



The S-Word

“No! Not THAT again! We hear about that all the time! We’re sick of it!”

That wasn’t the response I was expecting when I told a bunch of kids I was working on the theme of “sex” for this magazine. I was expecting enthusiasm, interest, and some questions. “Oh, that’s cool, Ken! You’re the hippest youth leader ever” would have been nice. Or, “Can I see it when it’s done?” Or even, “Can youth leaders talk about sex without getting into trouble?”

What I got was immediate revulsion. And that got me thinking. Why would a bunch of church kids not want to deal with this vital issue? What would have made them respond so emotionally to the subject? I think I might have some answers.

My first thought is that those kids don’t want to hear something that might go against their current beliefs as seen through their actions. They know that they’re disobeying God when they engage in sexual activity, and they don’t want to be reminded of it.

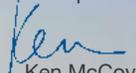
And then, I wonder if students have heard us cry, “Wolf!” once too often. We tell them about the racking pain of guilt that they’ll feel. We talk about the risk of disease. We carry on about the value of purity. But, the kids don’t know anyone who experiences painful guilt nor do they know anyone who has a sex disease, and the “pure” kids they know could just as easily be called “nerds” – where’s the value in that?

Finally, I’m thinking about the “hear about that all the time” phrase. “Hear about it” is probably correct. We perhaps use way too much one-way communication concerning the issues of sexuality. I long ago figured out that kids learn by doing, not by hearing. But, the “all the time” part is probably not accurate. My guess is that this topic comes up once or twice a year at their church. The topic of sex is so charged with energy that talking about it even twice a year may feel like “all the time” to a teenager.

So, despite what my young friends said, I’ll continue to find ways to engage them in learning the value of godliness, discovering the benefits of purity, and building the kinds of safeguards that will enable them to thrive in a sex-saturated society. These *Youth Leader Only* materials will help me. The *Bare Facts* DVD will be put to good use in living rooms, youth rooms, and even bedrooms. The articles in this magazine will get into the hands of parents and volunteer youth leaders. The music in the box will spread out into the cars, computers, and home stereos of my young friends.

I hope you do the same.

Godspeed!


Ken McCoy
Editor

