

**PRE-MARITAL SEX AMONG SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST YOUTH IN
BOTSWANA AND POSSIBILITIES FOR PREVENTATIVE ACTION**

BY

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ABSTRACT

This research set out to investigate factors that lead to seemingly prevalent pre-marital sex by Botswana Seventh-day Adventist youth aging between 12 and 30 years. A 31-item questionnaire, divided into four sections, was used on a group of 45 youths.

It was discovered that 78% of the youths studied had been involved in pre-marital sex at some point in their lives. Thirty-seven percent were still practicing it. The most vulnerable age range was 14 to 18 years, but some had started experimenting with sex as early as six years. Some of the contributing factors to the youth's involvement in sex included media, friends and lack of knowledge due to parents not giving them guidance.

Prevention of pre-marital sex can be made possible by the cooperation of entities like the family, the church, the school and the individual. Hence, the suggested model called the **Integrated Sexuality Education**.

KEY TERMS

Seventh-day Adventist, Youth, Pre-marital sex, Christian education, Practical theology, True education, Abstinence, Family, Church, School, Theory, Praxis, Empirical research, Society, Bible, Marriage, God, Character, Virginity, Children, Maturity.

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¹ The author is one of the four regional "departmental" directors at the northern headquarters (called North Botswana Field) of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Botswana. Located at Francistown, the office supervises and coordinates the work in 35 organised churches (2002) and their branches. The churches are dotted all over the one-half region of the country stretching from Dibete to Gudigwa, a distance of over 1400 kilometres apart.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Botswana has a population of 1,326.796 (1991 census) with an average growth rate of 2.4%.² The sex ratio of males per 100 females is 91.6.³ According to the Statistical Bulletin published in Botswana in 1999, about forty percent (40%) of Botswana's population is youth.⁴ The literacy rate is as follows: males, 85.2%; females 86%. Unemployment rate is as follows: males, 56%; females, 82.5%. Average births per female is 4.2 with the most fertile age group being 20-24 (60% of births).⁵

Until August 2000, Botswana has not been operating a television station of its own. Most people viewed South African channels and only fewer people have access to other television stations. Other forms of media include radio stations, largely South African magazines and newspapers.

²Statistical Bulletin. March 1999. Gaborone: Department of Printing and Publishing Services. Volume 24, Number 1. All statistics that follow in this paragraph are from this bulletin.

³ Ibid., 11.

⁴ Ibid., 11.

⁵ Ibid., 11.

The HIV/AIDS in Botswana situation is that more than 19% of the sexually active⁶ population is infected with the virus. This is the conclusion of Dr. Mwamba Nsebula, principal medical officer of Palapye Primary Hospital in the central part of Botswana. Dr. Mwamba Nsebula continues to reveal that "between 25 and 50 percent of pregnant women in various parts of Botswana are HIV infected."⁷ In a similar view, Kereng Molomo, a health personnel in the Botswana Ministry of Health, said: "Two boys out of 3 aged 15 are going to die of AIDS before the age of 40; and 70% of newborn babies die of AIDS-related diseases."⁸

As the "Mmegi" newspaper suggests, more than half of Botswana youth are sexually active and therefore, at the risk of HIV/AIDS and other sex-related problems. This is a dangerous situation for the young people and for the future of the country.

The situation portrayed here is not very far from that found in the Seventh-day Adventist church and perhaps most

⁶A government survey among young people at a college found that 75% of them had had sex, some of whom had started at the age of 12. *Mmegi* Newspaper. February 25, 2000. Pg 3.

⁷ Mwamba Nsebula, M.D. is the Principal Medical Officer at Palapye Primary Hospital. He presented a paper entitled, *Common Diseases Amongst Sexual Partners* at the Community's "Couples Day" celebrated at Kgolagano Center, Palapye. Page 3. May 27, 2000.

⁸*The Voice* Newspaper. July 7, 2000. Pg 14.

other churches too. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Botswana has a membership of about 19000 (2000). The majority of this membership is youth. The Seventh-day Adventist church⁹ first came into Botswana by American medical missionaries in 1921. Through medical services in hospitals and clinics in strategic parts of the country, it slowly established itself until now it has about 56 organized congregations and 26 pastors. It has divided the country into two regions for administrative purposes: the North Botswana Field with headquarters in Francistown, and the South Botswana Field with its headquarters in Gaborone.¹⁰ The Botswana SDA church is part of the SDA world church with its headquarters in Washington DC, USA.¹¹

⁹ Throughout the dissertation the Seventh-day Adventist church will be referred to as the SDA church.

¹⁰ All the statistical information about the Church is kept by the Secretary's office at the headquarters. Incidentally, the writer works at the headquarters and has been dealing with this information for 15 years.

¹¹ SDA Organisational structure is like this: 6 to 11 baptized members make what is called a Branch, 12-24 baptized members make up a Company, 25 baptized members make up an organized Church, a group of churches make up a Field, two Fields or more usually in one country make up a Union, a group of Unions or countries in a sub-continent make up a Division, and Divisions make up the highest entity or office called General Conference. The General Conference office is in Washington DC. There are twelve world Divisions. Botswana Union together with South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Angola, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles belong to one Division called Southern Africa Indian Ocean Division (SID), with its headquarters in Harare, Zimbabwe.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

It is very clear from observation and surveys¹² that more than fifty percent of the Seventh-day Adventist youth in Botswana have been involved in pre-marital sex. This leads to several problems for the youth, the church, the family institution and the society at large. For example, the increase in the number of single-parent families and the weakening of the church in its life in worship and witnessing as a result of its members who are backsliding.

What this means is that the church young people adopt the general worldly lifestyle of "free sex".¹³ In other words, they are made to believe that it is normal or even fashionable to engage in sex before marriage. Yet, this attitude and lifestyle erodes the fundamental standard of the Bible ethic of abstinence.¹⁴ The "free sex" attitude, which results in pre-marital sex, undermines and distorts the family institution as given in the Bible. Its negative results such as prostitution, HIV/AIDS and single parenthood, make adjustment and happiness in the family or marriage very difficult later in life. Donald M. Joy advocates that there needs to be psychological, spiritual, biological, ethical and other kinds of bonding between the

¹² The writer and others have done numerous casual surveys over the last fifteen years, relating to youth involvement in pre-marital sex.

¹³ No author. 1978. Is Sex sin? USA: Published by Worldwide Church of God, 8.

¹⁴ The Bible view of morality is going to be discussed in depth later under "Adventist Understanding of the Biblical view of Premarital sex"

two people before and besides the sexual bonding.¹⁵ Gordon and Cheryl Doss also outline twelve steps that culminate in sexual union: eye to body, eye to eye, voice to voice, hand to hand, hand to shoulder, arm to waist, face to face, hand to head, hand to body, mouth to breast, hand to genital and finally, genital to genital.¹⁶ Hence, in pre-marital sex, many steps are skipped and the bond is faulty and produces undesirable effects.

Furthermore, pre-marital sex adversely affects the church. For instance, death from AIDS deprives the church of a potential and valued worker. Moreover, the guilt and shame of having an unwed baby¹⁷ often lead to a "frozen asset" in the pew. Furthermore, single parenthood and "grannies" bringing up children means that the child does not have a conducive environment of love and care of both parents, which predisposes him or her, in the researcher's opinion, to traveling the same path of the parent.¹⁸

¹⁵ Donald M. Joy. 1986. Re-bonding: Preventing and Restoring Damaged Relationships. Dallas: Word Publishing, 5.

¹⁶ Dr. Gordon and Mrs Cheryl Doss. 1994. Christian Marriage. Makwasa: Malamulo Publishing House, 80.

¹⁷ Unwed pregnancy is mentioned by Chris Jackson in his book, Dating and Sexuality (1999:29) as one of the "three relationship predators which have left deep, permanent emotional and relational scars across the faces of many singles who experience a grim reminder of their home-life whenever they look into their companion's eyes."

¹⁸ Chris Jackson continues to note "it is hard for someone to exhibit healthy relationship actions and attitudes without ever seeing them modelled in the home." "That is why", he says, "singles owe it to themselves, to the community, and to God to make a heartfelt decision not to contribute further to the frightful statistics regarding unwed pregnancies, divorce, and absentee fatherhood." 29.

It is true that pre-marital sex has always been with us. What is new is the swelling numbers of young people, especially girls, who are engaging in this behavior. For instance, Brooks-Gunn and Furstenberg report an increase in the percentage of young people involved in pre-marital sex in one country from 7% in 1950 to 44% in 1982.¹⁹ As church, society, school and family leaders, we need to work at curbing the prevailing trend and restoring the Biblical ideal for family, which includes abstinence until marriage.

Broadly speaking then, the task of this dissertation is to find out the factors that make young people fall prey to sex and suggest ways in which we can help young people "stand" or wait until marriage.

The aim then, is firstly, to get an understanding of the extent of pre-marital sex among the SDA youth in Botswana and to find out the causes of it. Secondly, the aim is to recommend ways and means of helping the youth and youth leaders, parents and church leaders to prevent pre-marital sex.

¹⁹ Quoted in Susan Moore and Doreen Rosenthal. 1993. *Sexuality in Adolescence*. New York: Routledge Inc., 1.

Another significant aim of this study is to make recommendations to other scholars who might want to pursue further the concerns or dimensions that will be raised in this study. For example, having highlighted the extent of pre-marital sex in the church, some other scholar may want to explore what is being done about those youths that have had babies out of wedlock to restore their faith and dignity. They could go further to suggest programs that the church could implement.

It is the researcher's opinion that it is possible for one to wait.²⁰ The researcher believes that since it is a divine mandate, it also entails divine power for its accomplishment. It is also important for the youth and the adults to understand the spiritual value and responsibility of abstinence, not just for the sake of avoiding consequences, but as a divine mandate as well. In other words, to understand that even if there was no AIDS or pregnancy, we are still required and privileged to abstain. This will increase our happiness and usefulness to the society and to God. It is this researcher's view that the church, with the aid of scientific studies in practical theology, is well suited to deal with this problem. Besides imparting knowledge, the church also relies on the

²⁰ One of the pilot studies carried in this research at a big international church called Maun, showed that out of 21 youth who were questioned through a questionnaire, 7 of them (1/3 or 33%) were virgins. August 19, 2000.

power of God to live right.²¹ From this understanding then, the church could even be in a better position to help young people than most entities like the public school and other youth clubs.

Another dimension of this problem, which is beyond the scope of this research, is the supportive, restorative dimension for those who have already fallen. We must help the majority of young people to heal and face life anew. It is hoped that this study would help to give new life to the church and also help build a firmer foundation for future families.

1.3 HYPOTHESIS

First, it is anticipated that a great extent of pre-marital sex will be found among the youth under study. This is anticipated from the casual studies conducted by the researcher and also from the general public surveys, conducted among university students and hospitals.

Secondly, successful efforts in preventing pre-marital sex are believed to be in three main areas, namely, the home, the church and the individual. The home has the privilege of the formative years to give the right direction and example. The church has the moral and

²¹ The Bible has many precious promises of God to keep us from falling if we trust our lives to Him. For instance, Jude 24, Philippians 4:13, Psalm 34:7.

spiritual principle to give the youth power to "stand." Finally, the individual has the ultimate choice. This choice of abstinence is mainly influenced by home and church, followed by the school and other influences. Hence, it is finally, in this researcher's opinion, a matter of *maturity* and *character*. Kathleen Winkler emphasizes this points when she says, "It takes much more maturity to say NO than to follow the crowd". She continues by adding a spiritual element to it saying, "It's what God calls [us] to do."²²

1.4 CONCLUSION

As mentioned before, the church, with the aid of practical theological studies, is well suited to deal with this problem. The next chapter looks at practical theology and its methodology for addressing practical situations like pre-marital sex.

²² Kathleen Winkler. 1997. *Steer Clear*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 16.

CHAPTER TWO**PRACTICAL THEOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHOD****2.1 PRACTICAL THEOLOGY**

The research is done from a practical theological perspective. It is important to note here at the beginning of this section that practical theology is a broad branch of theology. It cannot possibly be encapsulated in one chapter of a dissertation of limited scope, for that matter. Therefore, this chapter seeks to only highlight the key concepts, especially those that relate to the topic of research, to help give it a framework in practical theology.

Practical theology is one of the branches of theology that takes the relationship between theory and praxis seriously. L.M. Heyns and H.J.C. Pieterse, in their book, *A Primer in Practical Theology*, describe the relationship between theory and praxis as a "bipolar tension". The two are held in dialectic. In other words, they believe that theories are not only applied to praxis but also derive from praxis. Therefore, they say, practical theology identifies, evaluates, modifies, and tests theories in praxis and, from observation of praxis, develop new ones,

if need be. The process is like a spiral that goes round and round and never comes to an end.²³

2.1.1 THE TASK OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

Practical theology maintains a persistent inquiry about all religious actions of Christians, whether in church or in the society. The aim is to see if we, as Christians, are communicating the gospel of Jesus Christ through our actions effectively. It was Schleimarcher who said that while systematic theology is concerned with true insight, practical theology is concerned with true action.²⁴ This involves all religious activities, of all Christians, at all times and at all places. Karl Barth underscores the relevance of studying religious people as part of theology by observing that, whereas theology is about God as the God of human beings, it is also about people as the people of God.²⁵

Emphasizing the equal importance of praxis to theory, Bastian (1968) is quoted to have said that, unlike the exegete, who is concerned with whether the preacher understands the text, the practical theologian is concerned with whether the preacher understands the audience - their experiences, thoughts, fears, hopes, faith et cetera - in

²³ Heyns, L.M. and H.J.C. Pieterse. 1990. A Primer in Practical Theology. Pretoria: Gnosis Books and Publishers CC, 22,31,32&45.

²⁴ Ibid., 9.

²⁵ Ibid., 4.

order that he may communicate the message effectively.²⁶ The two work together for the effectiveness of the message.

In short, "practical theology is a study that seeks to help humans to encounter God and to live in fellowship with God and other people."²⁷

2.1.2 PRACTICAL THEOLOGY AS A SCIENCE

Practical theology has been described as a critical, communicative, operational science.

Practical theology is critical. Practical theology is opposed to uncritical or pre-critical thought. Uncritical or pre-critical thought is being too busy or too lazy to critique one's actions. This results in contradiction and incoherence. "Critical" implies awareness of one's methods and willingness to revise one's perspective or presuppositions if need be. "Critical" also takes into account unconscious motives.

Practical theology is communicative. Every religious activity communicates something about the religious group concerned and their God. Therefore, we need to always inquire whether people are getting, through our actions, what we want them to get. It is also important to realize that even when we are not doing anything, we are still communicating.

²⁶ Ibid., 6,7.

²⁷ Ibid., 7.

Furthermore, below are some key elements involved in communication as part of theology as gleaned from Pieterse:²⁸ Communication is aimed at changing existing reality for the better. Communication is seen as ideal when done in the context of "the kingdom of God." It aims to be non-authoritarian. In other words, both participants have to be free and regarded as equal. Communication has to promote dialogue and dialogue promotes equality. Other essential concepts in communication include being mutual, sharing and interpersonal.

Practical theology is operational. Operational sciences have been described by Schelsky (1963) as "those that concentrated on human actions".²⁹ Examples of such sciences included sociology, psychology, anthropology, education and communicative science. Heyns and Pieterse ascribe the first proposal for practical theology to be called an operational science to G. Krause in 1967.³⁰

In practical theology, God is seen as coming into human history and *human beings* taking part in that encounter. They preach, pray, teach, believe, love et cetera. Therefore, practical theology as an operational science is action-centered, not logic-centered like other

²⁸ The ideas following were gleaned from H.J.C Pieterse's "A theological theory of Communicative Actions" in Religion and Theology. 5:2, 1998.

²⁹ Quoted from Heyns and Pieterse, 38.

³⁰ Ibid., 38.

theological fields.³¹ There are three main functions or operational fields of the church, namely, a) "Kerygma" (preaching and teaching) b) "koinonia" (celebration and care) and "diakonia" (service).³² These functions can take place anywhere, in the church and even on the street.

Practical theology is a science. Science, it is believed, has to do with theoretical reflection and theorizing. "Theoretical reflection and theorizing", argues L.M. Heyns and H.J.C. Pieterse, "are characteristic of science."³³ According to them, practical theology "can scientifically study the encounter between God and human beings."³⁴

Furthermore, Heyns and Pieterse, show that practical theology is a science on its own because firstly, it has its own field of study, which are the religious actions of Christians. Secondly, it develops its own theological theories. Thirdly, it applies its own scientific methods, not merely those theories and methods developed by others and finally, it studies praxis systematically.³⁵

J.W van Huyssteen views theology as a science in that it investigates reality within "some intersubjective control." In other words, he continues, although theology deals with absolutely important realities, "it cannot

³¹ Ibid., 39.

³² Ibid., 59-61.

³³ Ibid., 9.

³⁴ Ibid., 9.

³⁵ Ibid., 9.

simply and unquestionably present its own statements of faith on authoritarian basis."³⁶

Practical theology, therefore, is distinguished from practical training. Until relatively later, practical theology was not regarded as a theological science as other areas of theology like systematic theology. People like GJ Yonker (1794) and Karl Barth, assigned it the status of "transformer."³⁷ That is, translating scientific theories developed by other theologies into praxis.³⁸ Now, it is seen as having its own field of study, which is the relationship between theory and praxis.

2.1.3 PRACTICAL THEOLOGY IS NOT APPLIED THEOLOGY

According to Jan van der Ven's, Paul Ballard's and G. van Wyk's articles on applied theology,³⁹ practical theology is a distinguishable science on its own, separate from applied theology. It is called "practical" only because it relates to praxis. It has its own distinct task. It is a branch of theology that sees praxis as an object of scientific study. Hence, it identifies practical theological theories, evaluates them and even develops new ones. The authors above warn that it is a misconception to think that practical theology, perhaps like applied

³⁶van Huyssteen, J.W. 1981. "Systematic Theology and the Philosophy of Science." *Journal of Theology of Southern Africa*, 34.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

³⁹ The three authors are quoted separately in the bibliography.

theology, merely actualizes the theories of other theological disciplines.

Applied theology, Van der Ven reveals, was traditionally treated as a bridge between theories of other theological subjects and practice. It was seen as only dealing with application, thus equipping students with skills for ministry. Therefore, it was only given time at the end of one's training. The focus was on the trainee ministers. Van der Ven points out that in the first phase of the development of practical theology, which lasted from mid-eighteenth up to the mid-twentieth centuries, it could very well be understood as the "praxis of the pastor".⁴⁰ The second phase, he continues to note, widened beyond the pastor to include the laity. The third phase, which starts from the late sixties, Van der Ven observes, widened further to include the society: that the church is a part of the society and it is influenced by it.⁴¹

As already stated, practical theology has its own recognizable field of study. It is not just an appendix at the end of one's ministerial training. Moreover, it extends beyond the clergy to include all believers. Whereas, applied theology mainly focused on "church" activities like preaching and teaching, practical theology

⁴⁰Van der Ven, J. 1988. "Practical Theology: From Applied Theology to Empirical Theology". Journal of Empirical Theology, 12-13.

⁴¹ Ibid., 11

studies all Christians' actions wherever they take place, both inside the church and outside.

Another important observation from the authors is that applied theology is not enough because it does not study praxis systematically. In applied theology, praxis is not the object of scientific research. Theories are only applied without evaluating the praxis. In that way, it suggests that praxis does not influence theory. On the other hand, practical theology takes seriously the relationship between the theory and the praxis, with an openness to revise the theory, if need be. In applied theology, it seems the theory is more important than the praxis. Lastly, applied theology implies that all praxis is the same, the set theories can be applicable everywhere, anytime.

According to Wolfaardt, practical theology does not want to prescribe actions and skills, but guidelines.⁴² Gerhard van Wyk, another South African practical theologian, argues that in fact, practical theology should precede pastoral training and that its task is to scientifically verify church actions. According to him, practical theology is not a search for new techniques, but a scientific

⁴² Wolfaardt, J. 1982. *The context of Practical Theology: A Distinctly South African Position* in Study Guide PTA200W, Practical Theology, University of South Africa, Pretoria. Pg 2-13.

researching and description of the community's (Christian) actions. It is a "critical-analytic theory of practice".⁴³

According to Paul Ballard of Britain, practical theology is more practical than applied theology because it is closer to praxis. He says that it is in dialogue with faith and also with the society. Because of this dialogue (insights and critique of the situation), Ballard observes that it contributes to theology and also shapes Christian actions.⁴⁴

CRITIQUE

Although practical theology is a newer branch of theology and is still defining and refining itself, unlike church history or systematic theology, it, however, has its recognizable task and field of study. It will certainly help, in my opinion, to sharpen theological understanding and the church's effectiveness inside and outside the community of faith.

⁴³van Wyk, A.G. 1995. "From Applied theology to Practical theology." *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, 33: 89

⁴⁴Ballard, Paul. 1992. "Practical Theology as an Academic Discipline." *Theology*. XCV111: 112-122. Paper presented at the University of Wales Faculty of Divinity Colloquium at Greynog, May 1992.

2.1.4 TYPES OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

There are many types of practical theology but there are basically three types that Poling and Miller⁴⁵ discuss. I would like to discuss these first and end with the South African perspective.

Poling and Miller's types are each sub-divided into two foci - for the formation of the society and the formation of the church.

a) Critical Scientific Practical Theology

Society. This type of practical theology studies the church as one of the social entities of society "but takes little responsibility for the church's development."⁴⁶ Even though the proponents may be members of the church, they would view it more as "outsiders".

Church. This focus uses the scientific method of the social sciences to develop the effectiveness of the church. For example, it uses scientific skills by the pastors to bring quality care to the people. This focus is committed to the church but is also open to the "wisdom of the society." It uses such norms as love for the neighbor, individual worth but from a scientific point of view. The danger of this type, observes Poling and Miller, is that it

⁴⁵ Poling and Miller. 1985. Foundations for a Practical Theology of Ministry. Nashville, Abingdon.

⁴⁶Ibid., 10.

can lose touch with the central point of Christianity, which is the Bible and the power of God.

b) Critical Correlational Practical Theology

Society. This type of practical theology is concerned with the *public character* of the church. Therefore, it would like to restate church themes in contemporary language and symbols. The goal is to transform the society through participation in mutual dialogue in the public debate about the norms of society. It believes that "the church can be an important source of insight into the human condition if it is willing to risk its claims in the public arena."⁴⁷ This type also believes that the church cannot remain irrelevant to the public discussion because that would make it irresponsible to its role as a creative subsystem of society.

Church. This type of practical theology places practical theology primarily within the activity of the church as a concrete community, but admits that it is also a part of society. It is afraid that pluralism may result in the church losing "the richness of our Christian faith and the power of God that really helps."⁴⁸ Some of the practical theologians of this type include, Fowler and Browning.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Ibid., 18.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 21.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 15.

c) Critical Confessional Practical Theology

Society. This type of practical theology believes that the church is a pattern of what society might be, similar to the position held by the Medieval Catholic church that the church is the source of moral guidance for all society. One of the proponents of this type of practical theology, Farley, wants to see the church as having the capacity "to redeem any and all social, political, economical, cultural spaces without losing itself totally in them."⁵⁰ These theologians hope and work for the transformation of the society, but the focus is in the community of faith.

Church. This focus sees the Christian tradition, not science, as normative. Unlike the correlational type that gives the church and the society equal dialogue, the confessional type sees the church as the "locus of authority." This type of practical theology is fully committed and makes a sustained effort to understand the depth of the Christian tradition so that "modern faith is continuous with the Christian Story, not with the modern world."⁵¹ Edward Farley argues for "ecclesial presence" in the world.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 55,56.

⁵¹ Ibid., 57.

CRITIQUE

All the three types of practical theology enrich one another. Practical theology is formed and reformed in dialogue between all types. For instance, the confessional can never be reduced to the scientific. Conversely, the confessional will become arid and uniformed without the scientific. I agree with the authors that perhaps the best approach to practical theology is an open dialogue between all the types. Poling and Miller favour "a dialogical confessional community stance."⁵²

The South African perspective of Practical Theology

South African perspective of practical theology also has, generally, three approaches like Poling and Miller's. A. Gerhard Van Wyk, in his article "*From Applied Theology to Practical Theology*",⁵³ discusses these three basic approaches that represents the South African perspective.

⁵² Ibid., 33.

⁵³ AG Van Wyk, 85-101.

a) Confessional Approach.

This approach has been influenced much by the Dutch Reformed practical theology. It is similar to Poling and Miller's confessional type of practical theology. It is characterized by firstly, the study of the Bible; secondly, praxis which is generally deductively derived from theological theories; thirdly, the church and serving it being more central and finally the training of ministers being the most important task of practical theology.⁵⁴ Proponents of this approach include W.D. Jonker.

b) The Contextual approach

This approach places more emphasis on the "world orientation" rather than the church. According to this approach, "the task of practical theology is to bring about social change and reconstruction of society."⁵⁵ Another important emphasis of this approach is that its major concern is not with the training of ministers but rather "with the equipping of the community of believers."⁵⁶ Lastly, this approach is ecumenical.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 88.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 88.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 88.

c) The Hybrid or Intermediate Approach

This approach is a combination of the two approaches mentioned above. It believes that practical theology cannot be able to study "the whole social praxis", but at the same time, it does not support the "one-sided emphasis" on the church and its practice, the emphasis which has governed the formation of practical theological theories in the past.⁵⁷ According to this approach, the task of practical theology is to design an "ideal communication" between the church and the society. This is, perhaps, the position of the Practical theology Department of the University of South Africa.

2.2 PRACTICAL THEOLOGY AND EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Practical theology employs the empirical research methodology in its study of theory and praxis. Heyns and Pieterse define an empirical research as a scientific research consisting of three parts, namely, observation, trying out and evaluation.⁵⁸ The researcher studies the real situation firsthand. According to the dictionary, the meaning of "empirical" is, "based on observation or experiment, not theory."⁵⁹ It involves observation, exploration, experimentation, explanation, evaluation and prediction. Heyns and Pieterse continue to explain that

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁵⁸ Heyns and Pieterse, 72.

⁵⁹ Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 1995.

empirical research "builds on the ordinary experiential process, but is conducted in a conscious, systematic fashion and is monitored and verified."⁶⁰ They add that "three sub processes (surmise, expectation, testing), together with observation and evaluation, make "an empirical cycle" of observation, surmise, expectation, testing and evaluation."⁶¹

Mouton and Marais define research as "a collaborative human activity in which social reality is studied objectively with the aim of gaining a valid understanding of it."⁶² The objectivity and validity in the definition above implies understanding even the attitudes, feelings and meanings, which the participants have beyond just the outward, observable activity. In this way, interviews and questionnaires are very useful.

My research project, which is an empirical research, involves exploring and describing what is happening among Botswana SDA young people in the area of their sexuality. I want to find out about their attitudes and practices of pre-marital sex and the extent to which it happens. Furthermore, in the part of describing, I want to get to know the factors that lead to the situation and how the

⁶⁰ Heyns and Pieterse, 73.

⁶¹ Ibid., 73.

⁶² Mouton, J and H.C. Marais. 1988. Basic Concepts in the Methodology of the Social Sciences. Pretoria: HSRC, 7.

situation shows out. Back to exploring, Black and Champion describe an explorative research as a "research that has one of its chief merits being the discovery of potentially significant factors that may be assessed in great detail and depth..."⁶³ Lastly, Kooverjee further defines a descriptive research as one that "interprets what is; it is concerned with conditions that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs and attitudes that are held, effects that are being felt and trends that are developing".⁶⁴

2.3 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Key terms for the empirical research are as follows:

Pre-marital Sex: This is engagement by two or more people in any sexual activity before marriage. It involves sexual activity in which they touch each other's body and sex organs. Pre-marital sex also includes "oral sex" and homosexuality. The Bible understanding also includes bestiality (Leviticus 18:22-23) and fantasy or lust (Matthew 5:28).

Youth: The Oxford Dictionary defines it as "the state or quality of being young." In Adventist Youth Ministries

⁶³ Black and Champion. 1979. *Methods and Issues in Social Sciences*. Canada: John Wiley and Sons, 43.

⁶⁴ Kooervjee, I. 1991. *An exploration Field Study into Schoolgirl Pregnancies with emphasis on the Role the school can play in their Prevention.* Master of Education dissertation. Rhodes University, 43.

Department understanding, it includes persons from 10 up to 30 years.⁶⁵ This understanding may be a little different from the conventional understanding in which somebody who is 30 years will be considered a young adult. However, for purpose of study in an Adventist context, persons of this age bracket were picked.

Abstinence: Avoidance of all sexual involvement as mentioned under "pre-marital sex."

Adolescence: A stage of rapid physical development, usually between 12 and 19. In the findings, this is the period in which more sexual activity happens.

Maturity: A stage of mental, physical and spiritual responsibility in which somebody is able to make independent decisions and responses. Spiritual maturity is especially relevant in this study as it helps one to abstain from pre-marital sex.

Character: The sum of the attributes or qualities that a person has inherited and acquired. These include the person's attributes of body, mind and soul. In short, it is what the person is.

⁶⁵ Youth Department of the General Conference of SDA. 2000. Youth Ministry Handbook. Washington DC: General Conference of SDA, 5.

2.4 CONCLUSION

These definitions will be operationalized through a questionnaire designed for Africa and Asia by Dr. David David Chitate of Solusi University in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. More specific detail regarding the questionnaire will be found in chapter five.

In the following chapter, I will review two major modern Christian education perspectives and later, develop my own perspective of Christian education, which is largely influenced by the SDA philosophy of education.

CHAPTER THREE

"TRUE EDUCATION" AS CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

3.1 SOME MODERN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION PERSPECTIVES

This research project is guided by a practical theological framework, and is also done from a Christian education perspective. Pre-marital sex is a major area in the religious instruction of the home, the church and the school. Christian education has several approaches and perspectives. Without going much into detail on each of them, I have picked Timothy A. Lines⁶⁶ and Thomas Groome⁶⁷ to represent major modern perspectives on Christian education. At the end of the chapter, I will try to develop a perspective of my own.

Timothy Lines pictures vividly the functions of a religious educator while on the other hand, Thomas Groome writes extensively and passionately on the subject. Furthermore, Groome brings to his study many other writers and concepts to clarify his framework for Christian education. Consequently, the study of these two authors

⁶⁶ Lines, T.A. 1992. Functional Images of the Religious Educator. Birmingham, Ala: Religious Education Press.

⁶⁷ Groome, T. 1980. Christian Religious Education. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

should suffice in gaining a sufficient understanding of modern Christian education.

Lines gives us ten metaphorical typologies or "functional images" of a religious educator as follows:

1. Parent. As a parent, the educator nurtures and encourages the student towards maturity and independence.
2. Coach. Like a coach, the religious educator stands alongside and encourages the learner to practice and practice towards excellence.
3. Scientist. The educator uses logic, evidence, analysis, formation of theories et cetera, like a scientist.
4. Critic. Like a critic, the educator analyses evidence and argues from all angles.
5. Storyteller. The educator uses shared stories of a community that form part of its identity. This is also done realizing that stories often appeal more than facts.
6. Artist. The educator uses fun and creativity to help others see things differently.
7. Visionary. As a visionary, the educator instills hope and uses imagination to help others see the future with their hearts and minds.

8. Revolutionary. As a revolutionary, the educator analyses systems, notices current needs and initiates a change that results in transformation for the good of all.
9. Therapist. Like a therapist, the educator builds the learner by comforting, healing, supporting et cetera, to the end that the identity of the learner is realized and prized.
10. Minister. The educator, like a minister, gives himself/herself for others. He/she lives a life of servant-hood, sacrifice and risk for the sake of others.

This perspective portrays an educator who actually represents the philosophy of the education. In other words, many aspects of this philosophy can be derived from the functional images of the educator. For instance, it can be said that Christian education from this perspective is one that selflessly endeavors to holistically develop the learner. Another important aspect that this perspective portrays is the centrality of the teacher or educator in the whole process of education. The author shows that "the personhood and lifestyles of the educator

are just as powerful teaching agents as the curriculum, if not more so."⁶⁸

The second perspective on Christian education is by Thomas Groome. He begins by explaining that Christian education is an intersection between religion and education. He explains that "faith tradition" education is specific to a major religion. For example, Christianity or Judaism. Further, he says, doctrine is a subset of faith tradition and that theology will be a subset of doctrine.⁶⁹ This clarification is helpful in that it shows the place in the whole framework where one is discussing.

Groome who is, certainly, one of the greatest modern Christian educationists, defines Christian education as, "a political activity with pilgrims in time, that deliberately attends with them to the activity of God in our present, to the Story of the Christian faith community, embodied in the present and to the future vision of God's kingdom, the seeds of which are already among us."⁷⁰ One of the things we note from this definition is that Christian education encapsulates three dimensions of the past, present and future. When he continues to expand on this definition, Groome says that the purpose of Christian education is to

⁶⁸ Lines, T.A. 1992. *Functional Images of the Religious Educator*. Birmingham, Ala: Religious Education Press, 49.

⁶⁹ Groome, Thomas. 1980. *Christian Religious Education*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 73.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 140.

lead people to a "lived Christian faith." This lived experience of faith (we can call it present praxis) is informed by the past (the Story) and the future (Vision of God's kingdom). As observed from the previous chapter, praxis involves critical reflection on the situation. Furthermore, the lived Christian faith experience that Groome talks about is one that the learners themselves have reflected through and chosen deliberately. In short, Groome sees the goal of Christian education as fostering a relationship with God, other people in the faith community and the world, in view of the future.

Personally, Groome favors an education that is conducted in a "praxis way". This praxis way he calls, "shared Christian praxis". Shared praxis is a 5-step learning process that helps students appropriate the "Story" to their own lives. He defines it as, "a group of Christians, sharing in dialogue their critical reflection on present action in light of the Christian Story and its vision towards the end of lived Christian faith".⁷¹

The 5-step approach, which is in the form of a spiral, is as follows:

1. Naming present action. Participants are asked in a simple, non-threatening way to express their feelings

⁷¹ Ibid., 144.

and reactions towards the subject under discussion.

For example, baptism.

2. Participants' stories and visions. The question, "Why do we do what we do?" is asked so that the participants go beyond the obvious to begin to reason, imagine et cetera, about their present action.
3. The Christian Story and Vision. The capable teacher, who is called "a leading learner", presents the Story in a way that draws the participants in and makes the participants encounter the Story personally. The question, "What do you think...?" is used.
4. Dialectical hermeneutic between the Story and the participants' stories. This step is a critique, not criticism, of the Story in light of the stories and a critique of the stories in light of the Story. In other words, "What does the Story mean for our stories and how do our stories respond to the Story?" The reflection done under this step leads to the lived faith being informed by the Story and the Story being informed by lived experience.
5. Dialectical hermeneutic between Vision and Participants' vision. Like in step 4 where participants' critique their stories, here they critique their visions, which are reflected in their present action, in light of the Vision of God's

kingdom and then decide on future action that will be an appropriate response to the Vision. This fifth step leads to further praxis.

CRITIQUE

As stated before, the point of all Lines' ten functional images of the religious educator is that the personhood and lifestyles of the educator are just as powerful teaching agents as the formal curriculum, if not more so.⁷² The principles in this book are applicable to all educators including parents and church leaders. Character and all aspects of one's life are, again, brought to view. The task of the educator is to carefully and patiently nurture the character development of the student until he/she is mature enough to stand or perform on his own. His aim is to see a well-rounded, mature personality at the end of the education process.

My personal evaluation of Groome's perspective, which is "likely to be the most significant book in the field of Christian education for the next twenty years,"⁷³ is that his view is quite comprehensive. He has encompassed many noble and lofty principles. For example, "pilgrims in time" brings to one's mind the simplicity, single-

⁷² T.A. Lines, 42.

⁷³ Edge, F.B. 1982. "Reviews and Expositor." A Baptist Theological Journal, No.79: 551-552.

mindedness and vision of the students. The "activity of God in our present" brings to one's mind the God-centeredness of Christian education but which also incorporates a relevance to modern situations. "The vision of God's kingdom" looks forward to God's future, which emanates from "His original intentions and vision for all creation." This is a clearly comprehensive and God-centered view.

3.2 TRUE EDUCATION

Having looked at two major perspectives, I will now attempt to present my own understanding of what Christian education, which I call "true education" entails. Mine is a model that can be called a "Biblical model" of Christian education.⁷⁴ It is not necessarily different from the two above, but I have put it in the way I understand it and relate to it more practically. This understanding of Christian education will then, provide a major theoretical framework for this research project.

In the training of children, James Dobson, a noted family life educator and psychologist, supports a "Judeo-Christian tradition" as the best.⁷⁵ Judeo-Christian tradition is the similar to the Biblical model.

⁷⁴ This perspective is greatly influenced by SDA understanding of the Bible and the philosophy of education.

⁷⁵ Dobson, James. 1982. Raising Children. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers Inc., 87.

First and foremost, the Biblical model for Christian education or true education, is to be patterned after God's plan at Eden, the plan which is NOW to be found in the Bible. It is assumed that when God created man in Eden, He also had a plan for his education. That plan was original, balanced and the best. True education in this view, then, is not a product of human invention but only a rediscovery of God's ever-existing plan. The only education that will be worthwhile is that which is according to the principles that He has given. All educational theories must find their origin in His plan.

God's plan was interrupted and distorted by the fall of man into sin. But Christ, who came to redeem and restore what was lost, also restored true education. Admittedly, Christ who is our perfect Model in everything, who also is the greatest Teacher the world has ever known, must have received and imparted the perfect education which God was "well pleased" with.

Commenting on the education that Jesus Christ Himself gave, one of the greatest Christian writers and educator, says, "There is no higher education to be gained higher than that given to the early disciples, and which is

revealed to us through the Word of God."⁷⁶ Let us now look closely at the model.

3.3 THE DEFINITION OF TRUE EDUCATION

"True education means more than a pursual of a course of study. It means more than a preparation for the life that now is. It has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, mental and spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come."⁷⁷ To me, this is the most comprehensive definition of education. It goes beyond the attainment of a degree or occupying a certain office to include such weightier aspects as the development of the person himself or herself, service (not just a job) and the future life. Hence, character development is fundamental in Christian education. The comments that follow will basically be expanding on this definition.

3.4 THE PHILOSOPHY OF TRUE EDUCATION

As it was mentioned before, the philosophy of this model is firmly rooted in the Bible. In other words, it is

⁷⁶White, Ellen G. 1945. Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students. Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 11.

⁷⁷White, Ellen. 1915. Education. Mountain View, Ca: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 13

"God-centered". Moreover, it is holistic, involving the entire person - his/her physical, mental and spiritual powers, for an entire period of existence. One never "graduates" or "reaches" the end of his/her education. It encompasses every human being, including those who do not have literary training. Literary training is only a part of it, not **the** education.

3.5 THE PLAN OF TRUE EDUCATION

The plan for this model has its pattern in Eden. Many things are explained when we look carefully at the brief description of the life at Eden. Some of the principles we find at Eden, from an SDA view, include the following:⁷⁸

God: God is at the center of the education. He is the teacher or the authority. He gives Adam and Eve instructions on what to do and what not to do. For example, in Genesis 2:16. Today, the Bible, which reveals God's will here on earth, and not man, is to be the authority in the education. God and the Bible are at the center, not the periphery, of the subject matter of the education.

⁷⁸ For the most part of the material to follow, the background is a result of the study I did for my second oral paper for this MTH, Theories of Christian Education, with specific reference to E.G White, Harold Clarke, and James Dobson, not leaving out Thomas Groome and T.A. Lines. Some of the concepts might not be found explicitly stated in their books, but their thoughts have triggered some other thoughts in me. Hence, this is my own understanding of Christian education.

Nature: Nature was a textbook, aiding Adam and Eve in their understanding of God. E.G. White says: "Before the entrance of sin not a cloud rested upon the minds of our first parents to obscure their perception of the character of God...Nature was their lesson book. God was... revealed in the objects of nature that surrounded them."⁷⁹ Nature was not fighting against God. Today, science, which studies nature, is made to contradict the Word of God as revealed in the Bible and therefore, the majority are led to doubt God and reject the Bible. Christian education, I suppose, cannot imbibe any science that clearly contradicts the word of God.

Work: Practically, in Eden, man did not need to work. But God gave him manual labor in order to balance his development. Genesis 2:15. Today, much more emphasis is put on the mental to the neglect of the physical development. The resulting imbalance produces many evils like disease, indolence and low morals. In the Hebrew "schools of the prophets" which Samuel was instructed to set up, manual labor was a major part of the education. 2 Kings 6.

Communion: God would visit the couple in Eden for intimate communion. Genesis 3:8. Communion involves the

⁷⁹White, Ellen G. 1904. Testimonies to the Church. Volume 8. Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 255.

personal touch or the experiential knowledge the student has with God. Always, this knowledge proves more valuable than the one merely imposed from the Bible. God is better known personally than just being told about Him.

Therefore, in the Biblical model of education, deliberate instruction, effort and time, are given to the students for the cultivation of personal spiritual life.

Country: The environment of the "Eden school" was a garden or country. Although times have changed, many conscientious people can still attest the benefits of country. Examples include the cultivation of gardens and citrus fruit farms. Country is more conducive to mental, spiritual, moral and physical development. City life on the other hand, is generally noisy, corrupt, filled with many heart-sickening influences. These influences are even more detrimental to the youth. It seems that it was not God's plan for people to be "huddled" together in cities because the first city was built out of rebellion and God destroyed it. The Bible says, "So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth and they ceased building the city". Genesis 11:8. It seems that cities are some of the situations that man has forced God to tolerate "because of the hardness of your hearts... but from the beginning it was not so." Matthews 19:8. Abraham, Moses and John the Baptist are a few examples of men who

stayed outside cities to maintain a godly life.

Therefore, for the best development of the students, Christian schools would be located some distance outside the city. Even individual Christians would do well, as far as possible, to build their homes in the country.

Simplicity: The overall setting of the Eden "school" and its education was simple. For example, there was no overwhelming subject matter and no fanciful, costly buildings. As a pattern to us, this does not apply to the school setting only but also to individual lifestyles. We are to be simple in our tastes, dress, purchases, buildings et cetera. Jesus was our example in the simplicity of his life here on earth - his birth, dress, teachings, association with people et cetera. If all were simply in their lifestyles, for instance, not spending means for mere selfish gratification, there would be enough resources left to help the poor and the cause of God. Furthermore, simplicity would save us from soul-corrupting influences like pride and debt.

Diet: God specified the diet of man in Eden. It was a vegetarian diet. In Genesis 2:15,16, God "commanded the man saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat.'"⁸⁰ He did not leave it to them to decide what *they* would eat. This signifies the importance of a proper diet

⁸⁰New King James Version.

that promotes physical, mental and spiritual growth. Throughout the Bible, diet is depicted as playing a paramount role in the performance, and sanctification of someone. Examples: Exodus 16, the feeding of Israel on manna; the angel's instruction to the mothers of John and Samson. A balanced education must include the student's dietary habits somewhere. The same principle applies to all physical habits like dress and sex.

Family school: The "Eden school" was mainly a family school. The education was done in the context of family - around the family and by the family. Degrees are not to be obtained at the exclusion of family. In fact, the most essential elements that make for success later in life, for example, purity, obedience, service, truth, integrity, courtesy, honesty, hard work and fidelity, are learnt at home. Without them, the highest degree will not be useful to the possessor or to the society. Furthermore, we need to underscore that the home school is the first and foundational school of the child. Without proper discipline in the home and family, the upper levels of education like the public school and the church, will not do much in the formation and development of the child's character.

3.6 THE AIM AND GOAL OF TRUE EDUCATION

True education aims at character building. It aims to restore in man, God's image that was lost due to sin. In this respect, the aims of education and that of the gospel plan of salvation are one. That is, restoring God's lost image in man.

Moreover, the teacher and the student are not satisfied with mere temporal attainments like grades, salary, position or earthly honor. They aim beyond the attainments outlined above, to objects of eternal value like service, purity, piety and heaven.

3.7 COMPARISON OF "TRUE EDUCATION" TO GROOME

There are many similarities between Groome's theory and my perspective. For instance, my perspective puts emphasis on the student's character, which involves all aspects of the student's life being developed into God's character. In other words, becoming a "true Christian." Groome, too, has the purpose of Christian religious education as "lived Christian faith in response to [or within] God's kingdom."⁸¹ To me, the two theories have the same purpose; it is only put in different words.

⁸¹Groome, Thomas H. 1980. Christian Religious Education. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 25.

Groome's major emphasis is the "shared praxis" method, which is a way of imparting religious education. He devotes almost half of the book to explaining, elaborating and illustrating the shared praxis method. On the other hand, my emphasis is on the philosophy of the Education. I see this as a compliment because Groome gives me the method for imparting the education from my perspective.

One other similarity is that through the shared praxis model, Groome proposes "a critical" and "intentional" response of the student to all socializing forces used in education. This calls for a level of maturity in character development, even regarding pre-marital sex. After all the sharing, dialogue and reflection, the student comes up with his/her own "vision." I like this because it allows the student to appropriate the education to his/her own experience. Furthermore, I would add that amidst the differing approaches and practices, the student must, at last, understand the will of God for himself/herself.

Groome defines Christian religious education as "a political activity with pilgrims in time that deliberately and intentionally attends with them to the activity of God in our present, the Story of the Christian Faith community, and to the Vision of God's kingdom, the seeds of which are already among us."⁸² By "kingdom of God," Groome refers to a

⁸² Groome, 25.

"symbol of God's rule over all the world and history and points to God's ongoing activity to fulfill his original intentions and 'vision for all creation'."⁸³ Furthermore, influenced by Paul Freire, Groome advocates that education (and Christian religious education) leads to human freedom and causes them to participate in the world's transformation. I see Groome's view to be very humanitarian (which is similar to "service to man" in true education) when he advocates for human freedom and the world's transformation. I believe that by human freedom, it becomes desirable when mature, responsible people exercise it and not just anybody doing whatever they think is freedom. This brings us back to the issue of maturity and character as fundamental in "true education."

3.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, Christian education has been understood as being God-centered, simple, holistic, ennobling, sanctifying, and finally saving. Its aim is to be like God in character. A Godlike character is seen as the key in one's development because character is what he/she is. If he/she is like God, he/she will "overcome the world" like Jesus.

⁸³ Ibid., 36.

The goal of "true education" is service to God and humanity. It includes everybody and one's entire existence. It is hoped that these principles are universal, humanitarian and Christian enough to be incorporated into any "Christian education" philosophy.

CHAPTER FOUR

AN ADVENTIST UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF PRE-MARITAL SEX.

This chapter will attempt to give a general, personal overview of what the Seventh-day Adventist church believes to be what the Bible teaches regarding pre-marital sex. This would, generally, provide for a normative framework for interpreting the data that is to follow.

Although other sources and backgrounds will be cited in this chapter, most prominently, the Biblical view will be emphasized because it is the background to the whole issue. That is, the research is done as a result of concern over the erosion of the Biblical ideal of abstinence until marriage.

4.1 PRE-MARITAL SEX IN THE GENERAL WORLD

Our society is fast becoming a sex-saturated society. Our age is an age of sexual explosion. The discussions about sex have become more and more public and "deviant" sexual behavior more and more tolerated as a normal part of life. This is especially true in developed countries, but

it is fast becoming the case here in developing countries as well. Gemme of Canada (1979) "projected" that by 1994, 95% of young people will have engaged in pre-marital sex.⁸⁴ Another article by Anita Chandhwi⁸⁵ states that pornography has now entered the mainstream culture through television, adverts, cinema, music and the Internet. This she said, following the British High Court decision to allow hardcore films to be sold in sex shops. With pornography invading mainstream culture, it is inevitable that the victims will be mainly young people who are "ignorant", hyperactive and impulsive.

The painful truth is that our church young people are not exempt from the almost overwhelming tide of "immorality". Given their ignorance, vulnerability and the fact that they do not receive enough empowerment from their guardians, it is a real challenge for the young people who must abstain.

In trying to understand the wider context of pre-marital sex in the world and then in Botswana, South Africa has been chosen. South Africa is Botswana's closest neighbor and sort of a "pace-setter" for Botswana. One can expect almost the same situation as found in Botswana.

⁸⁴ Kooverjee, I. 1991. *An Exploratory Field Study into Schoolgirl Pregnancies, with Emphasis on the role the School can Play in their Prevention.* Master of Education dissertation. Rhodes University, 24.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 32.

Moreover, South Africa, being a developed, multiracial country, it mirrors the world at large.

Research in South Africa has shown that the average age at which South Africans have their first sexual encounter is 14 years and that one out of three babies is born to a girl under 18.⁸⁶ South African religious groups have protested against provocative billboard adverts⁸⁷ saying that they initiated younger children into experimenting with sex even before they had thought about it. Among other religious groups, Christians argued that such adverts "endorse sex at an early age and undermine family role and moral development."⁸⁸

Another study in Cape Town, showed that 56% of girls will have had sex by the age of 15 because they mature 18 months earlier than boys.⁸⁹

One factor leading to early sexual involvement, according to Love Life survey,⁹⁰ is parents avoiding their task of teaching their children about sex. It was discovered that most children wanted to learn about sex

⁸⁶ *Mail and Guardian*. August 4, 2000. Page 25.

⁸⁷ Like one which said, "My boyfriend just wants sex"

⁸⁸ *Sunday Times*. July 30, 2000. Page 24. Article entitled: "HIV Ignorance is Bliss for Prissy Religious Groups."

⁸⁹ Kooverjee, I. 1991. "An Exploratory Field Study into Schoolgirl Pregnancies, with emphasis in the role the School can play in their Prevention." Master of Education dissertation. Rhodes University, 15.

⁹⁰ *Sunday Times*, July 30, 2000. Page 25.

from their parents, parents also did not want their children being taught by anyone else, but "they are flinching from the task."⁹¹ The result is ignorance, misinformation, anxiety to experiment and peer pressure.

4.2 PRE-MARITAL SEX IN BOTSWANA AND THE SDA CHURCH

In Botswana, 85% of young people experiment with sex before the age of 19.⁹² We can add that many of these young people start experimenting at the age of 12 or 13 years, according to the Mmegi February 25, 2000 report quoted earlier in this study.

This statistic is not very far from that of young people in the church (78%)⁹³. A survey was conducted by the 2nd National Conference on HIV/AIDS in Botswana by Botswana/Harvard Partnership whose results were disclosed on February 15-18, 2000 at the Grand Palm Hotel in Gaborone."⁹⁴ The objective of the study was "to determine

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁹² Lecturer Taolo Lucus of the Social Work department of the University of Botswana said this on Botswana Television Program "Mmualebe" on 14/08/00 at 8:30 pm.

⁹³ The church study, which is presented later in this paper, shows that out of 45 respondents, 35 had practiced sex before marriage.

⁹⁴ *Mmegi* (Newspaper). November 10-16, 2000. Pg 9,10. This survey was supported by Ministry of Education and launched by the President Festus Mogae. It tell us that pre-marital sex is a concern to the government as well. Therefore, this research may help them too.

knowledge, attitudes, practices of SDA youth, especially on abstinence versus condoms." The results are as follows:

- Eighty nine percent (89%) admitted that there was a problem in the church.
- Seventy three percent (73%) advocated that abstinence was possible.
- Fifty percent (50%) said one should use condoms if he or she is not able to abstain.
- Forty two percent (42%) of the SDA youth interviewed had used a condom at least once.
- Twenty percent (20%) of them were currently using condoms.

Note that in the survey, the great extent of pre-marital sex is evident to most people in the church whereby eighty nine percent admit a problem in the church. Note also the number of those who have used condoms as being 42%. It is likely that others may not have used condoms at all in their sexual encounters. Lastly, the comforting thing is that a large majority of seventy-three (73%) are not yet defeated in their attitude toward abstinence. They still believe that it is possible to abstain.

4.3 THE BOTSWANA SDA CHURCH AND SEX.

The SDA church, like most Christian churches,⁹⁵ believes that AIDS is not the biggest problem facing the world but the major problem is adultery or fornication. Thus, even if there were no AIDS, sex outside marriage would still be wrong. The message the SDA church wants to bear to the world is not "Condomize" but "Obey God, abstain."

For years, the SDA church in Botswana has had a categorical stand on sex and marriage. It seeks to follow exactly what the Bible says hence, abstinence until marriage. The Youth Department of the church supports this position. One of its main objectives is to occupy and guide the youth according to this Bible standard. Activities which are done include lessons on Christian education, Conventions which are held twice a year, Camp-outs, Pre-marital Seminars, Bible conferences and combined camp meetings with the adults once a year. However, a large number of young people still fall prey to pre-marital sex. It is the aim of this research to get to understand the reasons why.

⁹⁵ Like the Roman Catholic Church, which has taken a clear stand from the onset that it does not support the use of condoms as a way of avoiding AIDS. This was read over Botswana Television News of September 2, 2000 at 8:00pm. News read by Simon Moilwa.

4.4 AN ADVENTIST UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF SEX

It was said above that the SDA church perhaps together with all Christian churches seeks to follow exactly what the Bible teaches about sex and marriage. The question is, What does the Bible teach about sex and marriage?

The Bible, the SDA Christians believe, is God's Guidebook for humanity. It states that marriage between one man and one woman originated with God at Eden. It is only in this context that sex is allowed. All other forms of sex or marriages such as homosexuality, lesbianism, polygamy and group sex, are prohibited. Note Deuteronomy 27:21; Leviticus 19:29; 20:13; Rom 1:27-29.

The prohibition of sexual perversion was of such a magnitude that it was punishable by death and was included in the Ten Commandments that constitute the foundation of God's government (James 2:20). Jesus says in Matthew 5:17,18 that He has not come to destroy the law but only to fulfill it and that until heaven and earth pass, not one jot or tittle will pass from the law. He came to expand the adultery law to even include lust. Lastly, the sexually immoral will be outside the city of God. Revelation 22:15. In other words, they will not be saved.

The Bible is very clear about sex and marriage in such a way that if we were to summarize the Biblical model for sex and marriage, it would be something like the following ideas:

Some Biblical Ideals for Sex and Marriage

In explaining the Biblical model, I am going to concentrate on seven points, which have been deduced by me as a Christian for 22 years, as a pastor for 15 years, a family life director and marriage officer for 6 years and a married man for 9 years.

1. Chastity. One is expected to be a virgin at the wedding. Examples include Rebekah in Gen 24:16, Mary the mother of Jesus in Luke 1:27 and numerous instructions in the Pentateuch. Virginitiy represents purity, which has always been a virtue of God: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8. Lastly, a chaste virgin is used to represent the "holy" church of Christ. 2 Corinthians 11:2. One is enabled to remain a virgin through the power of God and a Christ-like character.
2. Maturity before sex and marriage. Marriage, under which sex is allowed, involves heavy responsibilities besides the sexual privileges. Responsibilities like bearing and rearing children require that someone is

mature physically, emotionally, economically, mentally and spiritually. All the marriages mentioned in the Bible are of mature individuals. Teenage relationships are more likely to break, as the parties are not yet mature in their life experience. Maturity suggests growth in character and wisdom.

3. The Right Choice. The injunction of Paul in 1 Corinthians: 6:14 reads: "Do not be unequally yoked together..." and the example of Abraham in finding a wife for his son (Genesis 24) are enough to establish the importance of making the wisest choice of a life partner. For the Christian, the "right" partner would be, above all other factors, a Christian like him/her and especially of the same faith. Again, choice is part of a mature character.

4. Marriage, not cohabitation. Whereas the majority of the people today would like to "just stay together" or have multiple partners, the Bible stipulates the marriage of one man to one woman for life. This will greatly secure the happiness of the couple and their children. Moreover, vows of commitment make all the difference to the security, the quality and endurance of the relationship. Besides, just as God gave Eve to Adam, a marriage partner is perceived as a gift

from God; before you are given her/him in marriage, he/she is not yet yours, more especially, sexually. Commitment requires a mature character too.

5. A happy and peaceful home. The home is where we exemplify our true Christianity and qualification to serve at the church and the community. I Timothy 3:12; Titus 1:6. In Eph 5:27, husbands and wives are exhorted to live in harmony with each other. The home should represent the family above; it should be like a little heaven here on earth.
6. Secure children. It is the responsibility of every parent to take care of his/her children; otherwise, they should not bring them into the world in the first place. The home is the child's first school. It is a school of character development.
7. God-centered. Note Deuteronomy 6: 5-9; Luke 1:6. The popular saying is often repeated, "The family that prays together, stays together." This is because God is the author of marriage. We need to be consulting Him to learn how we are to conduct it. Moreover, empowerment to carry out the requirements of marriage like love, patience, fidelity, also comes from Him. Without Him, sinful human beings are like an aeroplane that takes off to the altitude but has not enough fuel

to reach its destination. The result is a crush - disappointment, divorce or even suicide or murder. Moreover, an interesting observation is that the values that make up a good marriage such as love, patience, fidelity, peace and sacrifice, are the very same values that make up "Christianity". This means that, a Christian already, more or less, lives the life of marriage. The path of Christianity is the very same path for happy marriages.

The Bible requirement still stands. There is nowhere the Scriptures suggest that since "iniquity shall abound" the sexual standard will be somehow lowered. Therefore, the youth of today are still called to the same Biblical standard that has always been. Philippians 2:15 admonishes us to be "blameless, and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world." The darker the night, the brighter the stars shine. There is still hope for the prevention of pre-marital sex.

4.5 CONCLUSION

With the Biblical ideal background in place, we now look at the reality of the SDA youth; analysis of the data collected from them is presented. Also having looked at

the broad background of practical theology and Christian education, we now, narrow down to the Seventh-day Adventist context and its understanding of the situation which is happening among its youth.

CHAPTER FIVE

EMPIRICAL STUDY

In this empirical section, we will highlight the population studied, the instrument used and some results obtained.

5.1 POPULATION

The SDA church in Botswana has a membership of 19000 (2000). Close to three quarters of this membership is youth. The youth are divided into two groups: junior youth (10 to 15 years) and senior youth (16 to 30 years).⁹⁶ As reflected in the country's males per 100 females ratio of 91.6, there are generally more girls than boys in the SDA youth as well. Some were born in SDA families but the majority of the senior youth were converted into the church.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Youth Ministry Handbook, 5.

⁹⁷ This shows itself in the youth reports that seek to know how many youth progressive "classes" somebody has gone through. Most senior do not have the elementary classes like Busy Bee, Sunbeam, Builder, Explorer et cetera, which are taught at an earlier age.

5.2 SAMPLE

A group of 45 youth were selected at Francistown headquarters during a major church occasion. They represented all ages from twelve years to 32. Twenty-two of the 45 were boys whereas 23 were girls. Some were educated with Masters Degrees while others were still in primary school.

Geographically, they represented the whole country because Francistown, the second largest city in the country, is the middle point between the southern and the western part of Botswana. It is mostly made up of people from all parts of Botswana. In addition to this fact, the church seminar had brought representatives from all parts of the country.

Drew and Hardman believe that a sample of 30 can be regarded as adequate sample of behavior and opinion.⁹⁸ Therefore, it is hoped that 45 gives a fairly valid understanding of the SDA youth in the country.

⁹⁸ Quoted in Naidoo, S. 1994. MA dissertation in Counseling Psychology. University of Port Elizabeth, 49

5.3 RESEARCH TOOLS

A questionnaire of 31 questions was used and is attached at the end. I adopted its pattern and the questioning format from Dr. David Chitate of Solusi University, Bulawayo.⁹⁹

The area of one's sexuality is a very personal area of one's life that he/she cannot easily share. Therefore, a questionnaire suited the sensitive nature of the subject because it allows the respondents to express himself/herself more freely. Direct questions were asked which needed precise responses that one would not give as easily in an interview. This is especially so since anonymity was strongly emphasized and assured. Moreover, it is my opinion that a questionnaire used for a sensitive subject like somebody's private life, is more likely to give more valid answers than other methods like interview.

Moreover, Susan Moore and Doreen Rosenthal observe that "education about sexual values and sexual health is likely to be more effective if educators take into account the *current* [emphasis supplied] beliefs and practices of their target audience."¹⁰⁰ Therefore, a questionnaire helped

⁹⁹ Dr. David Chitate is the Director of Research and also Head of the Family Consumer Science Department at Solusi University in Zimbabwe.

¹⁰⁰ Moore, Susan and Doreen Rosenthal. 1993. Sexuality in Adolescence. New York: Routledge, Inc., 1.

to know the current beliefs and practices, given by the youth themselves, not by somebody else.

Lastly, a questionnaire is likely to get the precise information in a short time. It leads toward highlighting some tentative empirical trends and lends itself toward model development for further studies.

As stated in the hypothesis, the aspects of pre-marital sex that I wanted to discover are firstly, the extent of pre-marital sex among the SDA youth in Botswana and secondly, factors that lead to premarital sex. These aspects were operationalized by way of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections:

Section A - Biographical information of the

respondents. This section seeks to find out about their parents, home environment, education and where they come from. The motive behind this is to see what influence the background has on somebody's sexuality.

Section B - Sexual knowledge of the respondents. How much

do they know about sex and where did they find out about it? Does knowing or not knowing predispose somebody to pre-marital sex? What role and influence do different sources of sexual knowledge have on somebody's choice of sexual practice later? These are some of the intentions of this section.

Section C - Sexual practices of the respondents. Based on the upper two sections, how have the respondents been affected? What are their present sexual lifestyles? This is really where we get to know the extent of pre-marital sex among the youth. We will know how many of them are involved, what ages are mostly affected, how they are involved - whether with multiple partners, church lovers et cetera.

Section D - Sexual attitudes of the respondents. This section seeks to find out about their inner values, beliefs and convictions, although they may be doing something else. How do they, as Christians, reconcile their lifestyles with their faith? What do they, themselves, say?

With these four sections, it is hoped that enough of the probing for information has been done. The information will help us to know and theorize about the youth's sexual problem. The research gives some quantitative (facts) as well as qualitative (feelings, attitudes) results. Dr. Chitate uses the terms "quantitative" and "qualitative" in this way. For instance, we want to know the extent, hence percentage of those involved in pre-marital sex. The answer to the question, "At what age did you have your FIRST sexual experience?" will tell us how many have been

involved. Whereas, the results from the answers to the question, "I have a lover right now", will tell us the number or percentage of those who are currently practicing pre-marital sex.

Qualitatively, the answers to, "abstinence is possible" question, tells us about their feeling and attitude towards abstinence. Given five options, namely: a) strongly agree, b) agree, c) not sure, d) disagree, and e) strongly disagree, the questionnaire could get their general feeling regarding abstinence. The answer to the question, "It is old-fashioned not to have sex before marriage", tells us about their values regarding virginity and marriage and also about their attitude towards pre-marital sex. The Likert scale was useful at this point, I believe. The same applies to other aspects like virginity, dating and AIDS, for example.

Before the questionnaire was administered, the researcher held four pilot studies in a form of group discussions in four strategic towns in the country: Mahalapye, Selibe-Phikwe, Maun and Shakawe. Mahalapye is in the central, towards the southern part of the country; Selibe-Phikwe is a mining town in the eastern part; Maun is a northern, tourist town, while Shakawe is rural town in the western part of Botswana. In each of the sessions, about twenty church youths attended. Here, attitudes,

feelings and ideas were gleaned which helped the researcher to anticipate similar results. These projections were helpful in the formation of the hypothesis and even the problem statement.

Two of the group discussions were held before the questionnaire was developed. This gave rise to the type of questions that would help to bring out facts, feelings and attitudes. In the two sessions, the youths were given pieces of papers to just answer "Yes" or "No". This was for the purpose of seeing the extent of the problem and how different sections of the country compared. By the time the 31-item questionnaire was used, the researcher had a fairly good idea on how to ask for information and the possible outcomes. This helped to influence my phrasing of some of the questions in the questionnaire.

5.4 DATA COLLECTION

All the youth from 12-35 who totaled 45 were asked to remain after a major church occasion.¹⁰¹ Only two people were above 30 years; 32 and 33. The questionnaire, that is, instructions and other words that were thought to be a bit uncommon to some youths, was explained. They were asked

¹⁰¹ There was a youth seminar, which coincided with a live satellite broadcast from Papua New Guinea by a well-known and beloved SDA preacher, Dr. Mark Finley. It happened that in the evening, the youth who had come for the seminar and some of the local Francistown youth came to watch the live broadcast. This is where they were asked to remain when the broadcast ended. The youth showed absolute cooperation in the whole process.

to spread out in the vast church to allow no one to see what the other had written. Absolute confidentiality was assured. For instance, no name was required. At the end of completing the questionnaire, they themselves threw the papers into a veiled, dry baptistery behind the pulpit so that the researcher will not even guess the order in which they came. In this way, it encouraged disclosure and honesty with the facts of their private lives. All the questions were adequately answered.

5.5 CONCLUSION

With the above explanation of the process of research in mind, I now turn to a study of the results obtained. The data is studied especially in the light of the objectives of the research, which are, the extent of pre-marital sex and the factors that lead to it.

CHAPTER SIX

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

I will present the results by following the pattern of the questionnaire. That is, sexual knowledge, sexual practices and sexual attitudes. Occasionally, I will attempt to correlate these with the biographical information.

Out of 45 respondents, 22 were males and 23 were females. This was an excellent ratio as one would see a balanced picture between both sexes.

6.1 SEXUAL KNOWLEDGE

Sources of sexual knowledge were recorded like this:

SOURCES	NO. of respondents
1. Parents	5
2. School	7
3. Media (TV, videos, books etc)	8
4. Friends	10
5. Church	15
TOTAL	43

The church is commended for having a large share in teaching the youth about sex. But it was discovered that, as stated before, most young people were converted into the church. That means that by the time the church begin to teach them about pre-marital sex, they have already experimented with it. It could also mean that the parents do not teach their children about sex until the child hears it at church at a certain age that would be too late. It is certain that what the church teaches does not lead the youth into the practice of sex but rather to its avoidance.

However, besides the church, the next two sources are media and friends. These sources are very likely to influence the youth into the practice of sex before marriage.

6.2 SEXUAL PRACTICES

6.2.1

Ten out of 45 had never had sex. Hence they were virgins. Thirty-five (35) had had sex at some point in their lives and out of 35, 13 or 37% were still practicing sex at the time of the questionnaire.

Of those who were virgins, 60% of them had both parents whereas 51% of non-virgins were either from single parent or separated families. This finding, although not

too vastly different, can suggest the value of a stable family and of **both** parents in preventing pre-marital sex. Both parents can give more guidance and support to their children.

Thirty-seven percent is a high percentage for those who are practicing sex at the moment. It tells authorities (parents, teachers, church leaders and others) that not only has sex spoiled the majority of the youth but also it continues to follow them in their Christian lives. It may be that the authorities need to put more effort, programs and research to see how to reduce the statistic to a minimum.

6.2.2

Question #17 said: "This is what pulled me into my first sexual experience..." Twenty-seven out of 35 responded to it and only four reasons were given. The results are as follows:

<u>REASON</u>	<u>No. of respondents</u>
1. Needed support (money, affection, accommodation)	1
2. Anxiety to experiment after watching TV or book	6
3. Too much pressure from friends	10
4. Lack of knowledge	11
	<u>TOTAL: 27</u>

Lack of knowledge came up at the top of the list. Could it be that parents do not talk to their children about sex at home? It was discovered that only 10 out of 45 or 22% of the youth had their parents talk to them often or very often about sex. This means that children learn about sex from other sources like friends.

6.2.3

According to this sample, 20 out of 35 who had sex had started at the age of 16 or earlier, with the earliest being 6 years:

<u>AGE</u>	<u>Number who had sex</u>
<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>8</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>10</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>12</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>14</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>15</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>16</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>17</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>18</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>19</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>20</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>21 and over</u>	<u>4</u>

The conclusion from this table is that young people become sexually active and involved at ages at which the authorities (parents, teachers, guardians, government) feel that discussion about sex is inappropriate. This means that sex education should begin as early as early as the child can comprehend and unfold as he/she grow.

However, it is not the knowledge of facts alone that is needed. In another study in the United States of America,¹⁰² knowledge did not always result in practice of risk-reduction behaviors. Perhaps, it is the same case with HIV/AIDS: although most people know that it is incurable, yet, more and more people continue to get infected with it. More than knowledge of facts is needed to help the young people.

The above table also shows that from the age of 14, (with 16 being the highest) most young people begin to be more interested in sex. This is the adolescence stage. Naidoo describes adolescence as a stage that is characterized by rapid physical development; heightened sexual interest and often confusion.¹⁰³ Naidoo continues to note that anxiety levels are high, yet

¹⁰² Naidoo, 38

¹⁰³ Ibid, 32

responses are impulsive. He suggests that intervention by someone who knows is critical.¹⁰⁴ The young people are trying to discover who they are, their beliefs, values and feelings. Peer groups and opposite sex become important. The adolescent stage of growth is one of the reasons why they easily get influenced into sexual relationships. It is therefore, important that at this time, they be given information, guidance and encouragement on correct sexuality.

6.3 SEXUAL ATTITUDES

6.3.1

Twenty-six out of 43 or 61% would prefer to marry a virgin. Even some of those who have lovers right now would prefer to marry a virgin. Only 17 out of 43 or 40% would not mind to marry someone who is not a virgin. The point is that, virginity by the time of wedding is still desired by the majority.

Ninety percent (90%) of virgins would prefer to marry a virgin and 16 out of 17, which is almost 100% of those who said they would not mind marrying a non-virgin had sexual experience before. This could indicate some guilt or

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 32

despair. Pre-marital sex lowers ones ambition to reach the highest Biblical ideal. They are willing to settle for less, which is potentially more troublesome in marriage.

Ninety percent (90%) of virgins had high interest in church and only 75% of non-virgins had high interest in church. This could mean that the church can help one to abstain and that low interest in church is likely to be evidenced in non-ideal behavior. Therefore, heightening the youth's interest in church would help reduce their involvement in pre-marital sex.

6.3.2 ABSTINANCE

The last finding concerns their attitude towards abstinence. The table below shows the responses of all the 45 youth in the sample to the question: "Abstinence is possible."

Disagree/strongly disagree	Not sure	Agree/strongly agree
2	6	37

An overwhelming majority 37 out of 45 or 82% of the young people in the sample believe that it is possible to abstain from pre-marital sex. This suggests to the researcher that we can capitalize on our youth's attitude and belief that

abstinence is still possible. They are not yet defeated mentally. This gives hope and courage to those who are working with them.

However, as it was shown before, 35 out of 45, hence almost the same percentage also had had sex at some point in their lives. They know and believe it is possible, but they do not find the strength to do it. It is like the struggle of the Apostle Paul in Romans 7:15: "For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do." Our young people need to be helped to know where to find the power to live out what they know and believe to be right and possible.

6.4 CONCLUSION

The empirical data suggests that there is a great deal of pre-marital sex among the Seventh-day Adventist youth. The questions of causes are complex and tentative. They include single parenthood, lack of education at home by parents and explosion of media technology.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A POSSIBLE CHURCH MODEL FOR THE PREVENTION OF PREMARITAL SEX AMONG THE SDA YOUTH IN BOTSWANA

7.1 POSSIBLE INFLUENCES FOR PREVENTION OF PRE-MARITAL SEX

As seen from the empirical results in the previous chapter, prevention or at least, reduction of the premarital sex problem lies in many different areas or departments. They can all work together for the common young person. A list of such important influences include the following major points in this researcher's opinion:

Firstly, the home. Parents have to "connect" with their children so that sexuality education becomes easy and natural at home.

Secondly, the Youth department of the Church can give counseling and support to the youth in certain areas where the parents may not be able to deal with their own children, including children whose parents are not church members or have neglected their duty.

Thirdly, the Women's Ministries department the church must give special support and guidance to young women.

Fourthly, the Education department must seek to provide Christian schools that will keep the youth "close"

even at school. This is important because peer pressure was discovered as a major contributor to pre-marital sex. Moreover, children spend more time at school with peers than with their parents.

Fifthly, the Communication department must provide the youth with encouragement, enrichment through regular newsletters and other materials like audio-visuals.

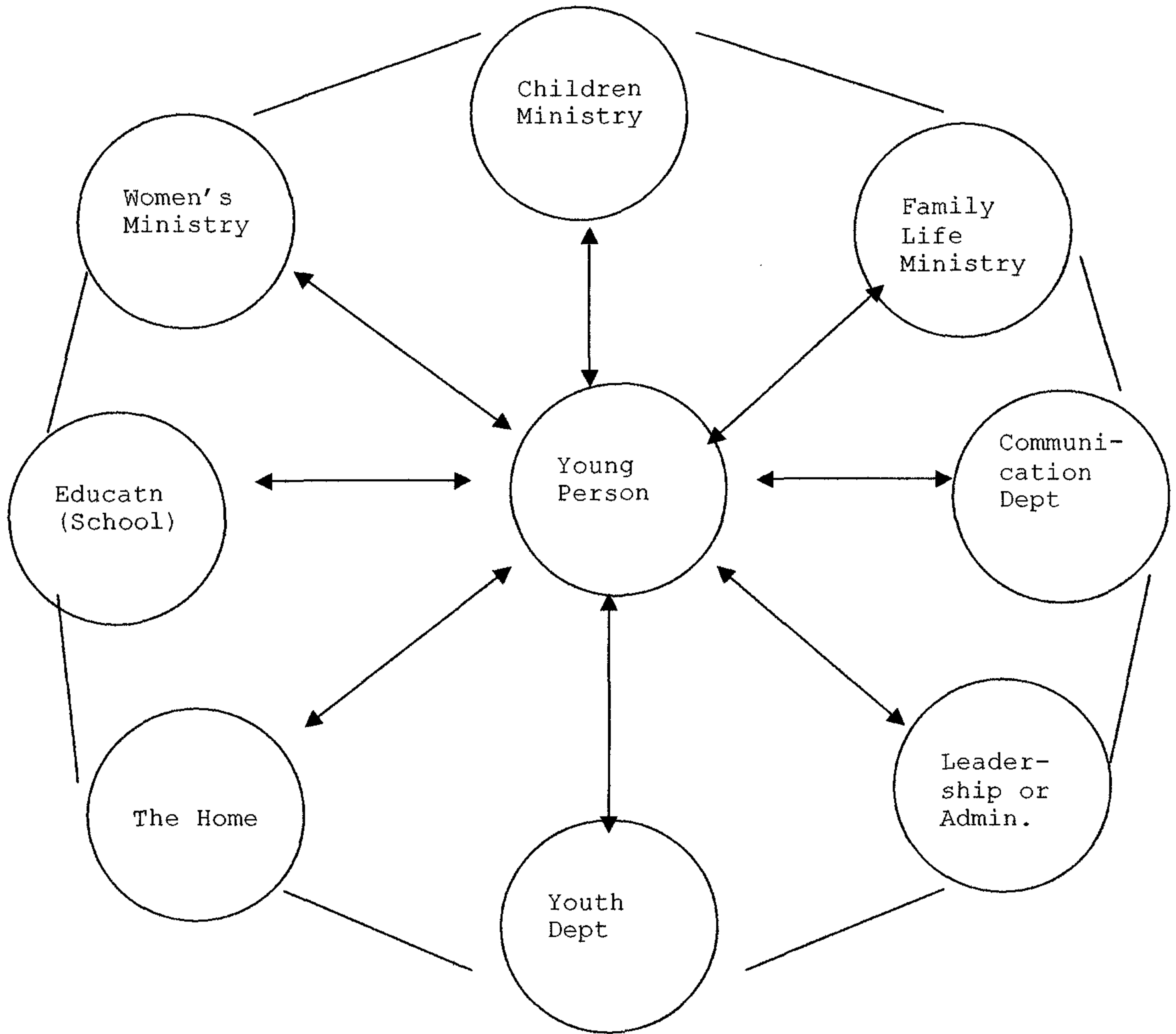
Sixthly, the Children's Ministries must help the parents with educating the children at different occasions. For those children who have no parents or are neglected by their parents, the church, primarily through Children's Ministry, becomes their parent.

Seventhly, the Family Life department must help to strengthen and enrich families so that they could be effective home "schools".

Lastly, the leadership, which includes the Directors, Pastors and Elders, must make sure there is proper planning, coordination and "tightness" of programs so that the programs are interesting and involving to the youth.

The departments listed above are not the only ones that have something to offer the youth, as all departments of the church should have an intentional endeavor to minister to the youth in their programs. All are needed.

A Model proposed for this holistic approach by the church is called, **INTERGRATED SEXUALITY EDUCATION**. The testing of this model will be left to a later study. It looks something like this:



7.2 EXPLANATION OF THE MODEL

The outer circles represent different departments that have to work together to contribute towards the instruction and support the young person needs in order to abstain from pre-marital sex. They are circles on their own, to show that they engage in their own planning, instruction and creativity as individual departments. They do not have to wait for all other departments to begin teaching or helping the child.

At the same time, the circles are joined together by lines, indicating that they work, plan and consult together as a team from time to time. Next, the young person in the middle is also in a circle, meaning that he/she is also expected to be motivated, by the instructions received, into a "self-education" program of his/her own. Consequently, he or she matures and moves out of the center into any of the outer entities as an "educator" himself/herself. The process is a spiral. That is, the young people who have received holistic instruction are expected to turn out to be even better educators.

Lastly, the lines connecting the outer circles with the center are pointing in both directions,

representing the instruction that the entities give to the youth. At the same time pointing in the opposite direction, they show that as the educators impart instruction, they also learn something in the process, which helps them improve their skills, methods, content et cetera. It is a practical theology situation; it is not a one-way but a two-way process.

7.3 CONCLUSION

Although the testing of this model will be left for a later study, it is hoped that it already offers an alternative approach to the situation of premarital sex. The youth will no longer be left to be the burden of the Youth Department alone or the parents alone. Those in leadership can sensitize all departments towards an "INTEGRATED SEXUALITY EDUCATION" of their youth.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study has come up with many important findings and indicates many interesting trends that should enable other researchers to highlight in future studies. Some of the major findings include the following points:

Firstly, it was discovered from the sample, that the overall knowledge about sex among the youth is high. This is evidenced by the fact that 78% of the sample has had sex before, and that the majority had it by the age of 16 years. Moreover, besides the experimental knowledge, among the top sources of knowledge they have come across are media and friends. These will be discussed in further detail in the next paragraph.

Secondly, besides the church and school, the predominant sources of sexual knowledge for the youth, which usually influence negatively, are media and friends. These sources are prevalent, as noted before that sex is saturating the society and the youth in the general world adopt an attitude of "free sex". The youth in the church meet their friends at school, malls and everywhere and are

bombarded with sexual themes from them and also from the media.

Thirdly, it was discovered that, on average, parents very seldom talk to their children about sex. Perhaps, this is because it is not easy within most African cultures to talk to children about sex. However, the other reason that might be contributing is the busy life in which families nowadays find themselves. Parents and children hardly spend quality time together in which this important and sensitive subject can be *discussed*.

Fourthly, most young people (78%) had had sex at some point in their lives. This statistic shows that there is a great extent of pre-marital sex among the SDA youth in Botswana. Thus, the hypothesis has been verified.

Fifthly, thirty seven percent (37%) of the sample are sexually involved currently. As stated before, this shows that not only has pre-marital sex spoiled the church youth but it also continues to follow them in their Christian lives. This again, leads us to the urgency of studying how to help the young people live up to their convictions. Hence, the third recommendation under 8.2 below that seeks to help them with a way of abstaining.

Sixthly, the youth start experimenting with sex at ages when authorities (parents, guardians, and government) think that it is too early to discuss sex with them. In

this study, some respondents reported having started experimenting with sex at 6, 8 or 10 years. Hence, one of the biggest emphases of this study, namely for parents to start talking with children earlier than they themselves think it is appropriate to do so.

Seventhly, the majority of the youth (82%) still believe that abstaining from sex until marriage is possible. This finding is a positive assurance to the authorities that the youth are willing to live up to God's ideal. It is also a plea for assistance.

Eighthly, the majority of the youth (75%) would prefer to marry a virgin. In other words, they want to *marry* somebody who has abstained, not only part of his/her, but the rest of it. This, again, is an attestation to the Biblical ideals of marriage, virginity and abstinence. Hence, the truthfulness of the problem statement, namely, the erosion by pre-marital sex of the Biblical ideal for marriage, which includes virginity, remains.

Ninthly, more than half of the youth (51.4%) are from single-parent families. Moreover, only 40% of virgins are from single-parent families as opposed to 60% of virgins who are from "both-parent" homes. Although there is not a big margin between those from single parents and those from both parents, by already, we can begin to see that the single-parent family structure is fast becoming

predominant. Although a single parent can bring up a well-rounded child, it is easier and better for both parents to bring up a child.

Lastly, the most vulnerable age range for sex begins at 14. This is more or less the beginning of the adolescence stage where young are experiencing drastic changes in their physiology, yet they do not have experience to make the right decisions. Authorities are greatly needed to come to their rescue at this stage. If parents had not been close to them before this stage, the adolescents will find it difficult to confide in them. They rather prefer their peers or just discover things on their own. Perhaps, more adolescent-friendly forums and counselors are needed at every institution dealing with the youths of this stage.

8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

A number of areas arising from this study could be pursued for further research. But perhaps, there are four significant areas that need thorough and urgent research:

Firstly, the testing of the "integrated sexuality education" model. It is my conviction that this model brings together a number of important areas that are necessary for the prevention of pre-marital sex among SDA youth in Botswana. Therefore, someone could test it and

prove it for all churches and entities in the SDA church in Botswana and beyond. The testing could involve picking a certain church, with its given departments, and follow the model for five years or so. In other words, a researcher or a group of researchers will educate about, promote, supervise and follow the results of the model for five or more years in one congregation.

Secondly, another important area, which has not been addressed at all in this study, is the restoration, care and counseling of the victims of pre-marital sex. According to the study, 78% of the youth have had sex before marriage at some point in their lives. Evidently, the majority regrets it, many have children, others have backslidden from the church et cetera. Some trauma of guilt, remorse, loss of self-respect et cetera ensues after the experience or at conversion. This may interfere with normal growth in the physical, psychological, emotional, social and even spiritual dimensions. Consequently, one's usefulness in the society is hampered. This current study has only identified that there is a problem, but has not gone into whether or not it is being addressed and if so, how. It will be very helpful to know the extent of the damage and the best ways of helping to restore our young people.

Thirdly, the majority of the youth (82%) believe that abstinence is possible and 75% would like to marry a virgin. **Yet, many find it difficult to abstain.** It is like what Paul says in Romans 7:15: "For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do." Perhaps, a study could be done to look into **the "anatomy" of abstinence.** In other words, besides preventing the extent of pre-marital sex in the church, this particular research could help the individual himself/herself in facing the sexual temptation in his/her everyday life and being able to abstain.

Finally, we could encourage practical theology departments of our SDA universities and seminaries to make a study of this problem. The church, as an object of study, often has nobody studying it. This results in many problems going on unnoticed and unsolved. Pastors and church members only lament the situation because they have no skills to investigate and theorize. I also see a challenge to train more practical theologians. For instance, I am one of the few practical theologians in the country.

8.3 CONCLUSION

Prevention of pre-marital sex, as seen from this research, has a broad spectrum of factors that can all work

together like a chain. It is hoped that this study is only a beginning; an eye-opener into what needs to be strengthened and what needs to be discouraged in our society, the church and more especially in our families and the individual's life.

It is true that in the last days, the Bible predicts an almost universal apostasy. Yet, God will also have His remnant that will stand unpolluted by the practices of the world. 2 Peter 1:4 assures us that this is possible:

"...His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which has been given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

If individual Christians, Christian families and Churches could do all in their power to maintain God's ideal for sex and marriage, an impact could be felt in the society. The world would learn about God's ideals on sexuality for them as well. In Botswana, the government has already started feeling that churches, through their message of

abstinence¹⁰⁵ have a better solution to AIDS. Perhaps, they also need to see the church young people demonstrating it.

¹⁰⁵The former president of the country, Sir Ketumile Masire, was interviewed in the British Broadcasting Corporation and he said that condoms have been tried in his country but they are not working. The only message that works is abstaining. For those who will try it, it works 100%. The government has set up a religious government organization that trains Christian counselors, pastors and others on dealing with HIV/AIDS. Particularly a Reverend heads it.

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APPENDIX**SOME TENTATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHURCH AUTHORITIES**

The trends of this research results include recommendations to church authorities on the following:

- A. The research showed that 60% of virgins had both parents. The youth thus need a stable family of both father and mother. It seems that both parents give better guidance, support and example to the child than a single parent. Therefore, it is recommended that parents consider enduring in their marriage and should not consider divorce, at least for the sake of the children, if not for anything else. To those who are not married, it is recommended that one should not bear children out of wedlock because it somehow disadvantages the child. They could use contraceptives if they engage in sex.

The Family Life department of the church could help with more Family Life Enrichment Seminars, Retreats et cetera. Cohabiting relationships should be strongly disapproved in the church. Marriage, instead, should be encouraged.

B. It is recommended that the "home school" be strengthened. That is, parents should take the responsibility to become the primary teachers of their own children, especially when they are still young. Proper early upbringing helps lay a solid foundation for a noble character in the child, which will prove a fortress against many evil influences in the society. If possible, parents could consider dropping the second job for the sake of the children; then the other spouse could become self-employed. Self-employment gives us a chance to even work together with our children, imparting to them practical skills. Some parents are taken away by educational pursuits. For example, a mother goes overseas for her studies. It is recommended that parents consider correspondence, especially with modern technology like the Internet.

It is recommended that parents become "friends" with their children. Perhaps they are distant from them. Therefore, time comes into focus as a pivotal factor. Parents should invest more time to teach and nurture children, especially when they are still young. A noted family psychologist, Dr. James Dobson, advocates for the children to be taught by the parents until they are 8 or 9 years. He says: "Keeping children at home in the early elementary school years is an idea whose time has

come."¹⁰⁶ Blake emphasizes this idea: "Parents should be the only teachers of their children, until they are eight or ten years of age."¹⁰⁷

Those who have grown-up children need to "connect" with their adolescents. Sometimes, adults are too serious, too "grown up". The "connecting" could be done through activities like, just sitting together, working together, nature walks, listening to their feelings, surprises, play, hugs, picnics, assigning leadership roles in the home and birthday parties.

- C. If the parent family is not able to give the necessary support, the responsibility for nurturing a child of Christ falls on the church. Families in the church should determine, by God's grace, to be role models for disadvantaged children.
- D. It was noted that high interest in church somehow reduces one's involvement in pre-marital sex. This, then, calls for careful planning on the part of youth

¹⁰⁶ Dobson, James. 1982. Raising Children. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers Inc., 69.

¹⁰⁷ ³² Blake, Harold. 1995. Child Age and Education. La Grande, WA: Manna Publishing House, 86.

leaders. For example, to call interesting speakers from somewhere, as the budgets allow, quality talks and variety in the programs. Something does not need to be expensive to be interesting, it only calls for some little creativity.

It is recommended that at the beginning of every year, as new leaders are elected, youth leaders be carefully chosen. Then, leaders should hold planning and consultative meetings with the youth to get their suggestions. Youth Witnessing Bands and "Cell groups" could also keep the young people involved and thus lessen chances of them getting tempted with sex, as it is said, "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." Incorporation of modern ideas and technology is very important to the youth. For example, computers and tours. It could be rightly said that the youth programs need to be "packed" with various, adventurous, fun and interesting ideas.

- E. Since more girls than boys become single parents, it is recommended that more attention be given to our young women in the education (at home and elsewhere). The SDA church has taken a step to set up "Women's Ministry" as a separate department, addressing the needs and challenges of women in particular. However, at the

moment, Women's Ministry mostly attracts older women.

Perhaps, a sub-department of Women's Ministry should be formed, something like YWCA or call it "Jewels" that will focus more on young women.

- F. The youth who are still practicing sex, need to be encouraged back to abstinence, otherwise their salvation is at stake. It is, therefore, recommended to run interval Weeks of Revival entitled, for instance, "Faith, not Fear". Sermons could also be prepared that show that through God's power, abstinence is possible. Sharing experiences and friendships with others who have "made it" can help. It is also recommended that lectures on resisting sexual pressure and counseling sessions should be provided, to help those who have lovers on how to drop a boyfriend or girlfriend.

- G. Among the top sources of sexual knowledge were media and friends. It is therefore, recommended that there be control of television viewing and associations with other children in the neighborhood. Parents should be careful not to allow children to watch anything and associate with anyone. This also, challenges the parents to invest money in buying good videos and other entertainments. This is because we are not only to restrict but also to

offer a better substitute. Association includes childhood time: parents need to be careful even with the choice of neighborhood and schools their child will grow in because children tend to adopt the ideas and attitudes of their peers and teachers.

H. It is recommended that we capitalize on our youth's faith that abstinence is possible. This could be done through more seminars on abstinence, incentives for certain attainments et cetera. An unlimited membership club could be formed which is joined by anyone who makes a sincere commitment to God to abstain. It can be called "the 7000 club" from 1 Kings 19:18: "Yet, I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him." Just the name, "7000 club" can give great motivation as the youth talk about it. A newsletter, which can just be one page, which carries news and encouragements to the "7000 club" can be published quarterly or monthly.

I. It has been discovered by other studies that knowledge of facts alone does not always lead to positive behavioral change. Therefore, it is recommended that our schools go beyond the biology and facts of sex to the issues of immortality and how to prevent pre-marital

sex. An element of the HOW TO ABSTAIN should be incorporated into the syllabus. In these days of industrialization, where most parents go to work, the school needs to take some of the responsibility to help the youth with the "how to abstain" and not leave the church to do it all alone. This is especially true because the youth spend most of their time at school than at church, and the majority of them do not attend church. If public schools cannot be able to do it, then more church schools are needed.

ANONYMOUS QUESTIONNAIREINSTRUCTIONS

1. Answer all questions divided into four sections.
2. Provide your own responses, not of another.
3. Provide only factual and honest information.
4. Do not write your name anywhere in the questionnaire.
5. The information is personal and confidential.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Gender _____
2. Age _____
3. What is your family structure? Circle one.
 - a) mother only
 - b) father only
 - c) no father and no mother
 - d) both parents
4. On average, my "parent family" was:
 - a) excellent
 - b) good
 - c) troubled
 - d) other
5. Who spent most of the time with you before school age?
 - a) mother
 - b) father
 - c) grandmother
 - d) sister
 - e) hired baby sitter
 - f) other, specify _____
6. Highest education completed by you _____
7. Highest education completed by your guardian _____

8. Based on your interest and participation in religious activities, how would you classify your religious status?
- a)no interest
 - b)low interest
 - c)high interest
 - d)very high interest
9. Who has contributed the most in your discipline in life?
- a)mother
 - b)father
 - c)grandparents
 - d)sister/brother
 - e)school
 - f)church
 - g)other, specify_____
10. How frequently do you have some form of family worship?
- a)never
 - b)1-2 times a week
 - c)3-5 times a week
 - d)6-10 times a week
 - e)more than 10 times a week.
11. Approximately, how many hours a day do you spend watching TV?
- a)0-1
 - b)2-5
 - c)6-8
 - d)more than 8 hrs.

SECTION B: SOURCES OF SEXUAL KNOWLEDGE

12. How many books, magazines on sex or sexuality have you browsed through so far?
- a) none
 - b) 1-2
 - c) 3-5
 - d) 6-10
 - e) over 10
13. How many videos, films or TV shows on sex or sexuality have you watched so far?
- a) none
 - b) 1-2
 - c) 3-5
 - d) 6-10
 - e) over 10
14. My parents/guardians talk to me about sex
- a) very often
 - b) often
 - c) seldom
 - d) very seldom
 - e) never
15. My present sexual knowledge was received from
- a) parents/relatives
 - b) neighbors
 - c) friends
 - d) Media (TV, books, magazines)
 - e) church
 - f) school
 - g) other, specify _____

SECTION C: SEXUAL PRACTICES

16. At what age did you have your FIRST sexual experience?
 a) _____
 b) if you have never, tick here _____
17. This is what pulled me into my FIRST sexual experience:
 a) too much pressure from friends
 b) curiosity to experiment after watching TV, reading a book
 c) lack of knowledge
 d) I was forced (raped)
 e) I needed support (money, love, accommodation etc)
 f) I was under the influence of drugs
 g) not applicable (if you have never)
 h) other, specify _____
18. I have had:
 a) _____ lovers (# of sexual partners) up to now.
 b) no lover at all.
 c) other, specify _____
19. I have a lover (sexual partner) right now.
 a) Yes _____ How many _____
 b) No
20. I am in courtship (having no sex together) with somebody I the church.
 a) Yes
 b) No
21. I hold hands, hug passionately and kiss opposite sex:
 a) very often
 b) often
 c) seldom
 d) very seldom
 e) never
22. I have used masturbation as an alternative
 a) very often
 b) often
 c) seldom
 d) very seldom
 e) never

23. I have used animals as an alternative

- a) very often
- b) often
- c) seldom
- d) very seldom
- e) never

24. I have a child

- a) Yes
- b) No

SECTION C: SEXUAL ATTITUDES

25. Young people can accurately learn about sex on their own
- a) strongly agree
 - b) agree
 - c) not sure
 - d) disagree
 - e) strongly disagree
26. Fear of AIDS or pregnancy will stop a youth from having sex
- a) strongly agree
 - b) agree
 - c) not sure
 - d) disagree
 - e) strongly disagree
27. It's old-fashioned not to have sex before marriage
- a) strongly agree
 - b) agree
 - c) not sure
 - d) disagree
 - e) strongly disagree
28. A girl cannot stand the pressure from boys to have sex with them
- a) strongly agree
 - b) agree
 - c) not sure
 - d) disagree
 - e) strongly disagree
29. Having sex nowadays is
- a) alright if one is in love
 - b) normal part of growing up
 - c) immoral, sinful and wrong
 - d) needful for emotional or economical survival
 - e) another reason _____
30. When the time comes for me to marry
- a) I would prefer to marry a virgin
 - b) I wouldn't mind marrying someone with a child
 - c) I prefer not to marry
 - d) I hate marriage (opposite sex)

31. Abstinence is possible.
- a) strongly agree
 - b) agree
 - c) not sure
 - d) disagree
 - e) strongly disagree