



Ever

WHEN YOUNG MEN ARE
TEMPTED

SEXUAL PURITY FOR GUYS IN THE REAL WORLD

BILL PERKINS AND RANDY SOUTHERN

FORMERLY TITLED *THE NAKED TRUTH*

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When Young Men Are Tempted: Sexual Purity for Guys in the Real World
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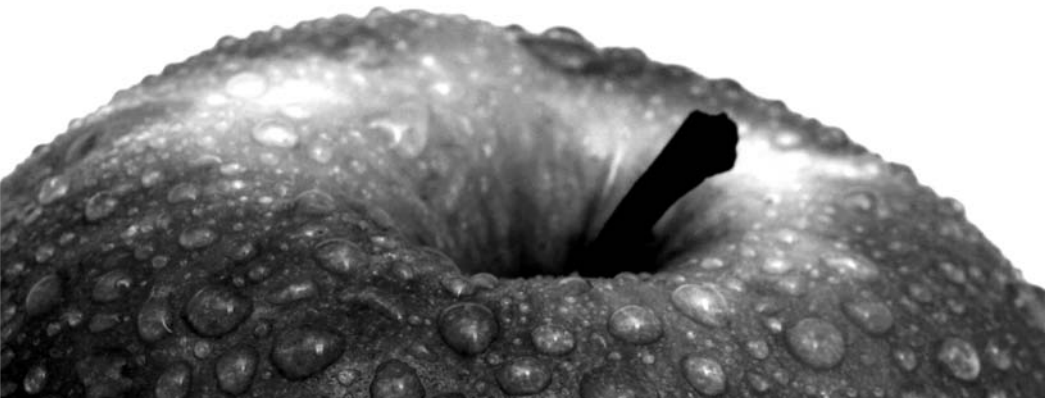
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CHAPTER ONE

UNDERSTANDING WHY NAKED WOMEN LOOK SO GOOD

Can you imagine how freaked girls would be if they knew how guys really look at them?

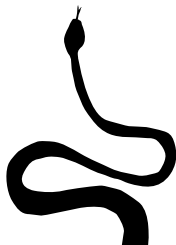
—David A.

I don't get why people are so uptight about nudity. That's how God created us. I say if you've got it, show it off. I'm just talking about girls, though.

—Geoff V.

I think about girls a lot. I mean A LOT. Almost all the time. Do you think I have a problem?

—Vincente



The idea for this chapter came one Friday night while I was turning on my sprinkler system. As I walked across my yard, I noticed that my neighbor's lights were on. Curious as to why the neighbors were up so late, I approached the fence and looked through the slats. I expected to see a handful of people playing cards inside. Instead I saw a beautiful young woman talking on the phone. No big deal, right? Wrong.

The woman was naked.

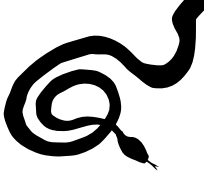
Instantly my eyes locked on her. Adrenaline rushed through my body. My heart started pounding like a jackhammer. My breathing grew shallow. The rest of the world seemed to fade away as I focused on the unexpected sight before me.

After gazing at her for a few seconds, I managed to pry myself away from the fence. I walked away a little shaken and a lot curious—not about her, but about me. One question kept running through my mind: *Why did I have such an extreme reaction to the sight of a woman's body? Why did her naked beauty affect me so strongly?*

Maybe you've had a similar experience as an accidental peeping Tom. Or maybe your first exposure to female nudity came from a magazine. Or an adult Web site. Or some late-night movie on cable.

Whatever your experience was, I'll bet you remember your reaction to it. The question is: *Why* did you react that way? What is it about a naked woman that stops guys dead in our tracks? What is it about her that makes everything else suddenly seem uninteresting and unimportant?

Those are the questions I'm going to focus on in this first chapter. Once you understand *why* you react as you do, you can



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begin to explore healthy, God-pleasing ways to deal with your sexual feelings and urges.

A WORK OF ART

The first and most obvious reason guys react so strongly to the sight of a naked woman is that the female body is a masterpiece. Call it the crowning work of The Master Artist. Genesis 1 tells us that God created the universe, the earth, and all living creatures in six days.

Genesis 2:21-22 tells us that God put Adam, the first man, into a deep sleep. While Adam snoozed, God went to work on the final piece of creation: the woman. With careful precision and perfect artistry, God designed her eyes, her nose, her lips, her skin, her breasts, her hair, and—well, you get the idea. When Adam finally woke up, God’s work was finished.

In human history there have been many momentous discoveries: Christopher Columbus discovering the New World, Ben Franklin discovering electricity, some guy named Reese discovering that chocolate and peanut butter taste great together. But none of them can compare to the discovery Adam made when he finally managed to stir from his slumber. Standing before him, in all of her God-created beauty and allure, was the first woman.

And she was naked.

The Bible doesn’t tell us how Adam responded to such a glorious sight, but as a guy, you can probably imagine his reaction. In Genesis 2:23, Adam called his new companion “woman.” The Hebrew word for “man” is *ish* and the Hebrew word for “woman” is *isha*. Perhaps when Adam got an eyeful of Eve, the first woman,

he simply said “ish” and then added a moaning exclamation of awe and excitement: “aaaaaaaaa!” If Adam had spoken English, he might have said, “Whoa! Man!”

Does a response like that make sense to you? As descendants of Adam, most of us experience the same extreme reaction to God’s creative work in women. We share our ancestor’s appreciation for the female form.

Want proof? The next time you’re hanging out with a group of guys, toss out a question like this:

What’s the most incredible sight in all of creation?

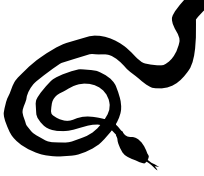
- (a) The night sky during a meteor shower.
- (b) A sunset in the Painted Desert.
- (c) Twenty-foot waves off the coast of Maui.
- (d) A fresh blanket of snow on the slopes of Vail.
- (e) The female body.

Feel free to throw in any other natural wonders you can think of, but it probably won’t change anyone’s answer. As far as most guys are concerned, everything else in God’s creation pales in comparison to the masterpiece of the female form.

THE HIDDEN TREASURE

Not only did Adam get to attend the unveiling of the first woman, but he also got to see her in *all* of her glory. Genesis 2:25 puts it this way: “The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.”

Imagine having a beautiful naked woman by your side 24-7. Life was good for Adam...for a while. Unfortunately for him—



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and for us—his time in paradise came to a screeching halt after one terrible decision. Ignoring God’s clear warning, Adam and Eve decided that tasting the fruit of the forbidden tree was more interesting than obeying God’s rules.

God’s response was quick and severe. He booted Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden and warned them that life was going to become extremely difficult and painful for them and their descendants.

Along with the pain of being separated from God and their home in the garden, Adam and Eve had to deal with a couple other new emotions: guilt and shame. One of the ways they dealt with their shame was to cover their naked bodies. Genesis 3:7 tells us they strung fig leaves around their hips to cover themselves. God later updated their wardrobe by giving them animal skins to wear (Genesis 3:21).

Just like that, the era of uninhibited nudity came to an end. And the modesty that began with Adam and Eve continues to this day.

That brings us to the second reason why the sight—or thought—of a naked woman has such an extreme effect on most guys: It’s something we don’t see very often. Nudity is a rare treat. Naked women get our attention because we seldom see them that way.

To take that concept one step further, you could say that the whole idea of nakedness is a special treat God has given only to human beings. To help you understand this concept, I offer the following true stories:

- In the late nineteenth century, a wealthy French woman dictated in her will that her entire fortune be used to buy

clothes for the snowmen of Paris. That's right—snowmen. Apparently the woman found the sight of unclothed snowmen to be vulgar and offensive, so she determined to do something about it.

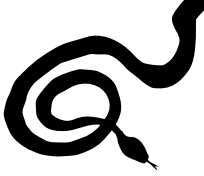
- In 1993, a supermarket chain in Dallas removed an issue of *Discover* magazine from its shelves because the cover showed a couple of nude apes.
- A European woman willed her entire estate to her niece on one condition: that the niece make sure the woman's pet goldfish wear pants at all times. That wasn't a misprint—the woman wanted her goldfish in trousers.

What led these people to make such odd decisions? Who knows? Whatever the reasons, though, it's safe to say that no one in his right mind would try to clothe a snowman or an ape or a goldfish. The fact is, those creatures can't be naked; our concept of "naked" involves the absence of clothes, and these creatures are never clothed in the first place.

How often do you put a shirt and pants on your cat before you let it out of the house? When was the last time you heard about a dog getting arrested for indecent exposure?

Nothing in creation is nude in the same sense that people are nude. Not trees, rocks, dogs, dolphins, or even the naked mole rat. No sane guy would ever be curious about the nakedness of an animal or a plant. Why would he be? Those things can't be naked.

Women, on the other hand, can be naked. Yet they seldom are. The females we see every day at school and at the mall and in the neighborhood all wear clothes. They cover themselves when they're around us. (Some girls cover more than others, of course,



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but we'll talk about that later in the book.) A naked woman, then, reveals what is almost always hidden from male eyes—the beauty of her body.

Comedian Tim Allen drives this point home in his description of the first time he saw a picture of a naked woman: “In a way, the picture was both frightening and reassuring. I realized for the first time that, dumb as it sounds, *all women are naked under their clothes*... That discovery made me distrust all women forever: they're hiding this! They have this power and I didn't even know it. It's just under their clothes!”

Allen raises a question that most guys can identify with. Namely, how can women walk around every day hiding something so wonderful? Not only that, how can they pretend they don't even know what they're doing? Don't they understand that the more they hide their nakedness, the more guys want to see it?

Curiosity may have killed the cat, but it also inspires all kinds of male fantasies.

THE COMPLETER

Don't get the wrong impression, though. As guys, our appreciation of the female form isn't as superficial and shallow as it may seem. It's not just a matter of physical lust. Our attraction to a woman's body goes a lot deeper than that. As a matter of fact, it can be traced back to the earliest days of creation.

Let's head back to Genesis 1 to find out where our overwhelming appreciation comes from. You'll notice that after each day of creation, God looked around at what he had made and announced that it was “good.” Except for one thing. You'll

find it in Genesis 2:18. God saw that Adam was alone, and he determined to do something about it.

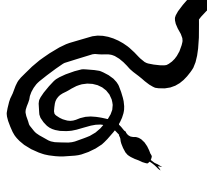
Step One of his plan was to help Adam recognize that he needed someone. In order to do that, God gave Adam an assignment: to name all of the animals. We don't know how long the job took, but when you consider the variety of creatures in the world, it's not hard to imagine Adam spending months—maybe even years—naming them.

Although the Bible doesn't say so, it seems logical to assume that at some point in the process, Adam must have noticed that the animals came in pairs, male and female. He also must have noticed that none of the creatures God paraded past him resembled him in any way. None of them eased his loneliness.

How long do you think it took before this started to bother him? Imagine how alone Adam must have felt as the final animals filed past him and he realized that everything in creation had a partner but him.

When Adam's feelings of aloneness started to get intense, God stepped in. As I mentioned earlier, he put Adam into a deep sleep and performed the first act of surgery. He took a rib from Adam's side and custom-made a companion for him. Just as the first man was made from the earth, the first woman was made from the man.

With the creation of Eve, Adam lost a rib. With the appearance of Eve, Adam discovered the one who would make him complete. Without her, Adam was like a pen without ink or a ship without a sail—he was incomplete. Part of him was missing—literally. He needed Eve to complete him.



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As descendants of Adam, most guys have that same need and that same sense of incompleteness. That's the way we've been created. I'm not talking about a surface emotion here. You may not *feel* incomplete. The need I'm talking about exists at the deepest part of our being. It's there because God put it there. He gave us a need that can only be satisfied by a woman. To put it another way: Women fill up what's lacking in guys.

Isn't it possible, then, that the beauty of a woman's body is somehow linked to our need for completeness? The Bible doesn't say this, but maybe at the deepest level of our subconscious, we have a craving for someone who will make us whole in the way God intended.

Maybe our desire for someone who will make us complete is what causes us to react as we do to a woman's body. Perhaps in the moment when a guy gazes at a woman's naked beauty, he experiences—for a fleeting second—the hope of being whole.

GETTING INTIMATE

We can't talk about nakedness without mentioning intimacy. Intimacy is what makes nudity special. When God designed us as sexual beings, he put intimacy and trust at the heart of the male-female relationship. A woman who takes off her clothes in front of a guy is putting her trust in him. She makes herself vulnerable. She allows him to see not just her beauty, but her flaws as well. That kind of intimacy requires a special relationship, which can only occur between people who love and accept each other, warts and all.

Adam and Eve had such intimacy. After God brought them together, they “felt no shame” (Genesis 2:25), even though they were completely nude. Their physical nakedness matched the

nakedness that existed at a deeper level—a spiritual and emotional level. Adam and Eve were intimate in every sense of the word.

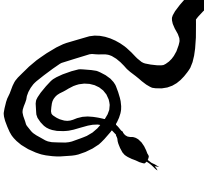
If you're like most guys, you probably don't consider yourself a prime candidate for intimacy. The idea of completely opening up to someone may make your skin crawl. But while most guys shy away from intimacy, we still need it. The problem is, we've been programmed to believe we have to be self-sufficient. Since childhood we've bought into the lie that "real" men are independent and rugged. That they never need anyone's help. That they never share their inner feelings with anyone.

That attitude may work for fictional action heroes, but not for flesh-and-blood guys. No matter how much we try to tell ourselves that we can make it alone in this world, something inside us screams for an intimate connection at the deepest level. I believe naked women are beautiful to us because their nakedness tells us, "I'm here for you. I'm yours. I've made myself bare for your eyes." That tells a man he's safe. It tells him he's loved. It tells him someone wants to be intimate with him.

Because nakedness involves intimacy, seeing a naked woman provides guys with an intimate connection—even if it's a superficial one. However, *true* intimacy can only occur in a safe setting, in an environment of love and trust.

GOOD NEWS

Before I wrap up this chapter, I need to make one more extremely important point about the female body and our reaction to it: There's no reason for you to feel like a pervert because you enjoy the sight (or thought) of the female form. God gave you your sexual appetite. He created the pleasure centers in your body; he designed your body to react the way it does when you get turned



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on; and he wired you with a strong physical attraction to female flesh.

That may come as a shock to people who think of God as being anti-sex. But saying that God opposes sex is like saying he opposes marriage or church; it's ridiculous. Forget Hugh Hefner or Dr. Drew or any other so-called "sexpert." God is the biggest supporter of sex you'll ever find. In fact, God doesn't just support human sex—he actually *celebrates* it.

If you have a hard time believing that, check out a little book in the Old Testament called Song of Songs (or Song of Solomon, depending on which biblical translation you use). At first glance this book seems out of place in Scripture: King Solomon and his bride take turns reciting love poems to each other. And let's just say these two lovebirds weren't shy about expressing their passion for one another.

Check out this passage from the book:

You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride; you have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace. How delightful is your love, my sister, my bride! How much more pleasing is your love than wine, and the fragrance of your perfume than any spice! Your lips drop sweetness as the honeycomb, my bride; milk and honey are under your tongue. The fragrance of your garments is like that of Lebanon. (Song of Songs 4:9-11)

Welcome to the first night of the honeymoon! Once the two lovers are alone, the king tells his bride that the look in her eyes is enough to excite him. You know the kind of look he's talking about, don't you?

Solomon also uses a familiar image to get his point across.

The area where the Jewish people lived was often described as “the land of milk and honey.” The land offered great richness and pleasure to those who lived in it. In a similar way, the woman Solomon held in his arms provided him with both pleasure and well-being.

Here’s another passage from the book:

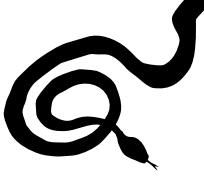
You are a garden locked up, my sister, my bride; you are a spring enclosed, a sealed fountain. Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates with choice fruits, with henna and nard, nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with every kind of incense tree, with myrrh and aloes and all the finest spices. You are a garden fountain, a well of flowing water streaming down from Lebanon. (Song of Songs 4:12-15)

Maybe you appreciate Solomon’s poetry; maybe you don’t. But if you look beyond all the fruit and spice references, you’ll see that Solomon is talking about his bride’s virginity. He points out that her fountain is his alone and her garden is private. In other words, no one has ever entered her before. But now the night for a visitor has arrived, and Solomon is seriously stoked to be that visitor. That’s why he goes into such detail about the aroma and taste of her love.

Solomon’s not the only one getting aroused in this passage. The fact that his bride’s fountain has become a “well of flowing water” (verse 15) suggests that she’s pretty excited as well. She makes that clear in verse 16 when she invites Solomon to “come into his garden and taste its choice fruits.”

Whoa. Is it getting hot in here?

The point is that I’m not quoting from some ancient book of



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erotic writings; it's the *Bible*. God chose to include these passages for us; God wants us to read these words of passion. He gives us a peek into Solomon's honeymoon suite to help us understand just how incredible sex can be—when the circumstances are right.

THE ULTIMATE PLAYGROUND

Speaking of those “right” circumstances, here's how cool God is—not only did he create guys so that we get pleasure from playing with a naked woman, but he also created the ideal playground for us. It's called marriage.

God intends sex to be one of the most powerful and pleasurable experiences of life. It's when a man and woman become “one flesh.” Their bodies literally are linked together. During those incredible moments, the man and the one created from him become whole again. They are one.

God's plan is for this oneness to take place within the safety of marriage because marriage is the only place where true intimacy, security, and commitment can exist between a guy and a girl. Couples who exchange marriage vows commit themselves to developing the kind of intimacy that nakedness requires. Marriage, then, is the only place in which a guy can totally celebrate and enjoy the beauty of a woman's body.

Of course, the fact that God wants sex to take place in marriage creates a world of challenges for guys who aren't married yet. I'll tackle those challenges in the chapters that follow.

GETTING PERSONAL

1. When was the first time you saw naked female flesh? (I'm talking about when you were old enough to appreciate it.) How did you react?
2. In your opinion what's the best thing about the way God created guys and girls? Why?
3. What would you like to say to God about his work in creating the female body? What would you like to say to him about his gift of sex?