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Blessings of Chastity

OBJECTIVE

Each young man will understand that he must guard the sacred power of procreation and not abuse it.

PREPARATION

1. Prayerfully study Exodus 20:14; Matthew 5:27–28; 26:41; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Nephi 3:7; 2 Nephi 4:17–20, 31–32; Alma 39:3–5; 3 Nephi 18:15; and Doctrine and Covenants 42:22–24.
2. Materials needed:
 - a. Copies of the scriptures (each young man should bring his own).
 - b. Pencils for marking scriptures.
3. Ensure that each young man has a copy of the pamphlet *For the Strength of Youth* (34285).
4. If it is available in your area, show “Chastity: As a Man Soweth” on *Family Home Evening Video Supplement 2* (53277).

**SUGGESTED
LESSON
DEVELOPMENT**

Discussion

Introduction

Explain that some things are great blessings when used appropriately, but when misused, they become dangerous and destructive.

- What things are blessings when used properly but dangerous if misused?

Answers may include things like the following. You might share one or more of these examples in order to help the young men understand.

1. Electricity. When used properly with safeguards and insulation, electricity is a great blessing. But when handled carelessly, it can kill in an instant.
2. Automobile. A car is a useful form of transportation, but when driven carelessly, it can be a lethal weapon.
3. Water. Water sustains life, but it can be extremely destructive when out of control.
4. Medicine. When used as directed, medicine can save lives and restore bodies. When abused, it can kill, maim, or enslave.

Adviser presentation

Explain that the power of procreation is like these things. When used properly, this sacred power can help us be more like God. If we use it improperly or carelessly, we may lose our exaltation.

Knowing that the proper use of the procreative power can help exalt us and its misuse can condemn us, Heavenly Father has commanded us to protect this power. Satan knows that misuse of this power can destroy us, so he tries to convince us that it is old-fashioned to be sexually pure and that casual or promiscuous sexual activity brings popularity and happiness.

Scriptures and discussion

Have a young man read Exodus 20:14. Suggest that the young men mark this verse.

- What does this commandment mean?

Have the young men read Matthew 5:27–28 and Doctrine and Covenants 42:22–24. Suggest that they mark key words in these passages.

- How did the Lord expand his instructions in these verses?
- When do we begin to be guilty of adultery?
- According to Doctrine and Covenants 42:23, what will happen if we look with lust and do not repent?

Explain that “cast out” means excommunicated.

Have a young man read Alma 39:3–5.

- What was Corianton’s sin?
- How serious is this sin?

Explain that since sexual sin is so serious, we should guard the power of procreation with great care.

Satan Attacks Chastity

Quotation

President Harold B. Lee wrote, “When you are prompted to immodesty in dress or to unclean or obscene speech or brazen conduct in your courtship, you are playing Satan’s game and are becoming the victim of his lying tongue” (Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974], p. 332).

Chalkboard discussion

- What tools or methods does Satan use to influence people to disobey the law of chastity?

List the young men’s responses on the chalkboard. Answers might include the following:

Tools of Satan

- Obscene or suggestive movies and television programs
- The idea of sexual “freedom”
- Peer pressure
- Alcohol and drugs
- Obscene music and lyrics
- Immodest clothes and actions
- Pornographic books and magazines

The following material describes the dangers of some things that weaken and destroy chastity. You might want to use this material as you discuss the young men’s responses.

1. *Obscene or immoral movies*: “Suggestive movies have led thousands of young people into sex traps. Hot love-making on the screen has become a pattern for similar conduct on a date for many young people” (Mark E. Petersen, *Live It Up!* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1971], p. 24).
2. *Sexual “freedom”*: “Some people justify their immorality by saying that restrictions against it are merely religious rules that have no meaning any longer because there really isn’t any God. . . .
“ . . . They . . . are so involved in their personal desires, passions, appetites, and lusts that they have no room left for sacred things” (Mark E. Petersen, in Conference Report, Apr. 1969, p. 65; or *Improvement Era*, June 1969, p. 79).
3. *Alcohol*: “Drinking and petting parties form an environment in which the moral sense becomes dulled and unbridled passion holds sway. It then becomes easy to take the final step downward in moral disgrace” (David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals* [Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1953], p. 410).
4. *Obscene music and lyrics*: “Have you been listening to the music that many young folks are hearing today? . . . Much of it has been deliberately designed to promote revolution, [drugs], immorality, and a gap between parent and child” (Ezra Taft Benson, in Conference Report, Apr. 1969, p. 14; or *Improvement Era*, June 1969, p. 46).

Am I Being Influenced?

Thought questions

Ask the young men to think about the following questions:

1. Do I listen to and enjoy unwholesome or degrading music and lyrics?
2. Do I read books or magazines that bring suggestive or immoral thoughts into my mind?

3. Do I associate with or pay attention to girls and women who dress immodestly or behave improperly?
4. Do I tell or listen to lewd jokes or stories?
5. Do I or my friends talk crudely about girls or say vulgar things to them?
6. Do I attend movies that would never be shown in a Latter-day Saint meetinghouse or at a Church-sponsored activity?
7. Do I watch television programs that are unwholesome and degrading?
8. Do I spend a lot of time alone with my girlfriend?

Point out that a “yes” answer to any of these questions reveals a problem. Encourage the young men to refrain from these harmful activities and to set specific goals to change their habits if necessary.

Quotation

Remind the young men that the prophets have counseled us to avoid all these things. President Ezra Taft Benson said the following:

“Young men of the Aaronic Priesthood, remember the scriptural injunction ‘Be ye clean who bear the vessels of the Lord’ (3 Nephi 20:41; D&C 38:42; see also Isaiah 52:11.) Remember the story of Joseph in Egypt, who hearkened not to the wife of Potiphar and maintained his purity and virtue (see Gen. 39:6–20).

“Consider carefully the words of the prophet Alma to his errant son, Corianton, ‘Forsake your sins, and go no more after the lusts of your eyes’ (Alma 39:9).

“ ‘The lusts of your eyes.’ In our day, what does that expression mean?

“Movies, television programs, and video recordings that are both suggestive and lewd.

“Magazines and books that are obscene and pornographic.

“We counsel you, young men, not to pollute your minds with such degrading matter, for the mind through which this filth passes is never the same afterward. Don’t see R-rated movies or vulgar videos or participate in any entertainment that is immoral, suggestive, or pornographic. Don’t listen to music that is degrading” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1986, p. 58; or *Ensign*, May 1986, p. 45).

Emphasize that the young men must not be deceived by the loose moral standards that are so prevalent today. Although they seem modern, these standards are not new at all. “New morality” is just another name for the old immorality that Satan has taught for thousands of years.

Testify that the prophets know what it is like to be young. They are aware of the challenges and temptations young people face today. Explain that the Lord has revealed standards that will help protect us from sin and danger.

Discussion and *For the Strength of Youth*

Distribute the copies of *For the Strength of Youth*. With the young men, read and discuss the sections titled “Standards,” “Dating,” “Dress and Appearance,” “Media,” “Music and Dancing,” and “Sexual Purity.”

Note to teacher

It is very important that the young men in your class understand the terms and warnings in *For the Strength of Youth*. This may be an appropriate time to answer their questions about the standards. Remind the young men that if they have violated some of these standards, they should repent immediately. Promise them that the Lord will forgive anyone who sincerely repents.

Adviser presentation and quotation

Emphasize the blessings that come to those who keep themselves pure and worthy. The greatest of those blessings include the privilege of entering the temple and the opportunity to serve a mission.

Read and explain this statement from the First Presidency:

“Full-time missionary service is not a right, but a privilege for those who are called through inspiration by the First Presidency. . . .

“To ensure the requisite worthiness, an individual who has committed serious transgression must have fully repented according to the criteria established by the Savior. The candidate must be completely worthy to enter the temple before being recommended for missionary

service. . . . The individual [must be] free of transgression for sufficient time to manifest true repentance and to prepare spiritually for a sacred mission call. This period could be as long as three years for multiple serious transgressions, and should not be less than a year from the most recent transgression” (see First Presidency letters dated 4 Mar. and 21 Oct. 1993).

Overcoming Temptation

Testimony

Testify that if we keep the commandments and seek the companionship of the Holy Ghost, we will be able to live chaste lives. Heavenly Father has promised that he will give us the power to withstand temptation and keep his commandments.

Scriptures and discussion

Have the young men read and mark 1 Nephi 3:7 and 1 Corinthians 10:13.

- What do these verses mean?
- How do you feel about the words of Nephi and Paul?

Have the young men answer the following questions silently to themselves.

- What commandments are hard for you to keep right now? What temptations do you need help in overcoming?

Have a young man read 2 Nephi 4:17–20, 31–32. Invite the young men to share their impressions about Nephi’s words. Help them understand that everyone—even someone with as much faith as Nephi—needs Heavenly Father’s help in overcoming temptation.

Have young men read Matthew 26:41 and 3 Nephi 18:15. Explain that these are the words of Jesus Christ.

- According to these verses, how can we receive help to avoid sin and overcome temptation?

Encourage the young men to pray for help in overcoming the specific temptations they face now.

The Steps to Sin or Perfection

Chalkboard discussion

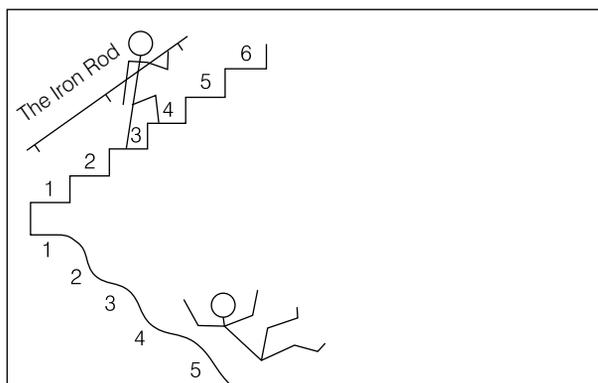
Explain that Heavenly Father leads us toward perfection by giving us “line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little” (D&C 128:21). Satan uses similar methods to deceive us, leading us down step by step toward sin.

Quotation

President Spencer W. Kimball warned us about how Satan tries to destroy chastity.

“Too many have lost themselves completely in sin through this doorway of necking and petting. The devil knows how to destroy our young girls and boys. He may not be able to tempt a person to murder or to commit adultery immediately, but he knows that if he can get a boy and a girl to sit in the car late enough after the dance, or to park long enough in the dark at the end of the lane, the best boy and the best girl will finally succumb and fall. He knows that all have a limit to their resistance” (*Miracle of Forgiveness*, p. 66).

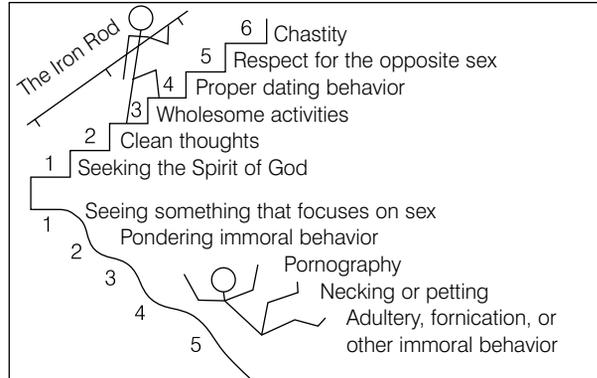
Erase the chalkboard and draw the following illustration:



Let the young men discover what the various parts of the drawing represent. Help them discover that—

1. The steps going up represent the Lord's way to build moral strength.
2. The steps going down represent Satan's way to destroy moral strength.
3. The Lord wants us to hold to the iron rod, or the word of God, and to seek his Spirit and the fruits of the Spirit, which include virtue, patience, kindness, love, and charity.
4. Satan's way has no handrail. The farther down his steps you go, the more treacherous the way becomes until you suddenly lose your footing and slide uncontrollably into immorality.

Ask the young men to suggest steps that build moral strength and steps that destroy moral strength. List their answers on the chalkboard. The following illustration is an example:



Conclusion

Testimony

Explain that men and women have been blessed with a power that allows them to be co-creators with God. Testify that the power of procreation is sacred and must be protected. Because of its sacredness, sexual intercourse should never be treated lightly. It is a sacred right granted to married men and women. Atonic Priesthood young men should never joke about sex or talk crudely about it, no matter what other young men may do. The power of procreation should be used only within a marriage.

Challenge

Challenge the young men to hold with all their might to the word of God, which teaches chastity. Challenge them to seek the Spirit of the Lord so that they will treat young women with respect. Explain that they have a priesthood responsibility to protect the purity of all women. Heavenly Father also expects young men to protect and honor their own virtue. Testify again about the importance of the standards Heavenly Father has given us and about the great blessings that come to those who are pure. Encourage the young men to commit themselves now to be chaste throughout their lives.