



Seasons In Time

ENCOUNTERING GOD FACE TO FACE...
IN OUR BRIEF JOURNEY THROUGH LIFE

Life Season II – My World As a Teenager (Continued)

Looking for Love in All the Wrong Places

Are you still a *VIRGIN? What's wrong with you!*" snorted the guys in my 10th grade PE Class. "We were making love in the 8th grade," they boasted; "When are you ever going to Grow Up and be a *REAL* man?" Taking that dare led to the most devastating experience of my life. It all started when my new girlfriend looked at me through tear-filled eyes. With a trembling voice she sobbed, "I think I'm pregnant! What are we going to do?" That began a nightmare of events that changed my life forever. At my parent's insistence, we stood at an altar exchanging wedding vows that we both knew we'd never keep. It wasn't long after the baby was born that my wife, still in her teens, began cheating. To get even with her, I did the same. By the time we turned 21 we signed divorce papers and went our separate ways. *Because I didn't know the difference between love and sex, my teenage world and my future were destroyed forever!*

I awoke one morning to an inner struggle beyond description. Two worlds had collided and I didn't know what to do. One world was toys and teddy bears; the other was raging hormones running wild! *Part of me wanted to be a little girl safe in my mother's arms. The other craved the arms of a young man.* I knew that one day I would "sort of" morph into a young woman, but I wasn't prepared for this emotional warzone in my soul. As a Christian, I was totally confused. God created me to be a saint, but I felt more like a sinner! *Was sexual desire a blessing or a beast? If it's a blessing, how do I control this beast?*



Love is infinitely greater and higher than human sexuality. Both are essential in a godly marriage, but when one is confused (or substituted) for the other, the end is tragic. Because God created men and women to be romantically attracted to one another, their righteous union in a covenant of marriage is blessed by the Lord (*Gen. 2:18, 21-25; Matt. 19:4-6*). When a marriage relationship is proper before the Lord, it even becomes an example of Christ's love for His Church (*Eph. 5:25-33*). *Read what happened when these two teenagers discovered the shallowness of looking for love outside of God's righteous intentions for a loving marriage.*

Over and over I rehearsed my 10th grade foolishness. Why did I fall for the challenge of my renegade friends? But it was my own stupidity that caused me to cave in to their peer pressure. I fell into such despair knowing I had ruined my life that I stopped dating altogether. Several years later I began attending a Christian church. It was there that I came to know Jesus as my Savior AND the Lord of my life. With Christ at the helm of my new life, I began to date again. *But this time I looked for love that God intended, not just proof of my manhood.* Two years later, I met a lady who had a similar experience. As I grew to love her and her little girl, I discovered what covenant love really means. After we married, we gained custody of my son from my former marriage. *Now I know that with God all things are possible. In Christ, my life is fully restored.*

As I continued to agonize over my new-found sexuality, I needed to learn more about sex and love. I found a prayer by a man named Harry Hollis Jr. that gave me a new understanding of God's intentions. I begin to cry as I read, "Sex is body and spirit; it is passion and tenderness. It is strong embraces and gentle handholding. It is joyful tears on a honeymooner's face. It is tears on a wrinkled face on a golden wedding anniversary. It's a quiet look across a room, a love note on a pillow, a rose lying on a breakfast plate, laughter in the night." Then when I read "The Five Love Languages" by Gary Chapman, my mind was opened to expressions of love that most never understand: "words of affirmation; quality time; gifts of the heart; acts of service; and physical touch." Finally, I read 1 Corinthians 13 and Ephesians 5:21-33. *That's when God filled my questioning heart with His presence. Knowing these things, I vowed to never look for love in the wrong places!*

Next: More Stories from My Teenage Years - *Why I Don't Trust Anyone!*

