

## Virginity Is a Matter of National Security



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In less than a month, on July 8th, Russia will have its national holiday celebrating [Family, Love, & Fidelity](#). It is also the Orthodox Church's feast day for [Saints Peter & Fevronia](#), patron saints for Christian marriage & family.

We asked some experts, why is it necessary to preserve virginity before marriage? How can the total devaluation of marriage among young people now be dealt with, and what should the Church and the state undertake to do so?



*Priest Timothy Kuropatov, prior of the Patriarchal monastery at the church of the Tsar Passion-bearers in Anino, South Chertanovo*

The disintegration of families and fornication among adolescents needs to be corrected by state policy, which today is aimed at the promotion of fornication, and morality is corrupted through television and the Internet. If we would prohibit such films, programs, and movies, and if we would react to divorces more harshly, the situation would change.

Most marriages today are falling apart due to the fact that people are big egoists with great pride. Responsibility for education is borne by parents, and children should receive spiritual education at the church. Let's be honest — there are not a lot of divorces among true believers. If a person is an Orthodox Christian, goes to church, honors the Lord, and takes communion, then his family is strong. Among believers there are the least divorces, a high number of good families, and ninety percent marriages are happy ones. The church prohibits divorces, and tries to heal human souls, while the state does not give these tools to society. The state provides other opportunities: come, file an application, and “walk out happy”. Therefore, a very big responsibility lies precisely with the state. The state should take measures to help people think and live as they should.



*Archpriest Oleg Stenyaev, Cleric of the Church of the Nativity of John the Baptist in Sokolniki. Writer, Theologian, and Missionary*

The younger generation is lost in the Internet. It is necessary to make a Great Exodus, to free our Slavic youth from dependence on electronic devices. In order for such an exodus to take place, it is necessary that powerful Orthodox missionaries enter the Internet and help Orthodox youth understand what is useful

for them and what is not. Christ descended into hell, and Moses returned to captivity, to save the people and bring the people out. Young people cannot read books or even watch full movies. When I was asked to write a review of the film “Noah”, I went to the cinema, and there were young people in the hall. It struck me that they could not even look at the screen for a long time, as everyone had smartphones, and while watching the movie, they sent messages and texted.

I was told that the situation is the same with students at lectures at the Moscow State University and other educational institutions. One mother complained to me that her child will sit at the table, eating and looking at the smartphone, then take it with him to the bathroom and shower. He writes something to someone, and can not tear himself away from the smartphone. We need a Great Exodus from this space, or we will get people with extremely limited intelligence. Imagine if a person learned to read from the inscriptions on fences, examining graffiti on houses, and through this method he tried to comprehend the history of his country and culture. What will come of it?



*Priest Dimitri Aleshkevich, priest of the church in honor of the icon of the Mother of God “Joy of All Who Sorrow” in the city of Sevastopol*

Virginity before marriage and purity outside marriage must be preserved according to the commandments of Christ. What is happening today in the adolescent environment is in exact agreement with the eschatological passages of the holy scripture, where it is said that the Babylonian harlot will give all nations to drink of her fornication (Rev. 18:2). The total spread of fornication and the destruction of the image of the Christian family is motivated by the general retreat of people — people of the Christian world — from Christ.

Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann in his “Diaries” makes this remark regarding student confessions in seminary:

The students’ confessions are eternally about sex ... I begin to think that this sin is useful – otherwise they all would think themselves saints and

rush into being “spiritual elders”! They are already half convinced. Hence the salvation of this “sting in the flesh.” It’s probably one that doesn’t let us die in pride, cuts us down to size.

(written March 10, 1976)

In Greek, there were up to six verbs that convey the meaning of the Russian verb “to love,” and here Fr. Alexander expresses the idea that one of the lowest forms of love — erotic love — still remains at least some form of love in the world, receded from the love of Christ. “Eros” is a derogation of “agape” — Divine love, and this, unfortunately, is the reality of our time — impoverishment and degeneration. What are we to do with it? We can preach and try to convey to people — from the earliest school days — the depth of Christian concepts, including the concept of “love”. And it would be nice if the state promoted and legally enshrined the mandatory teaching of the basics of Christian morality in school.



*Priest Vitaly Rybakov, Head of the Ryazan Center for the Protection of Motherhood and Childhood*

I recently participated in a conference that was held in *Almaty*, and one expert gave statistics on families, including Orthodox Christians and Russians. He said that among the people living in Kazakhstan, there are a large number of divorces and not a careful attitude to marriage. Children in families are not raised as future fathers and mothers. In Russia, the situation is no better, since the percentage of divorces from marriages reaches ninety-one percent. This is the highest percentage in the world! And that is a statement of fact. The Moscow Patriarchate recently held a meeting of metropolitans, and at this meeting it was said that the family was collapsing, and the transmission of tradition was broken. If marriages are entered, they are not Christian, and are not entered out of love.

Of course, not all marriages are setup this way, but almost everything is blithely: *“And then we will see!”*, as thus say young people who are entering into marriage. And even parents relate to marriage like this: *“Well, let them try! If it won’t work, they will divorce!”* Marriage is an institution of God, and when a violation of this institution occurs, there is a reluctance to have children. Young people are looking

for different ways to prevent this. This is especially scary. If we sin, we move away from God! The Lord says: “Repent!”

A great responsibility lies with the shepherd. It is necessary to set a personal example! The Church was created to accumulate and preserve the spirit of the Gospel. The church must carry the spirit of the Gospel, and teach it to the nations. Today, parents understand taking care of children as *“buy a tablet, buy an iPhone, connect the device to the Internet, and let the child sit there with it.”* Parents do not think about the fact the younger the child is, the more it is like a flower — you have to take care of it and protect it from many things. Try planting seedlings ahead of time in the open land, and what will happen to him or her?

An acquaintance who is an experienced doctor, professor, and M.D., and spent several years in China, said that Chinese doctors say that the human body is able to defeat absolutely everything. The task of the doctor is only to help the person to overcome the disease. And pregnancy is not a disease. Attitude towards a pregnant woman as a “sick” person is the wrong attitude.

We — Orthodox Christians — took this torch from our ancestors, and our children take this torch from us. What quality of torch they will have, to give to our grandchildren and great-grandchildren, depends on us. Superficial education is criminal. The priest cannot shy away from working and helping his neighbors — the congregation, the flock. When people are engaged in sports, the coach’s task is to lead a person to victories through fighting with himself, through difficulties, through *“I don’t want to”* and *“I can’t”*. The task of the priest is more important — to spiritually educate a person, and not just say *“we pray for you, and you live as you wish!”* There is a very big difference between the concepts of *“good”* and *“nice”*. A father cannot be *nice*; he must only be *good*. You can not abandon the secrets of Christ, and let them drift away. After all, this has serious consequences.

Sergey Bekhterev, a great teacher and doctor, said: *“To do things without thinking about their consequences is one of the last stages of schizophrenia!”* It is very important to educate children in the spirit of chastity! For the future marriage, premarital life is the foundation for the building — an entire building will be built on this life. We need to help our children build this life. For a Christian, the right life is faith in God, a life according to the gospel. If you do a good deed, you place a brick. The quality and quantity of our good deeds will determine how the whole building will turn out. Life before marriage, keeping yourself in chastity for your future husband or future wife, is also keeping yourself for God.

As a priest, I am often faced with divorce problems. A question arises from the

newlyweds' parents: *"How carefully did you look into this? Why were they blessed to enter marriage?"* There is a spiritual rule — if you want your child's future spouse to be godly, then keep yourself pure, and bring up your child the same way.

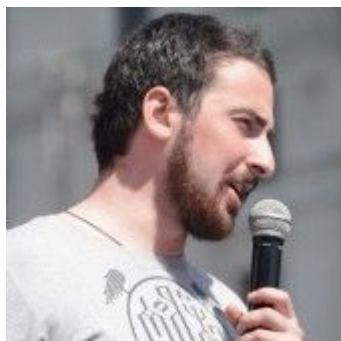
I have baptized many adults — soldiers, students, and many others — and married them, and they did not know the carnal life. They were virgins. So if we want our children to meet a pure man or woman and give birth to godly grandchildren, we must educate our daughters and our sons in chastity.

I knew a Russian teacher ten years ago who studied one and a half thousand St. Petersburg schoolchildren as part of his doctoral dissertation. One of the first questions asked was whether they would keep their virginity until marriage, or whether they were already having sex. The second question asked about their attitude towards suicide. About 70% said that they support free sexual relations outside marriage, and about 42% said they were not against suicide. This risk group prone to suicide is more than six times more prone to drug addiction.

Small families are not due to chastity before marriage. In Russia, sixty-seven percent of families are single-child families! This is terrible data. Evgeny Yuriev, a former presidential adviser to Dmitry Medvedev, speaking at a forum in Nizhny Novgorod, said that in two or three years no one would be born. He said: *"Understand, Fathers, there will be no people — there will be no Church, there will be no Orthodoxy!"*

It is necessary not only to give birth to many children, but also to educate future mothers to have many children in their families! One elderly woman said to me: *"Our mother had six children."* I replied: *"Great! Do you have 36 grandchildren?"* She answered, *"No, why do you ask?"* Then I said to her: *"Because if you had six children in your family, then you also should have had six!"* When did people have a change in consciousness?

At the lyceum in which Pushkin studied, a sign hangs saying: *"A.S. Pushkin. Not trained, but brought up!"* When the *Smolny Institute of Noble Maidens* was founded in St. Petersburg, its main goal was stated in its Charter: *"Raising Noble Maidens, the Expectant Mothers of Russia"*. What an emphasis!



*Dmitry Enteo*

The situation in Russia is catastrophic. Adolescents begin to have a massively active sex life from the ages of 12 and 13. This is entirely due to the informational environment in which our children are immersed. Movie rentals, television, the music industry, social networks, memes, fashion magazines, and practically everything that surrounds the modern young man aggressively calls him to fornication. The enemy ensured that extramarital sex has become the norm of our society. Moreover, if suddenly a young man or girl tries to preserve his chastity, such a person becomes an outcast, and his or her desire for cleanliness is cruelly mocked and stigmatized as pathology. The success of a young man in the eyes of his peers is determined by the number of virgins he seduces. What madness!

What are the consequences of this crisis? Mass adolescent abortions, the deepest trauma of the psyche and soul, and a huge number of divorces. Our country currently occupies a leading position in the number of divorces in the world, as reflected in the *United Nations Demographic Yearbook*. We didn't reach this sad record all at once. Years ago, it was every third couple that broke up. There were only a handful of such families in pre-revolutionary Russia. Yet in 2010, the divorce rate was 80%. Today it is rapidly approaching 90%. That is, 9 out of 10 marriages end in divorce. Just think of how much grief that is! Only 15% of children in Russia are raised in complete families with both parents.

But there are other statistics which are more encouraging. In cases where both spouses are unmarried prior to marrying one another, and they both preserve their virginity until after the wedding, about 90% of these marriages are successful. Such marriages do not fall apart. So this is the answer.

How can we change this catastrophic situation? First, we need to introduce in schools the lessons of family life and chastity, in defiance of the corrupting "sex education". We need to tell children how important it is to keep their purity. The administration of former U.S. President George W. Bush spent about ten billion dollars on the "abstinence program" for schoolchildren. The president himself went

to schools and told students the need to keep their purity. In the sex education classes, students were not told about the means of contraception, as it was a program of "complete abstinence". Special rings were introduced, which at the age of 14 fathers solemnly gave their daughters, after which they voluntarily gave a vow to keep their purity until marriage at the prayer meeting of their religious communities. The propagandists of fornication spread much slander about the results of this remarkable initiative, which certainly bore its fruit.

Russia needs to learn from this experience. We need to change public opinion so that any self-respecting young man would only want to marry a virgin, and so that girls will find it very difficult to find a worthy husband, if they do not keep their honor. They need to understand that a dissolute life and marriage are not compatible.

It is necessary to stigmatize sexual relations before marriage. We need to explain to young men that it is not normal to marry a woman who has already been used by dozens of men, and that only a fool would marry a harlot. Yes, this will hurt many very deeply. The vast majority of our society will be exposed. But we simply have no other way out to save the future generation.

According to the Bible, it is the father who is responsible for the honor of his daughter. It is important for men to understand that there is no greater shame for a father, than failing to keep your daughter pure before marriage. This is a great concern for one's entire family name. For many nations, both Christian and Islamic, the above attitude is a strict norm, which still works today. And it certainly can work for such peoples the future. Why do Armenians observe purity in the overwhelming majority of cases, while Russians are drowning in debauchery?

There are interesting passages in the Bible about how a corrupted maiden is to be redeemed in the eyes of her father. Maybe we should consider the law, according to which, a man who seduces a virgin would be obliged to pay her father an enormous fine, equal to half his income. Let young people be afraid of extramarital affairs. Of course, serious analysis is needed here, but in my opinion the idea is very interesting.





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*Translated by Katie Gleason*