

How to Pursue Sexual Purity

Ephesians 5:3-14

1. Uphold God's standard for sexual purity (vv. 3-4)
 - God's standard: Not even a hint
2. Use the biblical means for sexual purity (v. 4)
 - The biblical means: Giving of thanks
3. Understand the proper motivation for sexual purity (vv. 5-14)
 - The motivation: A life of sexual sin...
 - excludes us from God's kingdom (v. 5)
 - guarantees God's judgment (v. 6)
 - conflicts with our new nature (vv. 7-10)
 - undermines God's mission (vv. 11-14)

→ Biblical Means for Battling Sexual Sin and Temptation

1. Give thanks (Eph. 5:4)

2. Properly use the _____

- Scripture is crucial in our sanctification
 - Psalm 119:11 - *Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.*
 - John 17:17 - *Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.*
 - Act 20:32 - *And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*
 - 1 Peter 2:2 - *like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation...*
- You can come to a deeper understanding of the Bible and not grow spiritually, but at the same time, you will never grow spiritually without a deeper understanding of the Bible.
- The Bible's specific role in temptation
 - In Matthew 4:1-11, Jesus used the means of Scripture to resist temptation
 - In Ephesians 6:10-20, Paul tells us to take up the full armor of God to resist the schemes of the devil by:
 - girding our loins with truth (v. 14)
 - taking the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God (v. 17)

Ephesians 5:3-14

³But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; ⁴and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. ⁵For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷Therefore do not be partakers with them; ⁸for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light, ⁹(for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), ¹⁰trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; ¹²for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. ¹³But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. ¹⁴For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

3.

- Every day
 - Luke 22:40, 46 - ⁴⁰*When He arrived at the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation" ...⁴⁶"Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not enter into temptation."*
 - Matthew 6:13 - *And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*
- In the moment of temptation

4.

- 1 Corinthians 6:18 - *Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.*
- 2 Timothy 2:22 - *Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*
- Flee the place of temptation
 - i.e. Joseph (Gen. 39)
- Stay away from the places of temptation
 - Proverbs 5:8 - *Keep your way far from her and do not go near the door of her house*
- Take steps to make it hard to sin
 - Romans 13:14 - *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.*
 - Richard Baxter: "Keep as far as you can from those temptations that feed and strengthen the sins which you would overcome. Lay siege to your sins and starve them out by keeping away the food and fuel which is their maintenance and life."
 - John Owen: "Be killing sin or it will be killing you."
 - Matthew 5:28-30 - *I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell.*

5. Rehearse the tragic _____ of sexual sin

- David's sin with Bathsheba
 - 2 Samuel 11 – the pleasure of sexual sin
 - 2 Samuel 11-24 – the tragic consequences of sexual sin
 - Cover up
 - Murder
 - Death of a child
 - Rebellious, adulterous son
 - A life on the run
- Proverbs 5:8-14 - *Keep your way far from her and do not go near the door of her house, or you will give your vigor to others and your years to the cruel one; and strangers will be filled with your strength and your hard-earned goods will go to the house of an alien; and you groan at your final end, when your flesh and your body are consumed; and you say, "How I have hated instruction! And my heart spurned reproof! I have not listened to the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ear to my instructors! I was almost in utter ruin In the midst of the assembly and congregation."*
- Proverbs 6:25-29 - *Do not desire her beauty in your heart, nor let her capture you with her eyelids. For on account of a harlot one is reduced to a loaf of bread, and an adulteress hunts for the precious life. Can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burned? Or can a man walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched? So is the one who goes in to his neighbor's wife; whoever touches her will not go unpunished.*
- Wayne Mack, in his book *Sweethearts for a Lifetime*, suggests writing out the consequences of sexual sin. For example, sexual sin:
 - violates your spouse's trust
 - it undermines all areas of your relationship
 - it destroys God's design for marriage
 - it puts you at risk of sexually transmitted diseases/pregnancy
 - it cultivates a pattern of lying and deception
 - it sears your mind with images that will last a lifetime
 - it produces nothing but guilt and no real satisfaction
 - it destroys the trust all around you including your children
 - it influences your children to justify their sin by your example
 - it robs you of a clear conscience
 - it produces real guilt before God
 - it robs you of assurance of salvation and it even raises serious questions about the reality of your faith
 - it alienates you from God
 - it opens you to the discipline of the church
 - it exposes you to the severe discipline of God Himself, including sickness and even death.

6. Enjoy the gift of _____ love

- Proverbs 5:15-19 - *Drink water from your own cistern and fresh water from your own well. Should your springs be dispersed abroad, streams of water in the streets? Let them be yours alone and not for strangers with you. Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth. As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; be exhilarated always with her love.*
- 1 Corinthians 7:2-5 - *But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband. The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*
- 1 Corinthians 7:8-9 - *But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I. But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.*

7. Look to _____ alone

- When we fail, we come back to Christ for forgiveness.
 - Proverbs 28:13 - *He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.*
 - 1 John 1:9 - *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
 - Psalm 32:5 - *I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"; and You forgave the guilt of my sin.*
- In the middle of temptation, we come to Christ for help.
 - Hebrews 4:15-16 - *For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*
- Ultimately, the biblical means for pursuing sexual purity is Jesus Christ.
 - 1 John 3:3 - *And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*