

SACREDNESS IN SEXUALITY

By: Mary Lambrecht, M.S. LMFT

As a young girl, I was obsessed with farms, animals, and particularly horses. On my fourth birthday I became the proud owner of a horse named "Gallop." Gallop's head was blue vinyl and his body a wooden stick. I had picture books of horses and riders racing through fields, so Gallop and I ran circles around our house, his mane made of string flopping happily. Then at age ten, I rode my first real horse. We cantered through big, real fields and I grasped real, coarse, mane-hair. Thereafter, when I rode Gallop the stick-horse, the larger, real horse experience was foremost in my mind, informing my imagination and influencing my plans to ride that big, real horse soon again.

This story illustrates what C.S. Lewis, in *Weight of Glory* calls "Transposition." Transposition, according to Lewis, is a higher system informing a lower system, or a richer medium informing a poorer medium. Just as the big real horse informed my pretend horsemanship more powerfully than Gallop the stick horse or my picture book did, Lewis challenges us to allow higher, Godly ideals to inform our lower, earthly experiences. Examples Lewis gives of transposition include a cathedral informing an architect's drawing, or an orchestral symphony informing a piano player's etude. The point of all this, Lewis surmises, is that the lower medium can be only fully understood and appreciated, if we know the higher medium (*Weight of Glory*, p. 61).

So how do these thoughts relate to sexuality?

God's true plan for sexuality also stems from a higher medium (God's love) informing a lower medium (man's expression of this love through sexuality). Sometimes this order is reversed. When we position sexuality as the higher system, thereby putting love for the other as secondary, and also minimizing the concept of God's love, we rob ourselves of the awe, mystery and God-intended plan for sexuality. As Lewis points out: "The brutal man can never by analysis find anything but lust in love" (p. 64). Similarly, in his book, *A Final Word on Love*, Bruce Kokko states: "The euphoria we have in God's Love supersedes all others, and, what's more, lasts forever" (p. 15). Lewis' concept of transposition is fully represented in the apostle John's words: "We love because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

What does it practically mean then to have the love of God (the higher medium) inform our love (the lower medium), and more specifically the expression of that love through sexuality? Rob Bell points out in his book, *Sex God*, that as a bride and groom give themselves sexually to one another after they are married, the couple's true power is derived from this exclusivity (p. 139).

Bell points out that in the ancient Jewish culture, couples were married under the chuppah: a wedding canopy that symbolized the holy covering of God. The chuppah further represented protection, mercy, and grace. Bell further states "when sex is taken

out from under the chuppah, when it's isolated from its God-intended context, it loses its mystery" (p. 142). God compares this marital mystery with Christ loving and giving himself up for the church, "holy and blameless" (Ephesians 5: 25-29). The higher (Christ and the church) informs the lower (the union of husband and wife). When we bring sexuality out from under God's protective plan (marriage), we lose touch with the higher joy and purpose for sexuality. As Bell bluntly states: "When you take sex out from under the chuppah, all you are left with is mechanics" (p. 141).

Society's sexual messages are often disrespectful of sexuality as a sacred, holy expression between husband and wife. But the lower message of sex within today's society cannot overpower the higher message of God's original plan for sex. When we risk reaching for God's higher purposes in life, when we place our wooden stick horses in the corner, and climb onto real galloping horses, sacredness influences sexuality. Husband and wife become one flesh...a profound, holy mystery (Ephesians 5: 31 & 32).

Resources: *Weight of Glory* by: C.S. Lewis
SexGod by: Rob Bell
A Final Word on Love by: Bruce J. Kokko

Compliments of Practical Family Living, Inc.

P.O. Box 1676, Appleton, WI 54912 (920) 720-8920

You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute our articles in any format provided that you credit the author, no modifications are made, you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction, and you include Practical Family Living's web-site address (<http://www.pfl.org>) on the copied resource. Quotations from any article are also permitted with credit to the author and citing the web-site. Any use of other materials on this web-site, including reproduction, modification, distribution or republication, without the prior written consent of Practical Family Living, Inc., is strictly prohibited.