



The Secular Feminist Who Tested Christian Ethics—and Stayed

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UNCATEGORIZED

December 19, 2025

Is faith-based chastity outdated? Evidence affirms marriage, chastity, and family stability.

Years ago, as I was running errands with my minivan full of little children, I checked my rearview mirror. I saw the traffic behind me, but I also saw the sweet little faces of my kids. For some reason, that quick glance—which was such a simple thing on an ordinary day—resulted in an overwhelming sensation coming over me. It was so distinct that I still remember the exact location where it occurred. It's difficult to describe, but the best I can say is that it was a rush of *gratitude*. I felt gratitude for the [law of chastity](#)—reserving sexual relations for marriage—and for those who had taught it to me. Also, gratitude for my younger self who had trusted in it so I could experience the good fruits it bore as I married and had children.

Louise Perry

In an earlier [article](#), I wrote about society's need for righteous fathers, and I relied heavily on the book *The Case Against the Sexual Revolution*, which is a lesson from Louise Perry. Perry argues that women and children have paid a disproportionate price in the fallout of crumbling marriage norms over the last several decades. While working at a rape crisis center in her twenties, she began questioning the modern secular norms she had previously absorbed. Eventually, she became convinced that Christian sexual ethics work, although she was not persuaded by Christianity's supernatural claims.

I found Perry's writing compelling and have continued to follow her online. Over the last several months, I've noticed, as have [others](#), that there's been a transformation in Perry's relationship to Christianity. It's moved beyond a sociological appreciation. In an interview earlier this year, [she](#) said:

"I kind of think of myself as an agnostic Christian. I go to church. Some weeks I believe and some weeks I don't but one of the things that my husband and I have committed to do—he's in the same boat as me—is, we are so convinced that it's sociologically true and we would so like it to be supernaturally true, that we want to give our children the best chance possible of believing both truths and the way to do that, I think, is to expose them to Christians."

And then, in a more recent interview, she [said](#):

"And ... since writing the book, I have become Christian and have become much ... more willing to make these arguments in theological terms. One of the reasons that I ended up becoming Christian is because I realized if it were supernaturally true, you would expect it to be sociologically true. And observing quite how sociologically true it is was very persuasive to me."

From Hesitation to Witness

It's interesting to note that Perry married her husband in 2017 and published her book in 2022 between the births of her two sons in 2021 and 2024. She credits her time at the crisis center for initially opening her up to Christian sexual ethics, but the process of becoming a Christian coincided with her early years of motherhood. Perry said she

wanted to give her children “the best chance.” Her children were a motivation for her—a common human experience that many of us have as we take on the responsibility of precious souls.

I’ve thought a great deal about Perry’s experience of being drawn to Christian sexual ethics as a young secular thinker, and it has caused me introspection. How many times have I remained quiet about gospel teachings about marriage and sexuality because I assumed they were the least popular aspects of my faith? How often have I jumped to hasty conclusions about who may or may not be receptive to the Latter-day Saint [doctrine of the family](#)?

We live in a confusing world, and many norms that we once took for granted are being challenged. In Quebec, [three men](#) recently adopted a three-year-old girl in a case that is described as a first in Canada. In May 2025, a [journal article](#) put out by the American Sociological Association argued that childhood sexual innocence is a “colonial fiction” and that “childhood pleasure is indispensable for an inclusive sociology.” [Marriage](#) and [birth](#) rates are falling throughout the world. These are just a few of the indicators that point to an obscuring of the divine vision of the family—and Latter-day Saints aren’t the only ones noticing. Many people are feeling the divine tug of truth about the family unit and are participating in conversations about how to safeguard it.

There will continue to be opposition, and likely even attempts to silence defenders of the family. Still, as Latter-day Saints, we can—and should—join in efforts that foster the flourishing of families. And in the process, we will be strengthened by others, like Louise Perry. They offer fresh outlooks that can inspire us to be more enthusiastic about the eternal truths about family structure that we may have taken for granted.

About the author

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