

Podcast 122: Precious, Part 2

This is Part 2 of a special series exploring the commandment and need for us to become precious to each other.

STEPHANIE: Enos 2 and 3 says:

Now it came to pass that when I had heard these words, I began to feel a desire for the welfare of my brethren the Nephites; wherefore, I did pour out my whole soul unto God for them. And while I was...struggling in the spirit, behold, the voice of the Lord came into my mind again, saying, I will visit thy brethren according to their diligence in keeping my commandments. I have given unto them this land, and it is a holy land; and I curse it not, save it be for the cause of iniquity. Wherefore, I will visit thy brethren according as I have said, and their transgressions will I bring down with sorrow upon their own heads. And after I, Enos, had heard these words, my faith began to be unshaken in the Lord. And I prayed unto him with many long strugglings for my brethren the Lamanites.

*And it came to pass that after I had prayed and labored with all diligence, the Lord said unto me, I will grant unto thee according to thy desires because of thy faith. And now behold, this was the desire which I desired of him: that if it should [be so] that my people the Nephites should fall into transgression, and by any means be destroyed, and the Lamanites should not be destroyed, that the Lord God would preserve a record of my people [that] the Nephites, even if it so be by the power of his holy arm, that it might be brought forth some future day unto the Lamanites, that perhaps **they** might be brought unto salvation. For at the present, our strugglings were vain in restoring them to the true faith. And they swore in their wrath that if it were possible, they would destroy our records, and us, and also [our] traditions of our fathers. ([Emphasis added.] Enos 1:3-4 RE)*

In Helaman 4:2, it says:

And it came to pass that in this year Nephi did cry unto the Lord, saying, O Lord, do not suffer that this people shall be destroyed by the sword, but O Lord, rather let there be a famine in the land to stir them up in remembrance of the Lord their God, and perhaps they will repent and turn unto thee. And so it was done according to the words of Nephi, and there was a great famine upon the land, among all the people of Nephi. And thus in the seventy and fourth year the famine did continue, and the work of

destruction did cease by the sword, but became sore by famine. And this work of destruction did also continue in the seventy and fifth year. For the earth was smitten, that it was dry and did not yield forth grain in the season of grain; and the whole earth was smitten, even among the Lamanites as well as among the Nephites, so that they were smitten that they did perish by thousands in the more wicked parts of the land. (Helaman 4:2 RE)

And then we move on to Nephi—and just as a side note, I'm pretty sure Nephi did not love his brothers, 'kay? I just don't think he did. They were abusive; they were violent; and they were fratricidal, okay? But, this is what he does—Nephi 2:4:

*And it came to pass that when I, Nephi, had spoken these words unto my brethren, they were angry with me. [Yes, so what's new? They were always angry with him.] ...But it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord, saying, O Lord, according to **my** faith which is in thee, wilt thou deliver me from the hands of my brethren? And it came to pass that when I said these words, behold, the bands were loosed from off my hands and feet, and I stood before my brethren and I spake unto them again. ...And it came to pass that **I did frankly forgive them** all that they had done, and I did exhort them that they would pray unto the Lord their God for forgiveness. ...And after they had done praying unto the Lord, we did again [a] travel on our journey towards the tent of our father.* ([Emphasis added.] 1 Nephi 2:4 RE)

Genesis 11:4-9—again, another story of fratricide, 'kay? Pretty sure Joseph didn't love his brothers, and his brothers certainly didn't love him, because 4-9. *And a cert...* Genesis 11:4-9:

And a certain man found him, and behold, he was wandering in the field. And the man asked him, saying, What do you seek? And he said, I seek my [brothers]; tell me, I pray you, where they feed their flocks? And the man said, They are departed from here, for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan.

And Joseph went after his brethren and found them... [And when he comes, they see him, and they conspire against to slay him.] And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer comes. [They don't even call him by name, okay? And they have so much contempt for Joseph that they just call him “the dreamer.”] Come now therefore and let us slay him and cast him into [the] pit, and we will say some evil beast has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands and said, [Let's] not kill him. And Reuben said...Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit... [That's great—we'll just cast him in this pit...]

[Verse 7:] And it came to pass when Joseph had come unto his brethren...they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colors that was on him, ...they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit was empty, [and] there was no water...

And they sat down to eat... [And lo and behold, they see] a company of Ishmaelites [coming] from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. And Judah said...[Hey,] What profit [it is] if we slay...and conceal his blood? Come...let us sell him to the Ishmaelites...let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh. [Well, that's nice. We don't hate him enough to kill him, but we just sell him to this band of Ishmaelites.] And his brethren were content.

[So, they sell him for 20 pieces of silver. Reuben went back to the pit; Joseph wasn't in it.] He rent his clothes. And he returned [to] his brethren and said, The child is not; and I, where shall I go? And they took Joseph's coat, ...killed...the [goat], ...dipped the coat in...blood. And they sent the coat of many colors, and they brought it to their father and [they] said, [Oh, oh, oh, it's so terrible!] (Genesis 11:4-9 RE)

Okay, so you know the story. Lots of stuff happens, and then this—Genesis 11:39 and 40:

Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him, and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me! And there stood no man with him while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph. Does my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him, for they were troubled at his presence. [Because, yeah, what happened to you?] And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph, your brother whom you sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that you sold me here, for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years has the famine been in the land, and yet there are five years in which there shall neither be plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve your posterity and the earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me here, but God. And he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and [a] lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land[s] of Egypt. [And more happens and more happens...]

And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept. And Benjamin wept upon his neck. [And], he kissed all his brethren and [he] wept upon them. And after that, his brethren talked with him. (Genesis 11:39-40 RE)

Wow! The foregoing scriptures illustrate that forgiveness, intercession, and relationships *do not* have to be based on love, as we culturally define it here.

So, let's get back to who our neighbors are. We're going to start with the most intimate relationships and work out from there. At the top should be my relationship with the Gods, which is not always my focus, but ideally, it should be. And then we go partner/spouse, family/children, extended family (aunts, uncles, in-laws), friends, co-workers, religious community, work community, neighborhood—blah, blah, blah— until we get down to our enemies. The makeup of these relationships might look different for everyone. Some of us may have all of them and some of us may have only a few, but we all have intimate and significant associations or relationships, and we all have enemies.

So, how do we do it? How do we love them? So, as a side note, I would like to make a distinction here—*service is not love*. It can be *motivated* by love, but there's a difference because serving is actually quite easy—dropping off my gently-used clothes, tithing, dollar bills, blankets, granola, water bottles, taking my old-but-I'm-getting-a-new washer or dryer to someone in need, plant a garden, make a casserole, take a salad or a dessert. Don't get me wrong—these are great; we should engage in these. These are really nice things to do. However, they can be done at an arm's length—no conversation, no association, no relationship, no love, no risk.

Relationships are where the real work takes place. Relationships are difficult, and effortless; they are risky, and they are safe; they are uncomfortable, and they are comfortable; they are rich and rewarding; and they ebb, and they flow. They are *the vehicle* wherein we move through and into love, charity, sanctification, and ultimately, salvation. To be a part of the family of God up there requires us to *create* a family of God down here.

When I read an article or hear a news story about some tremendous act of forgiveness, on the part of someone who has given absolution to another person for some grievous offense, I think, “So what?!” The dad who forgives the drunk driver who killed his entire family; the woman who forgives the man who raped her; the elderly man who doesn't hold a grudge against the businessman who conned him and stole all his money—so what?! We treat these instances as though they are great acts of emotional heroism. We heap praise and adulation upon the people who are so *magnanimous* that they forgave the horrible bastard who grieved or assaulted or offended them. It's ridiculous! We *lie* to ourselves when and if

we think we are *ever* justified in resentment, grudges, judgments, or accusations. *We are not—ever.*

The Lord's standard is pretty clear, and there's not much wiggle room. You want Heavenly Father to forgive *you*? You forgive each other. That sounds like a really good way of *loving yourself*. Forgiveness is a *requirement*—it is a *condition*—and the Lord has this to say about it—3 Nephi 5:34:

And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.... For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if [you] forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (3 Nephi 5:34 RE)

Colossians 1:13:

*Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, hearts of mercies, kindness, humility of mind, meekness, long-suffering, bearing with one another and **forgiving** one another. If any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do you; and above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness...let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with **grace** in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do **all** in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. ([Emphasis added.] Colossians 1:13 RE)*

This sounds like loving yourself. Teaching[s] and Commandments section 157:58:

I have given you a former commandment that I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men. And again, I have taught that if you forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your trespasses.... If men intend no offense, I take no offense, but if they are taught and should have obeyed, then I reprove and correct, and forgive and forget. (T&C 157:58)

God is the *only* one who judges correctly. He is the only one who can decide whether an offense was intended or not, and then *He* reproveth, corrects, *forgives and forgets*. We are rarely worthy to judge, and we are *only* able to reprove and correct people we have a relationship with—and we are *always* expected to forgive and forget.

So, the real question comes down to this: Do we believe these words? It's pretty much that simple. Relationships—with spouses, children, co-workers, parents, siblings, friends,

enemies—require vulnerability, work, and a *deliberate* effort to see the good and *be* the good. Relationships are emotionally fulfilling. People who have community live longer and healthier lives. Working on those relationships and having them be positive and uplifting, for *your* benefit, sounds like *loving yourself*.

I have a simple formula that works for me, and I'll share it with you. I figure that every single interaction I have with another human being will achieve one of three things:

- The experience will either build our relationship with a positive interaction;
- It will leave it unchanged or 'status quo;'
- Or, it will tear down the relationship with a negative interaction.

Grocery store clerks, gas station attendants, students, teachers, husbands, children—doesn't matter.

The good news about this formula for me is that I get to choose, *every single time* with *every single person*. It's *never* out of my control. There is no love for others, *or yourself*, if your time is spent focusing on flaws, criticizing, imputing intent, or taking offense for no good reason.

Here's what the Lord says about judgment, flaws, criticism, ascribing motive, offense, and intent—and it's time we start taking Him seriously. So, He moves on from the Ten Commandments to the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 3:40, He says:

Now these are the words which Jesus taught his disciples that they should say unto the people: judge not unrighteously, that you be not judged, but judge righteous judgment; for with what judgment you shall judge, you shall be judged, and with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again. (Matthew 3:40 RE)

(It's like a person-with-a-cold's worst nightmare. [Audience laughter.]

The difference here that I see, between the “no judging” and the “righteous judgment,” is likely related to Final Judgment—as opposed to all those in-between judgments that we can do, if we *think* we have the Lord on our side, in terms of righteous judgment.

And then moving from Matthew into 3 Nephi—3 Nephi chapter 6, verse 6:

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, let me pull [that] mote out of thine eye, and behold a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam...of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out

of thy brother's eye. Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again, and rend you. (3 Nephi 6:6 RE)

And so, I say to that: What the heck does that have to do with anything? So, on the assumption that it is actually *related* to what came before that, I spent a reasonable amount of time contemplating it, and this is my version of pearls and swine and dogs, and whatever—it's a strange ending to this particular thought. So, what if it means that *we* are the dogs and swine, and judging is a holy and precious act—one that we don't have anywhere *near* the godliness to engage in, at least without seriously pursuing God's help. And we will get out of the attempt, and *all* we will get out of the attempt at that kind of judging, is trampling and rending. So, that's my take. And so, let's not do it, okay? Let's just not do it.

In the foregoing scriptures, we are being told to worry about ourselves *first*—and *that* should take a long, long, *long* time. And then, if we need to, we can worry about other people after that. So, in theory, if we're as critical towards ourselves as we are others, we should be doing a lot of repenting, improving, growing in love and charity and empathy, as we make ourselves better. Because it's just about beams and motes, people; that's it! Just don't do it!

When it comes to our interpersonal life, knowing how to make yourself better takes a lot of courage and introspection; you have to be willing to be clear on what's wrong with *you*. It's a lot easier to think about what's wrong with other people. So, asking questions like—

- How did I make that better or worse?
- What did I do or say to make them react that way?
- What did I say or do to cause their defensiveness?
- Or, why did I do or say what I did or said, *and* how and what could I have done differently?

—are absolutely necessary in order to become more Christ-like. However, if focusing on other people is your jam, then do it charitably—impute the highest motive and best motive to other people, assume their best intentions, engage in empathy and perspective-taking. These are godly acts. They make *your* life better. They wash away the bitterness, anger, hurt, and unhappiness *you* feel when you're focused on the negative. *This* sounds like *loving yourself*.

Ephesians 12, and 16:

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you that you walk worthy of the vocation with which you are called, [and] with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, in one body [in] one spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling — one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Can you be angry and sin not? Let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the Devil. Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands for the things which are good, that he may have to give to him that needs. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy spirit of God whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness...wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice. And be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. Be therefore followers of God, as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ [has also] loved us and has given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. (Ephesians 1:12,16 RE)

So, it still comes down to one simple question: Do I believe the words of God?

And *then*, He raises the standard again—3 Nephi 5:24 through 26, 30, and 31:

[24:] Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, and it is also written before you, that thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment of God. But I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of his judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council, and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hellfire.

[25:] Therefore, if ye shall come unto me, or shall desire to come unto me, and rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, go thy way unto thy brother and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come unto me with full purpose of heart and I will receive you.

Agree with thine adversary quickly while thou art in the way with him, lest at any time he shall get thee and thou shalt be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by

no means come out thence until thou hast paid the uttermost senine. And while ye are in prison, can ye pay even one senine? Verily, verily I say unto you, nay.

And behold, it is written, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you that ye shall not resist evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and to him that would borrow of thee, turn thou not away.

And behold, it is written also that thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy; but behold, I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, [and] do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father who is in Heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and...the good. Therefore, those things which were of old time, which were under the law, in me are all fulfilled. Old things are done away and all things have become new. (3 Nephi 5:24-26;30-31 RE)

These admonitions are designed to make *your life better*. Much like the other eight commandments, the first two are so that we can, and will, live loving, Christ-like lives, being obedient to God's instructions—which we really need to take seriously.

So, in addition to “start looking for them,” start asking the question, “What lack I yet?” And then *listen* to the answer. Start seeing people the way *God sees them*, and then engaging with them in a way that reflects that. Start asking God to take the scales from *your eyes*, so that you are no longer deceived into thinking whatever is untrue—*for you*. Start wanting to change *you*, and start taking the things God says seriously.

Now, you might think I'm being too absolute or too literal, and that's fine. You might even be right. However, ask yourself this: Was Jesus absolute and literal when He ended verse 31 with this— *Therefore, I would that ye should be perfect, even as I or your Father who is in Heaven is perfect* (3 Nephi 5:31 RE).

DENVER: This world is a place of trial and testing. Before creation it was planned that when we came here we would be “proven” by what we experience. *That happens now*. Prove yourself by listening to God, hearing His voice, and obeying. Sometimes we are like Alma and want to do *greater* things to help God's work, but the greatest work of all is to respond to God's voice and prove you are willing to listen and obey Him.

I want to show you the depths of truth that spreads through the ocean—distances and directions that are infinite. But I must be content to use only a cup to give what little a man can measure and convey. Only God can show it because it is too great, too far above man's poor ability. It's not lawful for man, neither is man capable to make it known, for it is only to be seen and understood by those who purify themselves before God, to whom He grants this privilege of seeing and knowing for themselves, *while in the flesh*.

It was a year ago that a renewed covenant was given, to all willing to accept it, by God. New covenant people sprang into existence when a few accepted that gift. Until that moment, there were only lost and scattered remnants who, although the object of God's earlier covenants, lived in ignorance of God's renewed labor in His vineyard. Now, in addition to other remnants, there is a new covenant remnant aware of God's renewed labor, a remnant who has been asked to labor alongside the Master of the Vineyard as He sends His final invitation to come to His wedding feast. Christ spoke of this very thing when He taught the Nephites. He foretold that the barren Gentiles would eventually produce more children for His Kingdom than the remnants on *this* land and at Jerusalem. Christ said:

And then shall that which is written come to pass: Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child, for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes, for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the gentiles and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not for thou shalt not be ashamed, neither be thou confounded for thou shalt not be put to shame, for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth and [shall] not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy maker, thy husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: the God of the whole earth shall he be called. (3 Nephi 10:2 RE)

We can see a new and different meaning in Christ's Book of Mormon prophecy to the Nephites. Before, Christ's words seemed to foretell that the lost and scattered remnants would build the Lord's House and the New Jerusalem; now, it appears that there are covenant-receiving Gentiles who are included. Gentiles who repent and hearken to Christ's words, and do not harden their hearts, will be brought into covenant as His people.

Christ mentions three distinct bodies: First, those who have accepted the covenant and are numbered among the remnant of Jacob, to whom Christ gave this land for their inheritance. Second, the lost descendants of the remnant of Jacob on this land, who will repent and return. Third, as many from the House of Israel who will repent and return. These three

will build a city that shall be called the New Jerusalem. All three of those will come to know God in gathering and laboring to build the New Jerusalem.

Then they will go out to assist all of God's people in their lost and forgotten state, to be awakened to the work of God and gathered as if one body of believers. Then all who have any of the blood of Abraham, who are scattered upon the face of the land, will come to be taught in the New Jerusalem. There the Power of Heaven will come down to be among them: the angels, and Enoch with his ten thousands will come down, the Ancient of Days or Adam, our first father, and Christ also will be in the midst of His people.

The spirit of God is withdrawing from the world. Men are increasingly angry without good cause. The hearts of men are waxing cold. The scriptures describe events now underway and call it the end of the times of the Gentiles. This process of the spirit withdrawing will end on this continent, as it did with two prior civilizations, in fratricidal and genocidal warfare. For the rest of the world, it will be as in the days of Noah in which, as the light of Christ or spirit of truth is eclipsed, men's cold hearts will result in a constant scene of violence and bloodshed. The wicked will destroy the wicked.

The covenant established a year ago, if it is kept, will prevent the loss of light and warmth of heart as the spirit now steadily recedes from the world. Be charitable and be patient, and labor to reach others. Even if they should judge you harshly because of their traditions, you should nevertheless be kind to them. They're going to grow to fear you, but it's only part of how darkness responds to light. Give them no reason to fear you. The time will come for us to gather, but between now and then, be leaven. Preserve the world. Be salt. Preserve the world, even if it hates you. The soul of every person is equally precious to God as is yours. If your kindness and example should awaken another soul, you will rejoice with the angels over them.

There is a need "to set in order the House of God," which can only be accomplished through a temple where that work can be performed. The temple is not the "House of God" needing to be set in order. But a temple is required to accomplish the work for God's House, or family, to be set in order. As once described by God:

Organize yourselves, prepare every needful thing, and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a House of God, that your incomings may be in the name of the Lord, that your outgoings may be in the name of the Lord, that all your salutations may be in the name of the Lord with uplifted hands unto the Most High. (T&C 86:29 RE)

Let me end with a few concluding words of wise counsel:

First, just because you young folks have thought about something, that does not necessarily mean you know enough to form a reasonable opinion about it. Likewise, holding an opinion does not mean you know the truth yet. Always be open to learning more and the possibility that more information may well change your thinking, change your opinion, and bring you closer to the truth.

Second, and I hope you remember this, words only have the control over you that you *allow* them to have. Some people use coarse language because they do not know any better. Coarse language *alone* does not necessarily reveal the worth of the individual or the thought underlying the words. As Joseph Smith once said, "I love that man better who swears a stream as long as my arm & [administers] to the poor— & [divides] his substance than the long smoothed faced hypocrite[s]." (*JSP Journals*, Volume 3, p. 303, May 21, 1843 [Edited to correct spelling.]

Many of my childhood friends and most of their fathers could conjugate obscenities into nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, and conjunctions. That reflected little on their inner character. An afternoon I spent with my father and a few of his friends, all of whom were veterans of World War II, reminded me of the heroic deeds and selflessness for others matters a greater deal more than coarse language. That afternoon humbled me. I was a law student at the time, and thought myself better educated than all those men, my father included. A few hours in their company, however, brought the sober realization that *they* had done great deeds, laying their lives on the line, and through their valiance I had inherited privileges *they* secured. Do not give a handful of coarse words power they do not deserve to have.

God's great power does not require an earthquake, a fire, or a whirlwind. Sometimes God's mighty power comes in a still small voice, or in a dream warning a family to flee to safety. God uses "small means" and "simple things" to accomplish His greatest influence. If you will allow Him to guide you with small means, He will save you from destruction *here*, and in the hereafter.

Finally, virtue matters; morality matters; chastity matters. One of the greatest sources of joy *and misery* is our ability to produce children. The union of man and woman inside a marriage, where children can be born to parents who want them, and are prepared to love and care for them, is how the power of procreation was intended to be enjoyed. Separate from that, it has produced a great deal of misery in this world. Be moral. Be chaste. Guard your virtue.

I teach these things in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

The foregoing excerpts are taken from:

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