

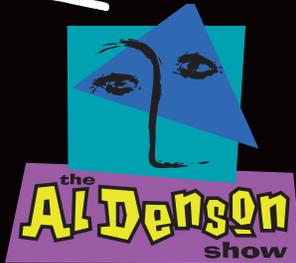
Dear Friends,

Thank you for your correspondence to the Al Denson Show and for tuning in every week to our program. My prayer for you is to be encouraged in your daily walk with God through the words of this booklet. Our hope is that in turn you will tell others of what God is doing through our ministry to youth and parents on TV. I am convinced you will not find another program on any network dealing with the issues today's youth and parents are facing, while providing answers from a Godly perspective.

Please help us with your donation. Your support will not only keep this program on the air, but will allow us to continue providing these materials on a weekly basis to thousands of people as a gift of encouragement. We need YOU to partner with us. All gifts are tax-deductible. Please make your gift payable to Celebration Ministries and mail to the address below.

May God bless you and thank you for watching!

Sincerely,



An Outreach of Celebration Ministries

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HOW DOES GOD SPELL



SEX?



When Al Denson speaks to students—more than 2,000,000 face to face—he comes with his own story of struggle and tragedy. In December 1994,

Al's much publicized, near-death experience in the crash of a small aircraft led him to a rare insight about the tenuous nature of earthly life.

With seven albums behind him and a string of #1 songs and awards that includes a Dove for "Best Praise Album of the Year", Denson's songs and messages to students from junior high through college continue to touch an ever-widening audience. In addition to his own performances, Al has been featured at crusades for Dr. Billy Graham, Franklin Graham, Ralph Bell, and Dawson McAllister. His new TV show, "The Al Denson Show", is seen by millions on TBN. The program targets and involves youth and the issues they face every day.

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HOW DOES GOD SPELL S-E-X?

There is probably not another issue that causes more stress and confusion among teenagers than sex. Stress exists because sex is such a powerful influence and force in your life. Confusion exists because you are receiving such mixed messages about sex:

- **Parents:** Don't do it!
(End of discussion.)
- **Church:** Don't even think about doing it!
(It's a sin.)
- **School:** This is how you do it.
(Just be safe.)
- **Friends:** Everybody's doing it.
(Not.)
- **Media:** It's no big deal.
(Yes, it is.)

According to national polls, sex is the number one pressure that teenagers say that they face. This temptation is a bigger problem in their lives than drugs, alcohol, or violence. One reason sex is such a dominant influence in our lives is because it is everywhere:

- music with sexually explicit words,
- television and movies with all the sexual innuendos, nudity, story lines, and jokes,
- advertising that cashes in on the fact that "sex sells",
- magazines that are full of pictures and articles that would have only been found in publications considered "trash" just 30 years ago,
- and what about the bare bodies you see everywhere from the mall to the beach?

It's enough to make you crazy! Do you feel like you are caught in a huge tug-of-war? The world pulling you one way and God pulling you the other way? Who do you believe? Whose side will you be on? Before you make that decision, you owe it to yourself to examine the facts. Always remember, whenever someone is trying to convince you to come over to their way of thinking, you had better check out what's in it for them.

The world would like for you to believe that sex is simply a physical act, NO BIG DEAL. Hollywood spells sex:

S-hallow
E-asy
X-tramarital

Ask yourself: If the kind of relationships that Hollywood endorses are so great, then why do most of them have such lousy track records? If their relationships are so fulfilling, why do they go through so many marriages and divorces? And what is their motivation to encourage you to embrace their lifestyle? Money. The world wants your money and once again, sex sells.

Not only is most of the world doing everything it can to lure you to its way of thinking and acting, but it is lying to you about the other side. The world wants you to believe that God spells sex this way:

S-inful
E-vil
X-rated

WHY SHOULD I WAIT?

WHAT IF I HAVEN'T WAITED?

HOW DO I WAIT?

Nothing, I repeat, NOTHING, could be farther from the truth. God thinks sex is great. Remember, it was all His idea! He designed your body for sex. But why then would God create you for sex, give this overwhelming desire to experience it, and then say wait?

To try and clear up some of the confusion, let's start by setting the record straight.

This is the way God spells sex:

- S**-ymbolic
- E**-xtra-special
- X**-citing

Those last two you can probably figure out, but SYMBOLIC? What's that about?

Let me explain.

God is one being with three parts, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We were created by Him in the same way. One life made up of three parts: body, soul, and spirit. You can't separate them. Whatever we do in one area of our life influences all the other areas. For instance, whatever you do physically will eventually affect you emotionally. Whatever goes on with you emotionally will eventually affect you spiritually. You cannot isolate one area of your life from all the others.

This is also true of sex. Sex, the way God created it, is to be an emotional and spiritual experience as well as a physical one. To limit sex to just a physical act is to cheat yourself and your partner, and to totally miss what God had in mind when he created sex, which is an ultimate, total experience.

God's ideal for marriage and sex is found in Genesis 2:25 where it says that "the man and his wife (Adam and Eve) were both naked, but felt no shame." The word naked in the Hebrew language (the language in which this verse was originally written) means more than just being physically naked. It means that they had no hidden areas, no hang-ups, no embarrassment, no fears. God created sex to be an experience of total ONENESS in every way: physically, spiritually, and emotionally.

God intends that the dating relationship be the place where two people come together spiritually. The engagement period is to be the place where two people come together emotionally. Total oneness is impossible outside of marriage because it is God that goes on to supernaturally complete the process of making two people one on their wedding day. This happens as they make their vows of commitment to each other before Him at a marriage altar. Marriage is a covenant involving not two, but three: a man, a woman, and God.

In the Bible, a covenant would always be sealed with blood. Jesus shed His blood to seal the new covenant between God and man. Sex, in the same way, **symbolizes** the covenant of marriage. A woman is the only female animal that has a hymen. When the hymen is broken on her wedding night and a little blood is shed, it is a symbol that the contract of marriage has been sealed before God.

In the same way, baptism is a physical act that symbolically paints a picture of our identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. We are demonstrating on the outside what has happened to us on the inside. Just as scriptural baptism takes place AFTER you are saved to SYMBOLIZE what has ALREADY happen in your life when you got saved, sex is to be that physical act that SYMBOLIZES the oneness that has already taken place emotionally and spiritually.

This is why sex outside of marriage is empty and meaningless. God says wait for marriage to have sex, not because He doesn't want you to have any fun, but because He wants to protect this most wonderful gift He has for you and to make sure you experience it to its fullest.

Let me explain it further like this: What if some of your friends had seen this musical on Broadway and now all they ever talk about is how great this show is. They make it sound so wonderful that you decide you must see it for yourself. So, you save up your money, fly to New York City, and spend \$150 for a ticket to see this famous Broadway musical.

You are so excited that you get to your seat early and can hardly wait for the show to start. Finally, you hear the orchestra begin to play and you hear singing and people talking, but the curtain never opens up. The entire performance is done behind the curtain. Can you imagine how disappointed and let down you would be

when the play was over? All evening you kept thinking that surely the curtain would open, and you would be able to fully enjoy this experience, but it never happened. Something important was missing. Now all you can think about was how much it cost you and how cheated you feel.

The same thing happens when we try to make sex an isolated, physical experience. We cheat ourselves, our partner, and dishonor the

One who created the gift for us to begin with.

Hopefully, now you see a more clearly what God's attitude toward sex really is, so let's try to answer three important questions that I'm sure must be on your mind.

- I. WHY SHOULD I WAIT?
- II. HOW DO I WAIT?
- III. WHAT IF I HAVEN'T WAITED?



I. WHY SHOULD I WAIT?

1. You Could Die.

There is a condition with which every person under the age of 25 is afflicted. It is the Superman/Supergirl Syndrome. It causes young people to believe that they are invincible, that bad stuff will bounce off them like bullets bounce off of the man of steel. As a result, it has been proven that most teenagers are not motivated by fear. This is a very scary situation because there has never been a time in history when intelligent teenagers should be more afraid than now.

We know that AIDS has been the sixth leading cause of death among 15-24 year olds since 1991. Sometimes it takes ten years or more to find out that you are a carrier. **There is no cure.** Ten years from now you could be married with children and give AIDS to your whole family before you even know you have it.

The World Health Organization estimates that by the year 2000 more than 20 million men and women will be infected with the deadly AIDS virus. In the next few years, over 100 million people will either be infected with HIV or will have already died. Every day in the United States over 4,000 teenagers contract a sexually transmitted disease, most of which will cause them to suffer in one way or the other for the rest of their lives.

What about condoms, you know, "safe sex"? Condoms fail one out of six times (like playing Russian Roulette with a loaded six-shooter). The AIDS virus is so small it can pass through a microscopic hole in a latex condom. Besides, most guys just don't use them.

2. You Could Get Pregnant.

Every 24 hours, another 3000 teenagers lose their virginity. In that same 24 hours, 2,700 teenage girls will become pregnant. That is more than a million each year. Three out of ten will choose to abort their babies. In 1994, that added up to 298,000 teen abortions for one year.

What about the "pill", you ask? You only have to look at the statistics to see that the pill is not a magic bullet. First, teenage girls are not regular enough in their menstrual cycle for the pill to be totally effective, and most are not responsible and mature enough to take them consistently. Almost every girl that gets pregnant will tell you the same thing, "I never thought it could happen to me".

3. It Could Damage Your Relationship.

Sex outside of marriage usually becomes the driving force in the relationship. It can lead to a serious breakdown in communication because you never really get to know each other when the relationship is built around the physical. These kind of relationships are usually characterized by a lack of trust and respect as well.

4. It Will Damage Your Fellowship With God.

Isaiah 59:2 says that "Your sin has come between you and your God and your sins have hidden His face from you." Sexual sin causes a Christian to lose interest in spiritual things. There is no way to have a genuine interest in prayer, Bible study, or worship. Sexual sin will also rob you of your peace as a Christian.

5. It Will Damage Your Usefulness to God.

II Timothy 2:21 says that God can't use an unclean vessel. Also, if your sin becomes public, it can cause other people to stumble and maybe even to fall. Even though God forgives, your testimony is still hurt, as is the cause of Christ.

6. It Can Damage Your Marriage.

Couples who have the most problems after they marry are those who engaged in sex before they were married. These are also the ones who are most likely to engage in extramarital sex later.

This is all bad and serious stuff. However, waiting isn't just about saying "No" to bad things, it is also about saying "YES" to some really good things as well...

Ten years from now you could be married with children and give AIDS to your whole family before you even know you have it.

SO WHAT'S WORTH THE WAIT?

1. Extra-Special, Exciting Sex!

Unlike the world, God wants us to handle sex with care because He created it to be extra-special and exciting. Remember, He thought it up! When sex is treated with the care and respect that God desires, and when it is done His way, in His time, it is the most incredibly beautiful, fulfilling, and exciting experience that a man and woman can ever share.

2. The Blessing Of God On Your Life

The Bible says in I Corinthians 6:19-20, **“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”**

In I Samuel 2:30, God says, **“Those who honor Me, I will honor”**.

First of all, from these verses we see that if you are a Christian, you no longer have the right to call the shots in your own life. Jesus purchased you with his own blood, and He, by right of ownership, is in charge. Honoring God with our bodies is not a suggestion, it is a commandment.

Secondly, if you will honor God, He will honor and bless your life. That blessing will include His provision for you and His protection over you. God blesses sex in marriage. It is a sin to have sex any other way. If you choose not to wait for marriage, you are cheating yourself, your partner now, and your future mate, but mostly you are hurting and dishonoring the God who knows you best and loves you most.

If you are a Christian, you have a high calling. You are royalty, a son or daughter of the King of Kings. He created you for one person on this earth. God created your body, purchased it, and lives in it. He wants you to have maximum, extreme, ultimate sex! **SO WAIT!** It's worth it.

II. HOW DO I WAIT?

If you are really serious about having God's best, you must be willing to set some boundary lines in your life. Boundaries are not restrictions, but self-imposed safeguards that will protect you and help insure that you reach your goal. A boundary is an invisible fence that you put up around the different areas of your life.

It is a way of saying, “Here are the lines I have chosen to draw and I WILL NOT cross over them for any reason.”

You **MUST** have a game plan in place before you need to use it. If you wait until the heat is on and emotions (and hormones!) are high, you've waited too late. You **MUST** decide ahead of time what your answer will be before the questions are ever asked. Here are some suggestions for boundary setting:

1. Stay Out Of Tempting Situations

Certain situations and places are trouble waiting for a place to happen and you know it. Parked cars, a house, or any place where the two of you will be completely alone should be declared “out-of-bounds”. You may be a strong Christian who really wants to do the right thing, but your body is saying “do it!” Determine now that you will never put yourself in a spot like that.

2. Limit Physical Contact

How far is too far? Most teenagers want to know how close they can get to the line without going out-of-bounds. Instead of asking, “How close can I get to the line?”, ask “How far away from the line can I stay?”

Your boundary lines could be something like this: (1) No part of my body will ever enter any part of another person's body, nor will I allow anyone, for any reason, to do this to me. (2) I will not touch or be touched on any part of the body that a one-piece bathing suit would cover.

3. Just Say No

To avoid crossing the boundary lines you have set, you will have to say no to things like:

- Spending too much time alone
- Wearing sexually revealing clothes on a date
- Watching R-rated (or even some PG-13) movies together
- Spending too much time kissing
- Frontal hugs

4. Just Say Yes

Sexual purity is not only about saying “no”, it is also about saying “yes”. If you have first said yes to Jesus, then you are different.

You are “in Christ” and He is in you, and you have a higher purpose and calling than the rest of the world does. That means that your focus shouldn't be on all the things you are to say “no” to, but your focus should be on your relationship with God and saying “yes” to spiritual things.

Ask God to give you a passion for Him and for His Word. Take advantage of EVERY opportunity to learn and grow in the Lord. If you will spend more time feeding your spirit than feeding your flesh, you will be much more likely to make your goal of sexual purity.

Staying pure in this day and age can be really tough and this world is no friend to sexual purity. It's almost like you are standing at the free-throw line on basketball court. Imagine that the goal you are shooting for is sexual purity. The stadium is filled with people screaming, "You'll never make it!". All the cheerleaders are yelling, "Miss it, miss it!". The other team is jumping around trying to distract and intimidate you. It seems no one wants you to make the goal.

Well, there is someone who understands and is on your side. The Bible says that Jesus was a teenager just like you and that He faced every temptation "known to man" (and woman).

He wants you to make your goal and he understands how hard it is. He is ready to help you, but you must admit that you need help, and you have to be willing to do things His way.

Finally, realize that most of the time when teenagers get involved sexually, it really isn't about physical passion, it's about trying to get their emotional needs met. We all have three basis needs and sometimes what teenagers are really after when they get involved in sex, is simply to have one or more of these needs met:

1. to be unconditionally loved and accepted
2. to feel valuable and capable
3. to feel that we are not alone

Sex can NEVER meet these emotional needs. You were not created by God to be fulfilled, or to have your needs met by anyone or anything but Him. You will always be disappointed if you try any substitute, and that includes sex.

III. WHAT IF I HAVEN'T WAITED?

First of all, you need to know that life is not over. Yes, you have blown it, but things can be new again. This begins with genuine confession and repentance. Confession doesn't mean that you have to make a public announcement to the world about your sin. It simply means that you admit that what you have done grieves your heavenly Father. You agree with Him that premarital sex is a sin, and then you repent of that sin.

You repent two things: of using sex to meet your own emotional needs instead of allowing God to meet those needs in your life, and of playing God in your own life and doing things your way. You then give the control of your life back to Him and begin to walk in a new direction.

When you do this, all things become new. God will forgive you completely and put the pieces of your life back together. He'll give you a new start. It is also very important that you forgive yourself so that you begin to see yourself as God sees you.

When God forgives you, it is as if your sin never happened. When he looks at you, he sees a pure, clean virgin. If you see yourself as God sees you, then you will act like a virgin and remain pure, but if you still see yourself as dirty and worthless for having premarital sex, you'll find yourself acting in a manner consistent with that self-image.

You can't undo what has happened in your life physically, but you can make sure it doesn't happen again until you are married. Spiritually and emotionally, you can be free of any guilt or shame. You are not a failure because you have failed. You can begin today to live a life that is pure. Remember, this is not a one time decision. Honoring God is a choice with your will that you must make every day of your life.

YOU CAN BEGIN TODAY TO
LIVE A LIFE THAT IS PURE.