

Dr. J. Budziszewski: “The Meaning of Sexual Powers”

So our first speaker today is Dr. J. Budziszewski who is a professor at the University of Austin, Texas. Dr. Budziszewski is a professor at the University of Texas-Austin. And he’s a professor of Government. And he’s been a professor there since 1981. And his work focuses on ethics, political philosophy and also the interaction of these two fields together with religion and theology. His areas of work and writing have included abortion, marriage, sexuality, capital punishment and also the role of judges in a constitutional republic. One of his most important areas of work has been in the theory of natural law. And he also has a particular interest, and this caught my attention in his bio, in a field called moral self-deception. Mainly, what happens when human beings tell themselves that they don’t know what they really do? And he also does work in virtue ethics as well as the problem of tolerance. He is the author of the book “On the Meaning of Sex” and his works and access to more information about him are available at his website which is www.undergroundthomist.org <<http://www.undergroundthomist.org>> . So it’s my pleasure today to welcome Dr. Budziszewski and also to welcome all of you to the event. Thanks so much.

I’d like to thank Jennifer very much for that introduction and especially for the remarks at the beginning. You know, I had been considering disrupting this event but she talked me right out of it. I’m glad about two things this morning. I’m glad that all of you are here. And I’m glad to be here with you. It has been quite a ride hasn’t it? At first I wondered whether the conference was going to take place at all. I received an e-mail message that asked me to be prepared for some things; it said I suppose you’ve heard about all the trouble by now. I hadn’t heard anything of the trouble so this was a little startling. But we did eventually hear about it. We heard about the uproar even in my home state of Texas—riding the range where we were singing “Git along, little dogies” as we do you know, whenever we ain’t speaking at conferences, eating at barbeque or developin’ better software.

Funding for these events at Stanford has been approved as you know and then cut, and then partly restored and the student government declared that promoting chastity and traditional marriage is hate speech. And the administration tried to charge the Stanford Anscombe Society a free speech tax just for protecting all of you from violence by people who hate people like me. Some of you may have taken flak from your friends or from your professors just for coming here to listen to the conference and find out what kind of speech this is. Well, there are such things as haters. There are such things as haters. There are haters on every side of every question unfortunately; such is human weakness. If that weren’t the case, this conference wouldn’t need to have security, so I don’t blame you for wondering.

So let me tell you where I stand. I am for love. I am for love. Let me say it again. I’m for love and love alone. What is love? Love is a commitment of the will to the true good of the other person . An enduring commitment of the will to the true good of the other person. I am for it. Love ardently promotes everything that builds up the other person. I’m for that too. Love wholeheartedly opposes everything that destroys the other person.

I also oppose that. I oppose the seductions of everything that is opposed to love including the glamors of the innumerable kinds of non-love in our culture which deceptively speak in love's name. Now please notice—if love is a commitment of the will to the true good of the other person—then love requires an understanding of what the other person's true good is. Heroin isn't good for my friend just because she craves it. There's a difference between what we desire and what's good for us. It may take years to discern that difference. But only then can we be really happy. And I hope we will be happy. I hope we'll be happy with each other forever. But it doesn't help that we're so confused.

Midnight, Shelly's getting herself drunk so that she can bring herself to go home with the strange man seated next to her at the bar. One o'clock, Steven is busy downloading pornographic images of children from internet bulletin boards. Two o'clock, Marjorie, who used to spend every Friday night in bed with a different man has been bingeing and purging since eleven. Three O'clock, Peter stares through the darkness at his ceiling wondering how to convince his girlfriend how to have an abortion. Four o'clock, Lisa's in the bathroom, cutting herself, delicately, but compulsively with a razor. She isn't trying to kill herself; she doesn't understand why she does it. She does it often. Five o'clock, Ruth is e-mailing to her friend, and this is from a real letter, "I have suddenly become sexually brazen. It scares me a little. I think that it's about time that I stop giving myself guilt trips about it. But the people I meet end up leaving. I can't help but feel that some or a lot of this is a little empty."

This isn't what my own generation expected when, God forgive us, we invented the sexual revolution. The game isn't fun anymore. Even some of the diehard proponents of this enslaving liberation had begun to show signs of fatigue and confusion. Naomi Wolf, in a book that she wrote entitled , appropriately "Promiscuities", plural interestingly, reports that when she lost her own virginity at age 15 there was, her words, "something important missing". Reading between the lines of her account though, the thing that was missing seems to be the very sense that anything could be important about it. In her own book "Last Night in Paradise", another writer, Katie Roiphe, poignantly wonders what could be wrong with what she calls "freedom". She says it's not the absence of rules exactly, the dizzying sense that we can do whatever we want, but the sudden realization that nothing we do matters. Some people are so desperate to make it matter—some young people. Some young persons even court death, deliberately seeking out partners who have deadly infections. Did you know that? At the opposite extreme, some of those people who languish in what I call the shadow of the sexual revolution toy with the idea of abstinence, but not the abstinence that arises from the glowing vision of purity, that this conference is about; but rather a sort of an abstinence that arises from the grainous of boredom, fear, exhaustion and disgust.

Speaking of exhaustion let me tell you about my own students. In the 1980s—I'm a pretty old relic I'm afraid—if I suggested in class that there might be any problem with sexual liberation, so called, my students said, "Well everything's fine, what are you talking about?" Problem. Now if I raise questions, many of them speak differently, they bring up the problems themselves. They still tend to live like libertines mind you.

Though sometimes they still talk like libertines but it's getting old, and they know it's getting old. They're beginning to sound like the children of 3rd generation Maoists.

There were Maoists in my generation. My generation may have ordered the sexual revolution but I think theirs is paying the tab. So I never want anybody to think that I am pointing any fingers. It seems that they're suffering some of the consequences that we should have suffered. By the way I'm not only speaking of the medical tab, the medical price. You know I've heard so many people say "oh you all have to practice chastity, all you folks, because you know you might otherwise have sexual diseases or unwanted pregnancies", and I think that that's, that's only one side of it. Yes, the medical prices ruin us. Once upon a time people worried about two or three sexual transmitted diseases and now they worry about something like two dozen, maybe three. A gynecologist whom I know remarked to me sadly, concerning one of these diseases, "Sexual intercourse shouldn't have to hurt, shouldn't have to hurt." But I'm not speaking only of broken bodies. I'm not speaking only of broken bodies, consider broken childhoods.

What is it like for your family to break up because dad has found someone new and then to break up again because mom has? What is it like to be passed from step-parent to step-parent? Some of you know that don't you? My heart's with you.

What is it like to grow up knowing that you might have had a sister but she was aborted?

A young man remarked in one of my classes once. —it was interesting, I hadn't brought up the subject of sex. I do sometimes. It's connected with many things in politics and with many of the classical writers—Plato is full of the subject—but I don't have to, they bring it up themselves, they see the connections. He remarked in one of my classes that he longed to get married and stay married to the same woman forever. And my heart went out to him. But then he said because his own parents hadn't been able to manage it, he was afraid to get married at all. And my heart broke. In a strange sort of way, he wanted to honor his father and mother. He didn't want to think ill of them. They hadn't been able to manage it, so he didn't want to think that he was better than they were. But that was the wrong response. It was the wrong way of honoring them.

Women show signs of avoidance too, but in a more conflicted way, I think. According to a survey that was commissioned by an organization called "The Independent Women's Forum", 83%, that's a really high percentage. You know in a lot of sociological surveys you don't get numbers like that. 83% of college women today, mind you, today, say that marriage is a very important goal for them. And yet 40% of them "hook up", as the expression has it. They have sex without any expectation of relationship whatsoever. Do you hear a little cognitive dissonance there? Can you think of a sexual behavior that is less likely to get you into marriage than "hooking up"? The ideology of "hooking up" says that sex is nothing but release or recreation. You have some friends for friendship and you have other friends for "hooking up". You know you don't use the ones that you "hook up" with for friendship and you don't have sex with the ones who are your friends.

What your body does is supposed to be unrelated to your heart. Don't believe it, the same survey reports. I'm glad they asked about this, that "hooking up" commonly takes place when both participants are drinking or drunk and it's not hard to guess the reason why. Despite all the talk about liberation and despite all the talk about joy and about happiness and getting to live as I please, the fact is that after a certain amount of this sort of thing, you may need to get drunk to go through with it; especially to go through with it

again and again and again. The fact is that we aren't made, we aren't meant, we aren't designed for this sort of thing. Our hearts and our bodies are designed to work together.

We are body and soul unities. Really now don't we already know that? I'm speaking of men and women both by the way. A woman may be more likely to cry the next morning because he didn't even call her afterward. But a man pays a price too. He pays a price he may not even notice that he's paying. He probably thinks that he can use women as tools and yet somehow remain capable of romantic intimacy when the right woman comes along. Sorry fellow, that's not how it works. Sex is like applying adhesive tape. It has a natural tendency to bond us together. Promiscuity is like ripping the tape off again.

Imagine putting that adhesive tape, that duct tape on your arm. It hurts, you know, you rip it off. Then you stick it back on. You rip it off. Hurts a little less this time—maybe.

You stick it on. It sticks a little less this time too. Rip it off, stick it on. Eventually the tape can't stick anymore. The loss of the stickiness of the adhesive tape probably contributes to an even wider social problem that might be called the "Peter Pan Syndrome". I thought I was being very original some years ago when I wrote a brief dialog on the "Peter Pan Syndrome" and I coined the name for it. I thought that's a catchy name and then I discovered that a number of other writers had given it the same name already. Well, you know, that's how it is. Even the author of Ecclesiastes talks about what human emptiness is, the writing of many books. Men in their 40s though, this is what I mean by the "Peter Pan Syndrome". Men in their 40s with children in their 20s, talk like boys in their teens. I'm thinking in particular of a man who chatted with me in an airport departure room. He was I guess in his 40s. He said "You know, I still don't feel like a grownup". That's what he said to me. "I still don't feel like a grownup." We were chatting and he envied his kids, he said, because they didn't have any responsibilities and played all day. You know there was once a time when people couldn't wait to grow up and have responsibilities. He couldn't even bring himself to call himself a man, just a guy. Well, I use the term guy too sometimes in some contexts, but you know, what he meant was not quite a man, not quite grownup.

Now in a roundabout sort of way I've just introduced the concept of natural law.

Although the natural law tradition is unfamiliar to most people today, it has been the spine, the main axis, the central pivot of Western ethical thought for 23 centuries, and in fact, it's experiencing a modest renaissance. The hinge concept is meaning and design.

Natural, meaning a natural design. I said that we're not designed for hooking up and that we're designed for our bodies and hearts to work together and that we're a body/soul unity. We human beings really do have a design and I mean that term in the broadest sense. Not just a mechanical design, you know, this part goes here and that part goes there. But what kind of beings we are? What kind of beings we are? And this design by the way isn't just biological, it's also emotional and intellectual and spiritual. Some ways of living harmonize with our design and others don't. Have you ever pulled, screeched your fingernails across a blackboard? Do you remember how it made your hair stand on end? Then you know what I mean. Because we're living that way. The blackboard is our nature and the way we live is like our fingernails screeching across it. From the natural law perspective, the problem with 21st century Western sexuality is that it flouts the embedded principles and the inbuilt meanings of the human sexual design. If I were a physician like my friend the obstetrician gynecologist whom I was speaking of a few

moments ago, I might highlight the medical consequences of flouting the design, but I'm not. I'm not a physician but a natural law philosopher and so I prefer to highlight the emotional, intellectual and spiritual consequences of flouting the design. But these two sides of human sexuality are interwoven and that's how they have to be viewed.

Then what are the natural meanings and purposes embedded in the human sexual design?

What are they anyway? And how do they make music together? What are the sexual powers for? I dare say we don't ask that question very often. What are they for? What are they for? What are they for? There are exactly two such purposes and meanings.

One is procreation. I prefer not to say reproduction, that makes it sound as though all you're doing is, is uh, conceiving somebody. But procreation is about a lot more than that. It's about the bringing forth and the nurture of new life, the foundation of families in which children have moms and dads; the turning of the wheel of the generations. That activity of human beings in which majestically we join ourselves in a chain with the distant past and the hoped for future. The other meaning and purpose of human sexuality which is linked with it, not to be considered apart from it, is union; the mutual and total self-giving and accepting of two polar complementary selves in their entirety, soul and body.

These two meanings, procreation and union are so tightly stitched together that if we followed the threads from either one of them, we'll get to the other. Now before I discuss that, you might say, well why just these purposes? Why these purposes at all? Why not say that the meaning and purpose of the sexual powers is pleasure? You know, it's a funny thing. If I ask my student's what's the purpose of the thumb? They'll say well, um, to grasp or to oppose the fingers so that you can grasp, if I say what's the purpose of the ingestive powers? They'll say well nutrition. What's the purpose of the heart?

They'll say to pump blood. But if I don't ask those questions first and I start with sex and I say what's the purpose of the sexual powers? They all say pleasure. Well you know all those other things are pleasurable too. Have you noticed that? It's pleasurable to take a deep breath. That felt pretty good. I hope I didn't embarrass you breathing in public. It's pleasurable to stretch your leg. It's pleasurable to eat. The problem is that eating is pleasurable even if I'm eating too much, breathing is pleasurable even if I'm sniffing glue. Flexing of the muscles of the leg is pleasurable even if I'm kicking the dog. What this shows is that pleasure isn't the purpose. If it were the purpose, it would tell us when it was good to exercise this power and when it isn't. No it doesn't. It's just like a grace note that comes when we're exercising the power and we can be happy in it when we're using it correctly and pleasure comes. In order to know when it's good to enjoy each pleasure, we have to look beyond the mere fact that it's pleasurable. Suppose we were to say that since eating is pleasurable, the purpose of eating must be pleasure.

Here's how it might be. You know you go to Grandma's house at Thanksgiving and you have dinner and when you can't have any more pleasure because you can't eat another bite, Grandma leads you into a little room with porcelain basins where you purge so that you can all have the pleasure of going back into the dining room and eating another course. It is said, you said 'gee, I thought that was going to end in a funny line'. No. It's said that certain people during certain areas of history really have feasted that way. But I hope it's not difficult to recognize that behavior like that is disordered. It misses the

point. It misses the point. Of course eating Thanksgiving dinner is pleasurable, but that misses the point what, what eating is. It misses the point both of the nutritional function of eating and also of the various social purposes that supervene on that, on that, on that experience.

Now the more general point that I'm trying to make is that although we do experience pleasure in exercising our sexual powers, pleasure is not their purpose, it only provides a motive for using them and a grace note for using them, a helpful but a dangerous motive moreover. Which may sometimes conflict with their true purposes and serve us wrong. Our bodies are not just tools for sending pleasurable sensations to our minds. They're not tools at all. They are part of what we are. They are of infinitely greater dignity than tools for that reason. I was saying that the actual purposes or meanings of sex are procreation and union. Well, it isn't difficult to see that procreation is one of them, is it? Apart from the fact that sex does in fact bring about the human life, it would be difficult to understand why we humans have sexual powers at all. Why should we have them? Why should we have them? But once the procreative meaning of sex is granted, the unitive meaning follows. Remember what I said about following the threads from one purpose to the other? Why does it follow? Because we aren't made by, like guppies who cooperate only for a moment in the procreative act and don't even know each other. For us, procreation requires an enduring partnership between two beings. In fact it's an opportunity for that partnership between two beings, the man and the woman, who are mutually complementary. That means they are different but different in a certain way, a certain patterned way, in ways that enable them to complete and to balance each other. A mom is not the same thing as a dad.

All of you women out there—I know my wife knows this. Think about the men in your life. Aren't there are things that they don't have a clue about. And they really need you to get it. And eventually they begin learning some of that. I like to think that maybe it's a little bit like that with men and women too. I hope so. Union then is a property of the distinctly human mode of procreation. A parent of each sex is necessary, well of course to make the child, because the female provides the egg, the male fertilizes it and the female incubates, provides a home for the resulting zygote. A parent of each sex is necessary to raise the child. Because the male is better suited to protection. I know it's politically incorrect to say that, but it's, we all know it's true. And the female is better suited to nurture. The male can nurture, the woman can protect, but there's a different flavor to it, a different color to it. A parent of each sex is necessary to teach the child because the child needs a model of his own sex, he needs a model of the other sex and he needs a model of the relationship between them. Mom and dad are jointly irreplaceable. In fact, their partnership and procreation, that is what they are. They are partners in that. Their partnership in procreation continues even after the kids are grown.

John Locke, one of the philosophers who influenced the founders of this republic thought, well, you know, parents only have to stay together once the kids are old enough to leave the home and then it doesn't matter. But you know, grown kids need the help and counsel of their own parents or the children's grandparents in order to establish their own new families. That is a continuation of the procreative partnership. Plainly then, the

gift of the spouses to each other is at the very center of the human procreative design.

The more I think about this mutual gift of self, the more astonishing it seems. New life could have been brought about in us humans without sex. It is in yeast. It is in amoebas.

Perhaps we might bud. A little fellow might begin growing from under my arm. I even know what it might feel like because I've got all these electronic things hanging from me so that you can hear my voice. Day by day, dangling there he would grow bigger and bigger and more mature. And others would say 'oh what a fine little one'. Finally he would break the stem and drop off and run away. Or a new human life could have been about with sex but without the gift of self. As in those guppies that I mentioned, but it isn't. For us humans just because of the way we are designed to realize the potentiality for new life—sex, sexual intercourse carries with it a second potentiality as well. A potentiality for a powerful and distinct form of human love. It's different than the friendship of brother and brother, of partners in a common task, of parents and children, of a teacher and students. It's different than all of those. It is a distinct form of human love. The only form of human love which is consummated by sexual union. This is why it shakes us to the core. This is why it says, now you will never be the same. Whatever, whenever the spouses give themselves to each other sexually, they are doing something that can't help but mean that happy chance of new life. Now notice that I didn't say that they can't help but have that motive in their minds. I said the act itself can't help but mean that. Even if that isn't their subjective intention. They can't change the objective meaning of the act, because you, know, a bodily action, have you thought about this? A bodily action is like a word—we mean things to each other, not only by what we say but even more, what we do. In fact, when the speech of let's say, the mouth, the speech of the mouth contradicts the speech of the body; the speech of the body repeals the speech of the mouth. If I crush your windpipe with my thumbs, the act says to you now die.

Even if I tell you with my mouth, be alive. To join in one flesh is to say, "I give myself to you in all that this act means". Even if my mouth shapes the words 'this means nothing' or it means something else. Do you see where this leads? For two persons to give themselves to each other totally, is to give what they are wholly. What they are wholly includes their bodies and into these bodies is written the potentiality to bring a third life into being. It's an intrinsic part of what they give and receive.

Now let me explore another part of this mystery. What makes the mutual give of selves possible is that the two selves have something to give. What do I mean by that? Well remember what we were talking about just a moment ago? A minute ago at least. The man and the woman are naturally complementary. By nature there is something missing in the man which he finds in the woman; something missing in the woman which she is able to find in the man. By themselves each one is incomplete. To be whole they must be united. The gift of self makes each self to the other self what no other self can be.

The fact that they forsake all others then is not just a sentimental feature of traditional western marriage vows. It arises from the very nature of the gift. To pretend that you don't have to forsake all others would be to deny what the gift really is. Or to not give the gift in the first place. You cannot give yourself partly because your self is indivisible.

The only way to give yourself is to give yourself entirely because the gift is total and because it joins the very flesh which individuates us, it excludes all others. If it doesn't exclude all others then the gift hasn't taken place. How powerful this is. The body is the

visible sign by which the invisible self is actually made present and communes with the other self. The body is an emblem of a person and the joining of their bodies emblemizes the joining of the persons. One flesh unity is the body's language for one life unity. Nothing else that we do with our bodies is like that. Have you thought about this in the case of every other biological power, only one body is required to do the job.

A person can breathe by himself using no other lungs and diaphragm but his own. He can circulate blood by himself using no other heart but his own. So it is with each of the vital functions except one, except one. And the sole exception is procreation. If we were speaking of breathing it would be as though the man had the diaphragm and the woman had the lungs and they had to come together in a momentous way to take a single breath.

If we were speaking of circulation of blood it would be as though the man had the right atrium and ventricle and the woman had the left atrium and ventricle and they had to come together to make a single beat. Now it isn't like that with the respiratory or circulatory powers, but that is precisely how it is with the procreative powers.

Neither sex, you know I used to read in the biology books when I was a kid and my school, my elementary school, my high school, they would talk about the male reproductive system and the female reproductive system as though he had one and she had one, but they were different. That's nonsense. Neither sex has a complete reproductive system. Each sex has only half a reproductive system. And they have different halves. The union of complementary opposites is the only possible realization of their procreative potential. Unless they come together as one flesh, as a single organism for purposes of procreation, although with two personalities; procreation doesn't occur. But how strange. And how mystifying that two such divided and incomplete beings must come together. Divided and incomplete, you know, until puberty, most little boys and girls, well, they play together sometimes, but they also think each other are kind of weird. You know, they'll say things like oh you know 'they have cooties'. Do you remember that? Do you remember feeling like that? There is an ontological gap between the two sexes. And all those little boys and little girls who talk about cooties are talking about the ontological gap. They didn't know it because they hadn't learned many-syllable words. But why should there be such an ontological gap between the sexes? Considering that it takes such effort to bridge it. And to learn to like those cooties. Why isn't there just one complete sex that combined all the male and female qualities instead of two incomplete sexes who need to balance and compensate each other? You know there have even been myths about that sort of thing. Socrates tells a story about a, about a primeval human being who was both all-male and all-female together. They were all perfectly happy. And according to some rabbinical commentary that's how it was with Adam before Eve was taken out of him. Um, why isn't there just one complete sex that combined all the male and female qualities instead of two incomplete sexes who need to balance each other? Who need to compensate each other? You know, in that story Adam was lonely. Whether or not he was complete, he was lonely. You would think that you couldn't be lonely if you were complete. Not so. You'd almost think that we were designed the way we are just so that we would have this difficulty to overcome. And wait a moment. Could that in a way be true? Could there be something good about having this difficulty to overcome? I think the answer is yes. The division and incompleteness of the two sexes is a blessing. Yes, that's what I

said, it's a blessing. It's a blessing. How could it be a blessing to be incomplete?

The first reason is that it makes it possible—it makes it possible for two different persons to complement each other. You can't give someone what he already has. You can only give him what he doesn't have. So men and women in general and the husband and wife in particular have to be different from each other and different in just such a way that they balance each providing with the other lacks. Surprising, isn't it? You would think that the ontological gap between the two would make the communion of two different versions of human being impossible and actually that gap is the very thing that makes it possible.

The second reason why the division in completeness of the sexes is a blessing is that it provides a motive for the two persons to cross that ontological gap. They feel this incompleteness. The sexes long for each other. They long for each other. Of course there are other ways to use the sexual powers. Other ways to try to dissipate that longing. Ways that can't bridge that canyon. One way for instance would sink me still more deeply into myself. Another way would reduce other persons to my tools. None of these ways would help me to climb out of the deep brick-lined walls of that well which is called myself. You can't draw your own water. Only someone else can draw that water from your well and you can draw that water from hers. You stay in your well and you're in trouble. Each of these ways makes the steep walls of that well even steeper.

By contrast the union of the two opposite sexes draws a person to forget himself in care and in sacrifice for someone who is truly and strangely other. You might say that we come to ourselves by losing ourselves. And that's a lesson about an awful lot of things besides sexuality. But sexuality is one of its images. That's also why not everybody has to marry and have sex. Because there are other ways to lose yourself and other ways to be united with the wholly other. These facts also though, highlight the importance of sexual purity for those who are not in a marriage. Too often purity is misunderstood.

You know and people will try to split the difference, they'll try to say well I tend to be faithful when I'm married, you know, but I'm not married and come on, what is all this jazz about purity? Purity is misunderstood. We tend to think of it as though it were negative, as though it were a lack, as though it were a loss, as though it were deprivation.

As though it were a no or a not, or a nada, lacking any character of its own. "Don't take from that box of chocolates. You may not have one." Well, you could see why this is said. Continent singles do obviously say no to something don't they? It's true that there is something that they don't do. They abstain from sexual intercourse but singles who have really grasped the virtue of purity aren't just not doing something, they are embarked in the doing of something. By living as they do they are pursuing goods of beauty and integrity which impurity undermines and (40:01 inaudible.) Purity in single people bears a deep analogy to purity in married couples. Because chaste married couples say to no to something to don't they? There is something which they don't do.

There is something that they abstain from. What they abstain from is unfaithfulness and it's not as though there may never be any temptation. People falsely imagine that continence limits single people. Would any sane person say that faithfulness limits married people? That faithfulness makes the married estate less than it could be? Of

course not. That would be like saying that avoiding false notes limits melody. Avoiding false notes doesn't limit melody, it is the very thing that makes melody possible and in the same way, faithfulness doesn't limit marriage, it is the very thing that makes marriage possible and in still the same way continence doesn't limit singleness, it is the very thing that makes the dignity of the single calling possible.

The fact that of the matter is that the single estate is another mode of life. Quite different from marriage. Some people are called to it permanently. Quite different from marriage to be sure but capable of its own unique kind of integrity. Continence belongs to the integrity of the single estate in exactly the same way that faithfulness belongs to the integrity of the married estate. By practicing continence single persons can see things, can see things in their true loveliness instead of through an obscuring haze of desire.

They can keep, by practicing continence, they can keep from being jerked around by their passions. By practicing continence they can have the inner freedom then to pursue whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely and gracious, whatever is worthy of praise.

You know I've just been trying to explain how the forbidden box of chocolates picture gets sexual purity wrong but remember I also said that it gets sexuality itself wrong, not just sexual purity. But the bigger picture of sexuality itself. Let me talk about that to.

This truth is even more beautiful than the other one. Here again though contemporary culture lies to us. It tells us that if we're chaste, if we're continent, if we're sexually pure, then we're being false to our sexuality. We are repressing ourselves. We are turning ourselves into neuters. That's not true. It's not even remotely true. It's the opposite of true. Consider um, Theresa of Calcutta. Was she less a woman because she didn't have sexual intercourse? Did she strike you as a neuter? As somebody without a strong character or flavor of her own? Did she give the impression of feeling deprived by not having that box of chocolates or being able to snack from it. Chastity didn't neuter her, it intensified everything about her including her femininity, her womanliness. How could that be? How could the chastity intensify her? Here's the answer. Sexual intercourse, of course, is what sexual beings to do procreate; but sexual intercourse is not the meaning of sexual polarity itself. It's not the meaning of being masculine and feminine. Consider first a woman. A woman who is someone who is in potentiality for motherhood. As Alice Von Hildebrand has put it, "even though not every woman is called to marry and bear physical children", as she puts it "every woman, whether married or unmarried is called upon to be a biological or psychological or spiritual mother". Women know intuitively, Von Hildebrand says, the profound importance of caring for others—of suffering with and for them—for, she says, maternity implies suffering. Well that's a profound insight and it belongs I would say to what another writer has called the genius of womanhood.

If you will allow me to build on this line of reasoning, then I suggest that just as a woman is somebody who is in potentiality for motherhood, a man is someone who is in potentiality for fatherhood. He's not just somebody who doesn't have the potentiality for motherhood, he's someone who has the potentiality for fatherhood. Just as motherhood is broader than biological motherhood, so fatherhood is broader than biological

fatherhood. Just as not all woman are called to marry and bear physical children, so not all men are called to marry and sire physical children yet, just as all women are called to motherhood in a larger sense, all men are called to fatherhood in a larger sense. I think our grasp of this fact has been weakened by the fact that in a culture like ours, in our culture, we've lost the rights and the customs of apprenticeship and coming of age.

Look, if you envy your sixteen old kid because he doesn't have any responsibilities and he gets to play all the time, obviously we've lost something about the meaning of growing up. We've lost the meaning of coming of age and we've also, this, our grasp of this fact has also been weakened by the fact that so many of us today have grown up with an impaired relationship with our fathers. And yet, unfashionable as it is to say so, men naturally desire to be not johns, not overgrown children; but something like knights who not only do hard things, but in firm and fatherly manner train others so that they will learn to do hard things to. You know a man will more readily aspire a manhood if he can taste the flavor of valor. If all goes well, than this is true not only of how he carries himself towards other men, but it's going to be true of how he carries himself toward women because a knight is a guardian. I spoke earlier of the genius of womanhood and this is the genius of manhood.

Because of these differences men and women have to teach each other. They have to teach each other. A woman knows intuitively that in order to be strong you have to love.

A man knows intuitively that in order to love you have to be strong. She knows that even boldness needs humility. He knows that even humility needs to be bold. He's a living emblem of that justice which is tempered by mercy. She is an animate symbol of that mercy which is tempered by justice. To her, sexual purity represents itself as a treasure to be protected. To him it presents itself as a quest to be undertaken for you see, it's one of those hard things.

Well, all of that concerns sexuality but none of it concerns having sex, necessarily. Why then is there sex? Why then have we human beings been divided into two different kinds? The answer is a paradox. We were divided into two so that we could learn to make a more perfect whole than if we were only one. That's right, we were divided into two so that we could learn to make a perfect, a more perfect whole than if we were only one. And that's not just a truth for married persons. That is a truth for all persons. For the married and faithful in one way who give themselves soul and body to each other, for the single and chased in another way. Each sex has to learn to give encouragement to the other and to stand in human solidarity. How many more colors there are in the world because there are two sexes and not just one? How much more music there is, how much more tang? I expect men and women to remain baffling to each other. Yet even their mutual perplexity can be a, a fountain of mirth, making the shimmering hues of that strangeness sparkle all the more. No matter whether we're called to the married or the single state of life, if we can delight in this fact, if we can make merry in this fact, if we can enjoy being mutually ridiculous to each other and to ourselves, than all of us together can live in a deeper joy.

People today do so much to kill joy that you would think that they don't want it. Don't believe it. They do want joy. So much of modern culture can be explained by a frenzied

longing for joy but not having any idea how to find it. They do want joy. All humans do, that is why in the long run the sexual revolution has no future. We are put together in such a way that although we can be pulled and pushed and drowsied by the flickering images of joyless desire, we cannot be satisfied by them. We know too much even in oblivion. We lie under the prickling enchantment of the law written on our hearts which is stronger than the counter-spell and can never be quite scratched out. The way and the life lie nowhere but in the truth and I hope we can walk in it together. Thank you.

End of audio. (00:50:47)