

Nothing shall be Restrained from Them

By Al Felder

“¹And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. ²And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. ³And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. ⁴And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. ⁵And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. ⁶And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. ⁷Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. ⁸So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city” (Gen. 11:1-8).

The scene depicted for us in this passage of scripture occurs after the flood. Prior to the flood, mankind had grown so wicked that God saw fit to destroy man and all other life on earth. All, that is, except Noah, his family, and two of every kind of creature. It was a horrific event that destroyed the world as it was known at that time.

Noah and his family settled down after the flood waters receded, and began once again to make a life for themselves. It was also at this time that God gave the command to go forth and replenish the earth. Well, man did become fruitful and multiply, but he did not go forth over the earth as God had commanded. Instead, man stayed together, and they all spoke the same language.

God looked down upon man at this time. As He considered man and his actions, He saw that no good would come of it. Mankind was united at this time, and through that union many advanced were being made. The only problem was that these advances were for evil and not good. God realized the unlimited potential of man as he lived and worked together and said, “Nothing shall be restrained from them.” Thus, it was at this time that He caused the confusion of the languages forcing man to spread out over the earth as He had commanded.

Today, more than ever, mankind is closer together. Yes, we still live in different parts of the world, we still speak different languages, and there is still much hatred that exists; but the flow of ideas between societies is able to take place today in a way it has not since the time that man all dwelt together. As a result, mankind has made many technological advances over the past century, and continues to make new ones every day. Some of these advances have

been for the better, others for the worse, and then there are those that have the potential for both good and bad.

Many of these advances have brought the world closer together. Now, instead of just reading about other civilizations, we are able to actually see how they live by watching the television. All sorts of knowledge are available to us through the use of the internet. Various forms of media serve the purpose of informing us, and keeping us entertained twenty-four seven in our modern society.

Yet, with all of this knowledge it seems almost scary what man is able to accomplish. Through all of our advances it seems obvious that we are making it easier to sin. Through mediums such as television, movies, and the internet immorality is constantly displayed before our eyes. My main concern is our young people today. They are truly growing up in a world where nothing will be restrained from them.

The Kaiser Family Foundation did an extensive study on media use by kids, and came up with the following statistics. Kids spend an average of six and a half hours per day with media. Twenty-six percent of the time they are using more than one device. This means that eight and a half hours' worth of media exposure is packed into six and a half hours. This is equivalent to a full time job. For children who have televisions and computers in their rooms, these numbers can be even higher.¹

Some parents may not bat an eye at these numbers and think that it's really not that big of a deal. What is the harm in all of this exposure? Well, let me recall your attention to your childhood. During the days that many of us grew up, the world was waiting to attack our faith beyond the front door of our home. There were many pressures that we faced from society and our Christianity was challenged every day, but no matter how trying things got we could always return to the solitude of our home. In our homes, we were protected. It was there that we could leave the world and its display of wickedness behind.

Unfortunately, this is not true for our children today. Even inside the home the world is waiting to attack their faith. Various forms of media constantly expose them to attacks against God and Godly living. They are constantly told that biblical truth does not match modern science, and immorality is constantly displayed before their eyes.

As a result of this, we have the following statistics. Forty-seven percent of all students (boys and girls) will be sexually active before high school ends. Seventy-five percent of all students (boys and girls) will have used alcohol by the end of high school. Nine percent of high

¹ **Meg Meeker, M.D. 2007.** *Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters.* New York : Ballantine Books, 2007. p. 22.

school students will have used cocaine and twelve percent will have used inhalants by graduation. Thirty-six percent of high school girls are diagnosed with clinical depression. Twelve percent of all students (boys and girls) will have seriously considered suicide before graduation.²

The Bible makes it clear that children are easily led astray and deceived. *“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive”* (Eph. 4:14). Children are not miniature adults. They are not as able to discriminate between good and evil. They don’t have the discipline to choose between the truth and cleverly crafted philosophies. That comes with maturity and training.

While in this delicate state, children are susceptible to harmful influences. Over the course of time they become desensitized to immorality. *“⁹Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, ¹⁰Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God”* (1 Cor. 6:9, 10). God makes His displeasure of those who commit these sins very clear. Those who choose these immoral behaviors over service to God will have no part of His kingdom in eternity. Our children are growing up with a constant influence that these immoral behaviors are alright and should be practiced.

One of the most disturbing trends is the amount of sexuality in the media. As of 2005, seventy-seven percent of shows contained sexual content.³ Not only has the frequency of sexual content increased, the intensity of it has increased as well. It is depicted more and more graphically. Beyond the television shows, there are the music videos that depict sex as dark, violent, angry, and emotionless.

As early as elementary school, our children are under attack. Aggressive marketing of sexuality is all around our young people. Many of the music, toys, video games, and magazines they come in contact with are all soaked in sex. They are told to be sexy and given an image of what they should be.

As if this was not bad enough, our children are at great risk for being exposed to pornography today. The average age of a boy’s first exposure to pornography is eleven. Nearly

² —. **2007**. *Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters*. New York : Ballantine Books, 2007. pp. 19-21.

³ **Meg Meeker, M.D. 2008**. *Boys Should Be Boys*. Washington, DC : Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2008. p. 63.

half of boys between the third and eighth grades have visited internet sites with adult content. In recent years, this has become more common for girls as well.

Pornography warps the natural development of sexuality in young people. The graphic content contained in pornography inflicts severe trauma on our children. It will lead them down paths of perversity that, in their normal development, they never would have considered. The sad reality is that many young people don't seek pornography; it pops up at them unawares and drags them in.

The Bible has much to say about the sin of fornication, but I believe that one passage in particular really brings out the effects of this sin. *"Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body"* (1 Cor. 6:18). Fornication, unlike any other sin, can have a damaging effect on us. It is the one sin, the Bible points out, that we take our bodies and use. It is a sin against God and our own bodies that are to be a temple for God. Because of its severity, this sin will have many long lasting effects both physically and mentally on children. All sorts of diseases can be contracted, and many psychological problems can exist as a result of this sin. Whether it is the viewing through media or participation in the act itself, the Bible makes it clear that we are to flee fornication.

Our children are also at danger from chat rooms and various social forms of media. The language used in these forums is often abusive, pornographic, and debasing. Because of the relative or complete anonymity of the writers, the electronic exchanges are filled with sock value and insults. Young people are less guarded in the things that they say.

Our children become lost in all of the media exchange today. They have lost so much that we took for granted in our childhood. Before the days of electronic media, we had to work at communication, and much more of it was face to face. We didn't play games against a computer; we played games with our friends. Letters were hand-written, now we send a more impersonal email. We have lost a sense of permanence. Who among us saves emails or text messages the way we use to save handwritten letters.

An anonymous author wrote the following commentary on our culture: "We spend more, but we have less. We buy more, but we enjoy it less. We have bigger houses and smaller families. We have more conveniences, but less time. We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our value. We have learned how to make a living, but not a life. We have added years to life, but not life to years. We have done larger things, but not better things. We have higher income, but lower morals. These are the times of steep prophets and shallow relationships. These are days of fancier houses, but of broken homes. It is a time when there is much in the show window, but nothing in the stock room." These are the times in which our children live, and they get to see it all of the time. What can and must we as parents do to protect our kids?

We need to provide them with a safe environment. We may not always be able to protect them once they leave our home, but within our home they should be able to find a place of comfort and reassurance. We can accomplish this by having a home built on the content and authority of God's word. *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God"* (Rom. 12:2). As we have stated, the world will have more than enough opportunities to influence our children. They literally face a non-stop assault today. What are we as parents giving them to combat this attack?

We need to provide them with a solid foundation in the word of God. Their minds need to be renewed through the study of scripture so that they will be able to discern what is good and what is evil. This responsibility rests squarely on us as parents.

Answer the following questions for yourself. Would you rather read the Bible or some other book? Are you more inclined to spend time praying or watching television? Would you rather go to a church service or a football game? It's not that these things are wrong in and of themselves; it's a matter of considering our priorities according to what the Bible says is important. *"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth"* (Col. 3:2).

Our children will know the true answers to these questions even if we are not honest with ourselves. What do we value most and put first in our life? Is it God or worldly pleasures? We must make sure that God is first, and we must provide our children with a home in which they can do the same. We must desire the word of God, and we must teach it to our children. They have so much exposure to ungodliness; we must take the time to expose them to godliness through God's word.

We must also limit our children's access to media. Keep televisions or computers out of their room. It's not a matter of trust; it's a matter of protection. As the parent, you should monitor what your children watch and have the ultimate say over programs or internet usage. At the very least, filters should be in place blocking harmful material from your children.

Society will tell us that this is too harsh. It will say that we are doing more damage to our children by not giving them independence. Well, to that I say look around. Watch the news or read a newspaper. Look at the state of young people today. Does it really look like this philosophy has been working? Are children better off today emotionally, psychologically, or morally?

As parents we need to be on the alert. We need to engage our children and get involved in their life. We need to know and control exactly what they are exposed to. *"Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward"* (Ps. 127:3). Children are a priceless gift from God, a reward to be cherished, and accepted with an awe of

responsible stewardship. We need to place the importance of our children on a whole new level. Don't let society tell you what you need to do. Look to God's word.

In conclusion, what if we had no parenting programs? What if we had no self-help courses? What if we had no trained psychologists? What if the only parenting book in the home was a Bible? Would that be sufficient? *"This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working"* (Isa. 28:29). If God has the greatest wisdom and the most wonderful counsel, who can possibly provide a substitute? The Bible is sufficient and authoritative, and it gives guidance and information we need to create a godly environment for our children.