacrament of marriage, we catch a glimpse of the recreation of the "**human**" the way he was first created at the beginning. Just as God brought Eve to Adam (*Gen. 2:22*) and blessed them (*Gen. 1:28*), so the

priest presents the bride to the groom and blesses them so that they become one unique married Christian entity. God then looks upon their union and sees that it is very good as He did before the fall because through this union, the Christian couple achieve what the first couple, that is Adam and Eve, failed at, which is pleasing God and obeying His commands.

We have to notice something important here. The reconciliation of man and woman after redemption is not restricted to the sacrament of marriage, but is the reconciliation of all believers regardless of gender in general through the return of a pure attitude to sexuality and the restoration of equality between men and women, in perfect accordance with God's original plan.

Characteristics of Sexuality after the fall:

Because Christ has redeemed man and renewed human nature with all its attributes, so was sexuality, an important component of human nature and one of its vital abilities, which affects the mind, the emotions, behavior, ethics and values. To the extent that the Holy Spirit's work is intensified in the believer's depths, sexuality is purified and cleansed, gradually growing into its original state of purity. The Holy Spirit's work in the true believer is accompanied by freedom from selfishness and the desire to domineer⁽ⁱ⁾ and bestows on him real love (*Gal. 5:22*). Love is the only force that can free sexuality from the grip of the "ego" and make it serve the life of man, directing it to the building of the perfect Christian personality. Sexuality that is motivated by Christian tenets contributes to the maturity and stability of the mind, schools the emotions and makes them stable. It leads to social, behavioral, and ethical development. It can transcend the restricted sphere of gender relationship to enrich human relationships in general. It can also ascend towards God, leading to a complete consecration of life to God through celibacy and service in His kingdom.

The renewal of the believer's nature necessarily includes the renewal of sexuality which possesses numerous characteristics, the most important of **which are**:

1- The Sanctification of the Believer's Sexual Tendencies and Motives:

When the believer's nature was renewed by the Holy Spirit, all his tendencies, motives, disposition, behavior, attitudes to others including members of the opposite sex were also renewed. The mind (**intellect**) is purified and renewed (*Rom. 12:2*), the emotions are directed away from self to others and love (agape) frees the Christian from the control of the ego. The will turns to what is right and submits itself to God's will, accepting His commandments with joy. The believer's daily desires express his profound personal longing for God. "**Your face, Lord, I will seek**" (*Ps. 27:8*) The believer can only experience inner peace and rest in God who is the only desire that man will never regret getting and without Whom no one can find repose.

Natural instincts in the believers are refined and sanctified. For example, the instinct to find food is no longer an aim but a means, the instinct of self-preservation is directed towards eternal life for "**For here we have no continuing city but seek the one to come**" (*Heb. 13:14*). The sexual instinct is also schooled, refined, and delivered from egotism to return to its original purpose, which is the service of others. It was never created to serve the individual but rather the family; it was not created for sensual gratification or selfish pleasures, but the sexual instinct is an "**other**" energy⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ that impels the individual towards others, to serve them and make sacrifices for their sakes. It impels him to serve his family, sacrificing his own rest in order to take care of his children. The sexual instinct is an "**other**" instinct all down the line; changing it into a "**self**" instinct is to pervert it.

Consequently, the believer thinks chastely about sexual matters. He has a pure attitude to the other sex and sees him/her as a valuable person, not as a body that will give him him/her sexual pleasure. His emotions are pure in sexual matters, for he considers sex as a clean capability that God has bestowed on man to use, like all other capabilities, for the sake of others and not for one's own sake. Christian marriage is viewed as a Christian way of life; the marital relationship is a giving one and evidence of exalted love.

Distorted sexual tendency (**sexual** lust) is converted into pure sexual tendency. The believer is able to exploit this tendency to build and develop a mature, sociable, integrated Christian personality. He has the spiritual ability to direct this tendency towards marital chastity to the advantage of love and marital union and for the purpose of forming a family. Or he can put it to the service of a consecrated celibate life where this tendency is sublimated and developed through special divine grace into a chaste celibate life and union with God.

2- The Restoration of the Original Purpose of Sexuality in the Believer:

The original purpose of sexuality as God intended it to be was the integration of man, which embraces transcendental love and union of the spouses through cooperation and sharing of their loves together. Their integration is manifested by the appearance of a child who is an expression of their love and union together, confirming that they are one.

The fall changed the purpose of sexuality, making its principal aim the begetting of offspring and preservation of man from sin. It emptied sexuality of its sublime unifying dimension because selfishness had now become a component of human nature. Christ's redemption restored to sexuality its original beauty and Christian marriage became the means to the new human integration that can only be founded on genuine Christian love (**agape**) and sacramental marital union (**one flesh**). A child is meaningless if he is merely the fruit of a physical relationship; otherwise, the only difference between a child of an adulterous affair and a legitimate child would be the absence of legality!

We notice that celibacy flourished after the redemption. Previously, in the Old Testament, it had been extremely rare.

The Concept of Celibacy:

The concept of sexuality was broadened in the New Testament. Sexuality for the Christian was no longer limited to marriage and marriage was no longer its sole purpose. For some, it rose to the level of spiritual marriage, with a special inner motive and was the result of a clear divine call. We find a believer who, instead of serving only his family, opens up in love to all, serving and making sacrifices for all. Celibacy therefore arose in order that life might be consecrated to God. This is evident in the lives of St. John and St. Paul the apostles and subsequently in monasticism where celibacy arises out of the desire to be totally dedicated to God and not out of a desire to escape from the responsibilities of marriage and a family.

Celibacy, therefore, the elevation of sexuality to the level of spiritual marriage in response to a special inner call, cannot be appropriated by an individual except if God calls him to it. When the Lord Jesus said that there should be no divorce, His disciples said to him that if divorce was to be so difficult, maybe an individual should not get married at all (*Mt. 19:10*). The Lord told them: "**All cannot accept this saying** (not to marry) **but only those to whom it has been given. For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother's womb**, (were born with congenital defects) **and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs** (have voluntarily) **chosen not to marry for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it**" (*Mt. 19:12,12*).

3- The Restoration of the Original Relationship between Man and Woman:

When man and woman were first created by God (**before the fall**), they were on an equal footing "**I will make him a helper comparable to him**" (*Gen. 2:18*). After the fall, woman became servile to man because of sin; "**your husband... shall rule over you**" (*Gen. 3:16*). However, through the redemption of Christ, the equality between man and woman was restored; "**Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man in the Lord**" (*1 Cor. 11:11*). "**There is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ**" (*Gal. 3:28*). In married life, "**The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but he wife does**" (*1 Cor. 7:4*).

The reason equality was lost and man became domineering is the absence of the first spiritual law which did not discriminate between them and which united them in love. Natural law prevailed and stipulated that the physically stronger should control the weaker. When sin was swallowed up through the wonderful work of redemption and man and woman were reconciled to God through faith and reconciled with the “**other**” having obtained a clean heart, the first spiritual law united them in love again and the woman again became comparable to man, his equal and his peer.

In the Christian life, man looked at woman with Christian love in his heart and saw in her a free and valuable human being, important in herself, worthy of respect for her uniqueness. His realization that she is his equal now accompanied the Christian love that was poured into his heart through the Holy Spirit. This feeling is conveyed to the Christian woman who feels man is her equal without forgetting to be willingly submissive to her husband, not out of fear or humiliation, but out of love and respect for him just as the church submits to Christ of its free will (*Eph. 5: 22-24*). At the same time, the love with which the man treats his wife does not do away with the fact that he is the head of his wife (*Eph. 5:23*). That is, he is the leader of the family without being oppressive or a dictator or infringing upon his wife’s liberty, exactly as Christ is the head of the church in love, not dictating to or restricting the freedom of the members of the church.

4- The Restoration of a Healthy Attitude to Human Sexuality:

In the Old Testament, the body and its secretions were considered impure because it was believed that it is in the body that the sinful desires and wishes buried in the heart were realized and satisfied. The body expresses the spirit’s lusts and puts them into effect. However, when the spirit returned to God’s embrace, its defects removed, and a new nature granted it through the redemption of Christ, the body of the Christian became the outer temple which holds the pure spirit. It now expresses its sanctified desires and its pure tendencies. The body was purified through redemption and there is, therefore, no further need for the outer purification practiced in the Old Testament since the inner man has been purified by the Holy Spirit. The members of the body have become “*instruments of righteousness to God*” (*Rom. 6:13*).

Accordingly, there is a pure attitude towards the sexual secretions of the body, whether of the man or woman. Once the spirit has been cleansed of the impurity that was associated with these secretions and we are now able to free our hearts from selfishness and lust through the Holy Spirit, the negative connotation of these secretions vanished from the Christian life. They no longer emanated from the body of a person who was separated from God as was the case in the Old Testament or as is the case in the unbeliever. They now emanate from a Christian who is reconciled to God and who is at the same time the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. This is corroborated by an important Christian principle, the reconciliation between matter and spirit, between the divine and the physical, and between the eternal and the immortal with the temporary and worldly. This was made clear in the Divine Incarnation when the Son, the Eternal Word, took our material human nature (*1Tim. 3:16*). Thus our nature and our body with all its members and secretions were blessed and sanctified through the Son and God’s union with us.

5- The Restorations of the Original Conception of Pregnancy and Birth:

The concept of pregnancy and giving birth in God’s original plan meant the extension of life towards a life of eternity and immortality since a spiritual and physical eternity had been prepared for man. When death entered the soul of man, he was separated from God, and when it entered his body, he was headed inevitably for the grave. Because of the fall, the purpose of conception and birth was to compensate for man’s death and to replace his immortality with a temporal existence through his continuity in the form of children and grandchildren. That is why it became very important in the Old Testament to have children (**sons**) who would carry the family name; that is why barrenness produced a great unhappiness. This is also why polygamy appeared in the Old Testament, for the increase of offspring (*Gen. 6:13*).

When Christ redeemed the world, procreation once more was put into the service of eternity and immortality. The kingdom we lost because of the fall was regained through redemption. Marriage in the

church has become fertile ground in which faith, love, and holiness grow. That is, a generation grows leading a genuine Christian life and heading towards the kingdom of heaven.

Giving birth in the Old Testament was linked to spiritual and physical pain and was a result of sin; “*in pain you shall bring forth your children*” (*Gen. 3:16*). Woman in the New Testament, on the other hand, even though she experiences physical pain in childbirth “*nevertheless will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness with self-control*” (*1Tim. 2:15*). That is why the Christian mother gives birth to her children with joy for she is not bringing them into the world to death but to eternal life. She takes them and presents them to the Church where they receive the second birth through water and the Spirit (*Jn. 3:5*) so that they enjoy eternal life if they keep the faith. The expression “*she shall be saved in childbearing*” means that after redemption the marriage of a woman and her childbearing go hand in hand with her salvation and that of her home as long as she keeps the faith.

Thus, we see that the concept of pregnancy and childbearing were changed after Christ. Marriage has become a path to a shared salvation and children appear to reveal more members of Christ “*the Church*” (*Eph. 5:3*) which includes visible members on earth who gradually advance until they join the invisible members until the number of the believers is complete. Thus the offspring are on their way to the kingdom.

There is therefore no need to cling to the Old Testament ideas about procreation. The importance of sons in order to preserve the family name and to ensure its continuity on earth has ended with the equality of sons and daughters, men and women, in duties and privileges and in all the opportunities of life. An end was put to polygamy for the sake of offspring (*Gen. 16:2*) in Christianity and monogamy was restored as in the beginning because the value of offspring gained a spiritual dimension. That is, what was important now was not to beget the greatest number of children possible to ensure the continuity of the family, but to beget the best prepared for immortality in the kingdom of heaven.

6- *The Restoration of the Spirituality of Marriage:*

We have seen how the integration of the individual was achieved by redemption, and that of the human entity through the sacrament of marriage in which the believers, man and woman, are joined into one whole Christian entity.

All the negative consequences of the fall that befell marriage now disappeared after redemption. Christianity now has restored the integrity of marriage that is built on real love (**agape**), and comparability (**equality**) between the spouses. In Christian marriage, sexual lust (**distorted sexual tendency**) was replaced by a pure sexual tendency whose aim is not to achieve pleasure for itself, but which contributes to marital union in which the two are now one complete human entity “*one flesh*” (*Mt. 19:5*). The purpose of marriage is no longer procreation to ensure the temporary continuity of man on earth, but married love is crowned by a child who transcends the first birth which casts him to the grave to reach the second birth (**baptism**) of water and the Spirit (*Jn. 3:4*) which leads to eternal life. Marriage is thus the way to the heavenly kingdom.

Christian marriage is a restoration of the original monogamous marriage where there was no separation of the one flesh (*Mt. 19:7-9*), that is no divorce in contrast to the divorce which occurred in the Old Testament only if the man wished it (*Deut. 24:1*). Moreover, the original pure attitude to the body was restored because the soul which impelled the body to sin was now cleansed. The body had now become the temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (*1 Cor. 6:19*).

The attitude to the marital relationship was also converted from considering it only a physical union to considering it an expression of love, agape, and a model of sacrifice and giving, where selfishness and egotism had no place. The marital relationship in Christianity became pure because hearts were now pure. “*Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled*” (*Heb. 13:4*). This is because the Old Testament links works and the condition of the heart. An act is impure if it emanates from a lustful heart although the same act can be sanctified if the heart is pure and clean. This is the great difference between the Old Testament attitude to marriage as impure (*Lev. 15:16-18*) because of man's separation from God, even

among the prophets, and the Christian attitude to the marital relation as pure and clean. It is a union in “*one flesh*”, established by God and therefore not to be dissolved (*Mt. 19: 4-6*). The purity of this relationship is derived from the state of the hearts of the believing spouses who take Christ as their beloved God.

Thus, we see how God created a pure clean sexuality, how it was distorted when man fell, how it was made pure for us through redemption, and how the pure attitude to sexual matters was restored when we were given the Holy Spirit Who grants us chastity and love (*Gal. 5:22,23*). We also see how purity was restored to marriage, and how man and woman became comparable, completing and loving each other and united in a pure Christian entity.



6- Sexuality and Daily Life



We often hear the repeated cries of young people asking: “**Why does God allow us to suffer from sexual pressures? Is He not the one who created in us the sexual instinct? Are not these impulses we feel normal? How can God then ask us to postpone their expression in a long deprivation which we would be better off without? We find it hard to resist the insistent demands of desire, and sometimes a man thinks of marriage as a way of escape and a release of this energy!**”.

In order to explain this issue fully, we have to discuss and assess some of the concepts expressed in the young people’s cries.

Fundamental Truths:

- 1- In man, in contrast to animals, it is not enough to mature sexually in order to lead a normal life; this must be accompanied by psychological maturity. Thus, sexual maturity can be defined as the maturation of both physical and psychological sexuality. God’s divine wisdom in this is that the purpose of human sexuality in general is to prepare the individual for family life. Mere physical maturity is not enough to assume its responsibilities and burdens.
- 2- Physical sexual maturity takes place a number of years before psychological sexual maturity. The reason is that psychological sexual maturity does not happen suddenly but needs constant and repeated interaction with others through which the individual gradually goes out of himself to learn how to give to and make sacrifices for others, foregoing some of his personal needs for the sake of others. This goes hand by hand with understanding his own inner sexual feelings on the one hand, and the nature of sexuality on the other. This naturally requires enough time so that mental, emotional, social, and spiritual maturation can also be achieved, for they all contribute to psychological maturity, which takes a long time, extending from childhood through adolescence to adulthood.
- 3- Sometimes psychological sexual maturity is appreciably delayed in spite of an individual’s attaining adulthood. This is probably due to the delay in emotional development for the individual’s emotions remain childish. He pities and indulges himself, and does not want to expend it on behalf of other; he prefers to gratify it by giving it all the pleasures it desires without thinking of making others happy. Psychological sexual growth takes another path. Instead of sexual energy being expended in order to give others (**the “I” giving the “other”**), it takes advantage of the pleasure that accompanies sexual activity to gratify itself (**the “I” taking from the “other”**). This doubtless leads to a delay in the achievement of psychological sexual maturity.
- 4- When sexual energy is restricted within the bounds of the ego, man’s sexual life consists of consumption instead of being a life of giving love, whether before or after marriage. Before marriage, his attitude to the opposite sex is sensual; that is, he sees the other as something to be possessed for self-gratification. After marriage, the same attitude prevails and his/her partner is a means of finding pleasure (**not an end in him/ herself**), a means he/she exploits for his/her own purposes. Marriage is neither an escape from sexual difficulties nor a solution to the sexual pressures that young people are subject to except if the sexual hardships serve to lead to the individual’s maturity, making him fit for the sacrificing life of marriage. Then marriage is not merely a release from sexual pressures but becomes an extension of the life of love and giving which the young person was accustomed to before marriage, and which made him/her capable of assu-ming the responsibilities of marriage and a family.

The Concept of Sexual Hardship:

Sexual hardship is a state of psychological and physical disturbance that begins with the onset of puberty when the sexual hormones first explode bringing with them emotions and feelings for the opposite sex. There are many mood swings and in general there is a special inclination towards the opposite sex, oftentimes changing into sensual desire that soon converts the “**other**” from a person to be loved and lived with into a mere body for selfish gratification.

From this results a conflict (**difficulties or hardships**) within the young person, a conflict between two desires:

1- The desire to unite with the other which can only be attained through sanctified marriage. This needs to be sublimated towards the love of others and not be limited to one particular person. This is known as general love through which an individual is united to others intellectually and spiritually through social life and the church.

2- The desire to possess and use which considers the other’s body as something to be enjoyed. This conflicts with the desire to unite with the other.

If an individual is inclined towards the first desire, he becomes spiritually and emotionally mature, that is, real love matures and leads to his developing a stable personality. On the other hand, if he tends towards the second desire, he remains spiritually and emotionally childish, and continues to burn⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾.

Sexual hardship is thus linked with the normal growth of the individual and through it, he can adapt to the numerous physical, intellectual, and emotional changes that he undergoes as well as the changes that result from his relationship with others (**social development**). When we realize that the formation of the personality needs difficulties, the hardship of going beyond self, we soon realize that sexual maturation, if it takes the right path, will give great impetus to the development of the personality and will contribute to its stability, its formation, and maturity. Thus, sexual difficulties are necessary for psychological and character maturity on condition that these difficulties are exploited in a healthy way, that is, on condition the energy engendered by the hardship is deflected from the ego and directed to love of and openness to others.

How to Cope with Sexual Difficulties:

We must not interpret the expression “**sexual difficulties**” to mean the painful psychological pressures that tear a person apart, but it must be understood as a symptom of a distress that afflicts a soul that seeks growth and maturity. This depends on the way we cope with sexual difficulties, for we could find release through selfish gratification and thus pervert our sexual energy from the love for which God had designed it and thus delay psychological maturity. We could also put our sexual life on the path of real love and thus grow psychologically; personality thus matures and becomes integrated. We put up with the hardship for the sake of achieving maturity; we also bear it for Christ’s sake and out of love for Him. Thus we achieve continuous spiritual growth.

Oftentimes, young people deal with sexual stresses in such a way as to hinder their healthy psychological development when they try to find release in self-induced arousal^(iv) or through adultery. These are failed and futile attempts to relieve the intensity of the stresses. If we, however, bear the hardship, attempting to go out of ourselves, seeking true love, and depending on the power of the Holy Spirit, we will discover that the difficulties are gradually alleviated to the extent that we gradually attain psychological maturity and a balanced personality. Thus, the difficulties gradually diminish opening up the way for genuine love to flower in our hearts.

These difficulties the young people experience are part of a normal process through which all who have matured have passed. They are necessary for the building of love for and relations with others. Young people will find themselves faced with the option of choosing to be imprisoned in self or to give of oneself. As a young person trains himself to love and give, he approaches maturity.

Selflessness is a prerequisite of maturation. This can be attained through the refusal to waste sexual energy outside the framework of love or to treat the opposite sex lightly by changing them into mere bodies

from which pleasure is derived. The highest human values are esteem for members of the opposite sex and a respect for their freedom as well as serving the needy and making sacrifices for them. All these doubtless help in escaping from the domination of the “ego” and in growing in loving, giving, and sacrificing. Without all these there can be no genuinely Christian marriage. A person can only reach perfect love, “agape”, if the spirit of true love, that is, the Holy Spirit is poured into his heart and comes to dwell within our temples (*1Cor. 6:19*) and works in our depths. We have to obey God with all our hearts and offer sincere repentance, and we will enjoy the Christian love that transforms the hardship into a power for personal and spiritual growth that surpasses what we can think of or imagine.

Delayed Marriage and Sexual Difficulties :

Young people are subject to sexual pressures because sexual feelings for the opposite sex develop before they reach the age of marriage. Hormones from the sexual glands begin to flow before the age of fifteen whereas twenty is generally the age of marriage, and that is often delayed because of complicated social and economic factors.

It is clear that the age of marriage is increasing as a result of economic and social pressures, thus prolonging the period before marriage and this entails psychological and sexual distress.

In rural societies, for instance, young people often marry as soon as the signs of physical maturity appear. Social conditions in the countryside are different from urban areas since there are no housing crisis, no elaborate arrangements, and no special preparations to set up a home. This leads to the frequency of early marriage and to the incompatibility of the immature spouses who most probably have not attained sufficient maturity. Early marriage is thus not a solution to the problems of youth that result from the misuse of sexual energy, for the marriage of immature young people will lead to other kinds of marital problems that can sometimes be complicated.

Many mistakenly believe that the marriage of a profligate will guarantee his reformation and his virtue. It is as though they have diverted him from playing fast and loose within a socially rejected context to playing fast and loose in a socially acceptable context. A licentious youth is unstable and emotionally immature. That is why a mature love is important for young people prior to marriage so that they can give their wedded partners love generously.

We can therefore ascertain that marriage at an older age gives the individual a greater opportunity to achieve a fully developed personality that is socially, emotionally, and spiritually mature, on condition the young people make the most of this time to develop their intellect, establish good relationships with others and grow spiritually.

It is evident that the age at a marriage takes place is not as important as the degree of maturity which must be reached by the individual who wishes to marry. If marriage is delayed, this gives him a greater chance to become mature if he makes the most of this opportunity. However, economic factors still exert a lot of pressure and we need to devise new ways of supporting young people at the beginning of their family lives through projects, long-term loans, and new job opportunities for our youth who aspire to an honorable future.

