

Lesson 2

Relationships: Friendship, Love, & Sexual Desire

Activity 3

Exercise: True Love Waits? Love and Abstinence

Abstinence programs encourage teens to wait until marriage to have intercourse. These programs often argue that sex is very special and should be saved for the wedding night, that sex is better when there is love in the relationship, and that sex sullies a relationship.

In reviewing the rules that Capellanus outlines in *The Art of Courtly Love*, this author suddenly thought that the expectations sounded a lot like what abstinence programs are teaching today. The theory of love as a perfect union also seemed similar to the content of some of these curricula. Read the following statements from various “Abstinence Only” programs across the country and see if you can identify various beliefs about what love is.

From <http://www.positive-choice.org/a-h.htm>

- The Positive Choice curriculum teaches that “human sexuality includes deep emotional and psychological aspects and is not merely physical in nature.”
- It also teaches that “non-marital sex can undermine the capacity for healthy marriage, love and commitment,” and that “abstinence is beneficial in preparation for successful marriage and significantly increases the probability of a happy, healthy marriage.”

From www.pureloveclub.net

- “When you ‘hook up’ for fun, physical intimacy begins to lose its depth, greatness, sacredness, and power to bond two people. Sex is shared as easily as a handshake, and the couple loses all reverence for the sacredness of each other’s body. You begin thinking that physical pleasure is basically for fun and can solve the problem of boredom or loneliness.”
- “This may come as a surprise to those who think that purity and prudery are synonymous, but purity has nothing to do with having a negative idea of sex. In fact, only the pure of heart are capable of seeing the depth and mystery of sex. For the person who is pure, sex is an unspeakably wonderful gift meant for your spouse alone. Therefore, the foundation of chastity is the dignity of every person and the greatness of sex.”