

Victory Update

February Issue

winter retreats and more...



The Chetek Ski Retreat

The Chetek Ski Retreat was a fun opportunity for the boys to experience some winter activities as well as hear the Word of God from a fresh source. Activities included snowmobiling, sledding, tubing, and even golf on the frozen lake! But, of course, their favorite activity was learning how to ski on Friday evening. Most of the guys had never experienced downhill skiing before, but it was not long until they all had the hang of it. Some even worked up the courage to ski down some black diamonds! It was a blessing and encouragement to have the Word of God presented to us during morning and cabin devotions. We discussed topics such as how loving God affects our relationships with others and the powerlessness of our own works to bring salvation. All in all, the ski retreat was a great time for the guys to make new friends, experience some new activities, and be challenged to live their lives for Christ.



Bay City Baptist Church Work Day

Pastor Brown and men from Bay City Baptist Church joined us for a work day several weeks ago. It was such a blessing to see how these men poured into the work that we set before them! They made great headway with the renovation project of our main garage by insulating and adding plywood walls. They also worked steadily on the process of collecting and burning the downed branches left by our logging project.

If you want to volunteer at Victory Family Ministries, please contact Ben Barrick at ben.barrick@vafb.org.



Snowshoe Retreat

We brave the frigid temperatures and the rustic accommodations of the Harlow Lake Cabins every year, and every year we come back with unforgettable memories and stories. Even for some of our students that have done some camping before, this particular trip is packed with new experiences. We reside in a rustic cabin with no running water or electricity and get to visit breathtaking sights by way of snowshoe, x-country ski, and fat bikes. It truly puts new meaning to "Winter Wonderland." We started off our trip by visiting the Eben Ice Caves. Over the course of the winter, a continual, slow flow of melt water freezes over the edge of a small cliff. The guys enjoy exploring the different cavities of the caves and sliding around on the ice. However, their favorite part about the caves is the steep snow-covered hills around the cliff that they can body-sled down!



We stayed in the rustic cabins of Little Presque Isle situated on Harlow Lake. They are small, quaint cabins that serve our purpose of being off-grid very well. Although only 20 minutes away from Marquette, MI, they give us the feeling of being alone in the wilderness. There is one other cabin on the peninsula, but we were blessed to be the only occupants of the cabins that week. The guys had to sled in wood provided by the park service for our fires and we lived by the light of the lanterns.

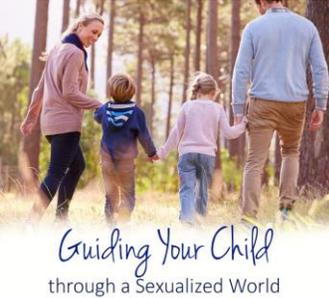


Presque Isle is a 323-acre forested peninsula that extends into Lake Superior. It is one of Marquette's city parks and offers a variety of things to do. In the summer, one could jump off the cliff that you see us standing on the picture and enjoy the clear waters of Lake Superior. There are also plenty of interior trails that we took with our snowshoes. The views of Lake Superior from this Isle are gorgeous. Little Presque Isle is a much smaller peninsula that actually can become an island if the current and waves sweep away the sand bar. In the winter, ice forms on the sand bar and gives hikers access to the Isle. Last year, the ice slopes were too treacherous to get across. This year, however, the ice bar formed a nice, easy bridge that we used to cross and visit this exotic gem. One of the highlights of our year is visiting the Valley Spur trail system near Munising, MI. Dave and Carol, our x-country ski instructors, do a fantastic job teaching the guys how to ski. We also take our upper-level guys snow-biking on the Noquemenon Trails in Marquette. It takes some getting used to, but it is a blast! We definitely wore ourselves out



The Snowshoe Retreat is a fantastic venue to discuss purity. All the white snow draws our minds to God's substitutional righteousness and our need for it. For those same reasons, this retreat is well-suited to spend a great deal of time discussing sexual purity. When we approach this topic we do so from the standpoint of satisfaction. The grime and filth of this world is trying to lure us all into the false belief that it can truly satisfy. This includes not only sexual sins, but also our attempts to find satisfaction in money, friends, food, and the panoply of ideas and items with which Satan tempts us. However, in the end, only a heart submitted to God will ever experience true, glorious, and ultimate satisfaction both here and in eternity!





Guiding Your Child through a Sexualized World

Article written by Aaron Brewster

Sinful sexuality has likely existed since shortly after the Fall of Man, and though nearly every ancient culture has embraced sexual debauchery on a national scale, America is relatively new to the practice.

The **Sexual Revolution** that started in the 1920's primarily affected the lower class and fringe citizens. Promoted by those fighting for their right to get drunk, this dingy, back-room thinking was still considered base and dirty by the average American. Young people were easily sheltered from its effects.

However, the **Sexual Liberation** of the 1960's had a different impact. Even though they focused on more extreme forms of sexuality, they managed to force their beliefs into a much wider slice of mainstream thinking. There wasn't a class or demographic that wasn't affected by the shifting tide of sexual thought. This made it far more accessible and culturally acceptable – especially to young people.

But the **Sexual Explosion** of the 2000's hasn't merely pile-driven its way into the majority of American homes . . . it's hijacked *our families*. Today, sinful sexuality is not only considered acceptable by the majority of teens and young adults, but it's the practical life-blood of our culture. In fact, to reject the Sexual Explosion's teachings is to be considered abnormal, intolerant, and worthless.

At every turn our children are being led to believe that lifestyles that were once viewed as perverted and/or sinful for thousands of years are now the generally accepted norm. And it only took less than 50 years to do it.

What's the danger our children are facing, and what can we parents do about it?

A number of years ago I predicted on Facebook that if homosexuals won the legal right to "marry," people with all sorts of aberrant sexual fantasies would come begging for their piece of the pie. I proposed that gay "marriage" would be remembered by history as little more than the gateway drug for a dynamic sexual explosion in America. And though I had gay-rights advocates booing my prophecy, it took less than a year for my prediction to come true. But now, given the massive push in transgenderism, I believe we need to broaden our predictions and consider the implication all of this will have on our families. I believe that – barring an act of God – your children will see the following forms of sexuality legalized (or at least generally accepted) in their lifetime.

Polygamy

Polygamy is three or more people "marrying" each other. Of course, true marriage in the sight of God can only occur between one man and one woman, but there are plenty of religious

charlatans and greedy politicians who say marriage is only a piece of paper. And in a culture where you can watch TV shows about polygamists and where *three lesbians can get “hitched,”* it doesn’t take Nostradamus to guess that it won’t be long before the government realizes that laws against polygamy were instituted by people who believed in God, and that there’s really nothing “wrong” with it as long as everyone’s a consenting adult – because “wrong” is what we make of it.

Pedophilia

And speaking of “consenting adults,” the **University of Cambridge** hosted a conference a few years ago where the following was said and applauded:

“Paedophilic interest is natural and normal for human males.”

“At least a sizable minority of normal males would like to have sex with children Normal males are aroused by children.”

Again, what’s to stop a nation who rejects God’s standards of morality from lowering the age of consent? We already know that American elementary-aged children are participating in sex acts – things which have been hammered into their skulls by the entertainment industry. Apart from God’s Word, if someone claims to have “data” that says sexual activity among children isn’t harmful, why wouldn’t we allow adults to have sex with consenting children? Again, we’re not here to discuss the *plethora* of reasons this is obviously sinful, but we are here to learn to answer the threat.

Incest

Certainly no country would ever allow incestual relationships! Everyone knows those are bad!

But **Judge Garry Neilson** said, *“A jury might find nothing untoward in the advance of a brother towards his sister once she had sexually matured, had sexual relationships with other men and was now ‘available’, not having [a] sexual partner.”*

In light of the genetic abnormalities that can form in incestuous relationships, the same Australian judge said, *“But even that falls away to an extent [because] there is such ease of contraception and ready access to abortion.”*

Ladies and gentlemen, both God’s Word and history have shown us that mankind devolves into lower and lower sexual perversions. And we must not forget that America is like the younger sibling of the world – when something becomes readily acceptable in Europe, America isn’t too far behind.

Bestiality

Each of the aforementioned sexual perversions is stomach turning, but this last one takes the cake. And I believe that most people you know would find this completely disgusting, but more and more people in our culture find sexual intercourse between humans and animals to be okay, and they're willing to fight for that right in court.

So, what does this mean for our families?

Lord willing, these predictions will be wrong. We'll see. But I don't think so.

Consider Romans 1:24-32, *"God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity , so that their bodies would be **dishonored** among them. 25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their **women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural** , 27 and in the same way also the **men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another** , men with men committing **indecent acts** and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error. 28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a **depraved** mind, to do those things which are not proper, 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; 32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also **give hearty approval to those who practice them.**"*

At the same time, we need to hold on to sanctified optimism. God can do anything and everything He sees fit. We've seen great spiritual awakening and revival many times in this nation. Perhaps the Lord will see fit to use His people to affect such a change before we die. That would be amazing, and I'd be happy to be proven wrong. Remember, this prediction can only come true "barring an act of God." May we all be used as that act of God. Of course, today the real concern is not what the world is going to do, but what we need to do to prepare our children for the attack. Even if the predictions above don't come true in our children's lifetime, there are more than enough sexual attacks barraging them. How do we prepare our three year old, our thirteen year old, and yes, even our twenty-three year old?

Here are the two most powerful suggestions I can give you.

1. Talk about Biblical Sexuality Early and Often .

For decades, the "birds and bees" was an awkward discussion had in an awkward way at an awkward time because no one wanted to deal with it – and they didn't really know how. May I say, that was an atrocity. In fact, I'm going out on a limb to say that parents not talking about sexuality from a biblical perspective early and often helped to lay the groundwork for the Sexual Revolution. Christian parents weren't telling their kids about sex, so the world did it for them.

This – in turn – led to the Sexual Explosion of the new millennium. However, I do understand our hesitancy. The idea of introducing a potentially destructive thing like sexuality into the pure mind of an otherwise innocent child is petrifying.

But it's also a lie. None of the things I wrote above are actually true. The first and worst claim I made was that sexuality is an impure, destructive entity. Sexuality is just like everything else in this world – it was created to be a perfect and beautiful part of the human experience, but sin has corrupted it. Yes, it can be used to destroy, but when we scare kids into thinking that sex is wicked, we're lying to them about how God created them and the plan He has in store for them.

Another major lie of which we try to convince ourselves is that our children's minds are "pure." Our children's minds aren't pure. They're full of selfish lusts. And if we define "pure" as free of sexual thoughts, we will be surprised that they're not pure in that context either. God created us to be sexual beings within the right relational context, and we're not 100% certain when those drives and desires kick in. For some children, they start thinking sexual thoughts around puberty, but for others it can happen as early as kindergarten or sooner. I'm not even referring to the sexual thoughts that have been imposed from the outside. I'm just discussing the *natural* desires and thoughts that organically arise in a child's mind because they're human. I know that's daunting to consider, but we mustn't fool ourselves into thinking they are "innocent" just because they're young. I think most of us just need to pause and try to remember our first sensual thoughts.

The third lie I spoke was the idea that I'll be the first one to introduce sexuality to my children. That's impossible. It doesn't matter if you homestead in Montana, there will always be husbands and wives who kiss, babies being born, barn dances, and countless other looks, posturing, films, songs, and books that hint at, flirt with, and subconsciously point to the sexual reality in all human beings. Please, do not avoid the topic of sexuality with your kids because you don't want to be the first to sully their pristine minds with wicked thoughts of sex. None of that is true. I've been introducing sexuality to my children since they were old enough to understand language. The key isn't whether to deal with it, the key is *how*. And as long as you deal with it biblically, there's plenty of material in the Bible itself, and plenty more material that was founded on it. As an example, you can't get through the first few chapters of Genesis before you encounter men, women, nakedness, marriage, sex, sin, shame, and child-bearing. Allow the Scriptures to be your starting point as you train your children in God's Word.

But there are also great resources that provide a script.

Larry Christenson wrote a book called, "The Wonderful Way that Babies are Made." I've recently worked my children through it, and it's fantastic.

Barrett Johnson at infoforfamilies.com is another Christian man who's trying to give you all the information you need to discuss this vital topic with your kids.

There's also *The Nashville Statement* written by the Coalition for Biblical Sexuality. If you're interested in how you can use the brief document to teach your children about biblical sexuality, you can click [here](#) to listen to a short iTunes podcast I did on the topic.

2. We need to encourage others to talk about it early and often.

Not only has Christian culture convinced us that we shouldn't talk about sexuality with our kids, many people have totally outlawed anyone talking to our kids about sexuality. I've preached in Christian schools where sexuality was completely off the table for anyone – including the teachers and pastors in the school. I've met parents who refuse to send their children to purity conferences like the ones that evangelist Ben Schettler organizes. This is a travesty! We need trustworthy men and women speaking Truth into our children's lives. Why would we forbid them from addressing this topic? Because we're afraid. But God has not given us a spirit of fear. He's provided us a spirit of love and a sound, mature mind. Yes, we need to be wise, but why do we shy away from this topic? The world is pushing it down their throats!

I live in the Northwoods of Wisconsin, fifteen minutes past nowhere. I need to drive 45 minutes into another state to get to the closest Walmart. And yet, my family has seen all of the following while at Walmart: teens making out, homosexual couples, a man dressed as a woman, magazines featuring pictures and words all about sex, music that discusses sex, posters, movies, books, calendars, games, and makeup advertisements using sex to sell. And we were only there for 45 minutes! If you take your child to Barnes and Noble, swing through the children's section, and head straight to the cash registers, your kids will see a number of things, not the least of which is a Playboy magazine sitting right at their eye level when they reach the check-out.

We must not fail our children in providing them a substantial, foundational, unmovable, and unashamedly biblical groundwork for sexuality. We need to speak that truth into their lives, and we need to enlist other God-fearing men and women to do the same.

This is why, every year, we take the students at Victory Academy on a week long snowshoe retreat. During that retreat we discuss God's plan for satisfaction, and we relate it to everything from food to money to sexuality. We're doing everything we can to help parents in the daunting task of training their children to understand God's plan for sexuality. We're also creating a sexual addictions curriculum to help everyone break the chains of sin in their lives.

If we're not careful, Christians will lose this battle. But we'll only lose it because we're ill-equipped and afraid. The world system has all of its bullet-points orchestrated perfectly with its entertainment system to keep their philosophy of sex ever before your children . . . regardless of the age. Homosexuality, transgenderism, pornography, polygamy, incest, pedophilia, and bestiality are just some of the issues your children are and will be faced with in every imaginable venue. But the Bible offers everything we and our children need for life and godliness. It exposes us to genuine, all-consuming satisfaction the world cannot counterfeit. Hope lies in God's Truth.

Train up your children in God's Word to prepare them to successfully meet the temptations of the world.



Director's Travels

The more I study the Scriptures, the more passionate I am about our Great God and Savior Jesus Christ. Though life gets busy with all sorts of details, projects, and relationships, the energy and focus to press on comes from the quiet times and moments of reflection on Jesus and His amazing grace. The busyness of life has brought opportunities to travel around meeting people and talking about our Great God and His work here at Victory Academy

In these first two months of the year, my travels have been:

- Visiting three churches in our area to meet potential supportive volunteers and see who we could minister Truth to.
- Met three pastors to discuss our partnership and their support possibilities.
- Recruited staff at three Christian colleges: Maranatha Baptist University, Bob Jones University, and Appalachian Bible College (one more to go down at Faith BBC in Iowa).
- Attended a Couples' retreat at Camp Chetek as well as a Counseling Conference and a Bible Conference at BJU.
- Presented a ministry update to our supporting church in Baldwin, WI, Faith Baptist Church.

This last weekend of February my family will be doing a ministry presentation in a church in Michigan in hopes that we can partner with them in some way for the ministry and to see how we can minister to their families.

Though busy, it is a joy to me to be able to travel and meet up with friends and meet new friends that have a passion for the Gospel and bringing that Gospel to hurting, struggling people. It seems to me that the world is full of struggling people and the hope of Christ is the answer to that struggle. So, whether I'm traveling somewhere to meet, teach, or counsel a family; or whether the other staff are on a retreat with students or ministering to the students in the "regular" program at Victory or WildHeart, know that we appreciate those who sacrifice financially and pray faithfully for us. We rejoice in Truth and in bringing that hope to teens and families amidst their struggles.

Faithfully Serving,