

Sick from Lust

The church and the world are sick from sex. Lust causes the church to waste away, proving itself powerless as it preaches the good news of Jesus. Like Amnon, Christian brothers and sisters feel “frustrated to the point of illness.”

In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David. Amnon became frustrated to the point of illness on account of his sister Tamar, for she was a virgin, and it seemed impossible for him to do anything to her. 2 Samuel 13:1-2

In the sight of God, sex has become so perverted in the vast majority of churches that unnatural behavior is now considered healthy, natural, and normal. Like Lot’s daughters, who had lived too long under the bad influences of Sodom, the church engages in utterly sinful activities. Of course, like today’s church, these girls had their justifications and noble reasons for sleeping with their father. Just like the teenagers today that justify the unholy dress they wear.

One day the older daughter said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is no man around here to lie with us, as is the custom all over the earth. Let’s get our father to drink wine and then lie with him and preserve our family line through our father.” That night they got their father to drink wine, and the older daughter went in and lay with him. He was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up. Genesis 19:31-33

You probably believe this has nothing to do with you or your church. Let us take a test and see if your church has adopted the customs of the world.

- Does your church believe that divorce and re-marriage is adultery?

A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord. 1 Corinthians 7:39

- Does your church think it is okay to date or court?

Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity. 1 Timothy 5:1b-2

- Does your church focus in on the family instead of teaching the married to live as though they are single?

What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none. 1 Corinthians 7:29

- Does your church teach that singles should not look for partners?

Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife. 1 Corinthians 7:27b

- Do the girls in your church dress modestly and boys unworldly?

I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes... 1 Timothy 2:9

We do not have space to explore all these points in this publication. We will, however, see that if we hope to overcome sexual sin we must embrace the standards of God, by the grace of God. Without grace, anyone under the Lord's wrath will commit adultery.

The mouth of an adulteress is a deep pit; he who is under the Lord's wrath will fall into it. Proverbs 22:14

From one night stands to long term commitments, to divorce and remarriage, all those ripe for the judgment of hell-fire will fall into the deep pit of the adulteress mouth. If this includes you, then realize that God provides warning and opportunity for mercy, if you repent.

Overcome Sexual Sin

There are only two ways to overcome sexual sin—neither are easy. Yet those who persevere will find the joy of restfulness in Christ. This rest allows those who overcome to sit at the feet of Jesus without lustful passions welling up in the mind or heart.

1. Flee

Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. 1 Corinthians 6:18

As you flee sexual immorality run toward righteousness in Jesus Christ. Those who stand still in an attempt to conquer lust will be overcome by sexual sin. Like Lot who fled Sodom, the first step to overcoming sexual sin is to stop standing and start running. What we run to, however, is just as important. For example, the Bible tells youth what they must pursue.

Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 2 Timothy 2:22

Give yourselves fully to these things and lust will not gain a permanent hold on you. You may stumble along the way, but you shall overcome. And every time you stumble, jump back up and keep on running. Confess to God and to men over and over again, until you know from the Holy Spirit that you can run with humble confidence in the Lord (James 5:16). As I now approach old age I can tell you in the Lord that if you run, He is faithful and will enable you to overcome. After all, true grace does not excuse sin, but provides the power to say no to sin (see Titus 2:11).

2. You must suffer

Secondly, you must suffer on the cross Jesus will give you to carry each day. You must suffer in your body, feeling the struggle and the pain as grace empowers and demands you say no. Running is hard work and as Paul wrote, we must strain toward the goal, (Philippians 3:13-14). When dealing with sexual immorality you had better run the plan God gives you—don't just beat the air, (1 Corinthians 9:26).

There are no quick fixes to sexual sins. God's grace, however, will cause you to suffer in your body with sin so you can be "done with sin." "As a result," the following passage promises, we can then do the will of God instead of burning with lust. We have a choice as Peter said. We can choose to do what the "pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust" and other sins, or we can pick up a cross that causes us to suffer against sexual sin. If anyone offers you some other way to deal with sexual sin than this kind of cross, they are false prophets. Rebuke and avoid such teaching at all costs for it does not have the power to help.

Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. As a result, he does not live the rest of

his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. 1 Peter 4:1-3

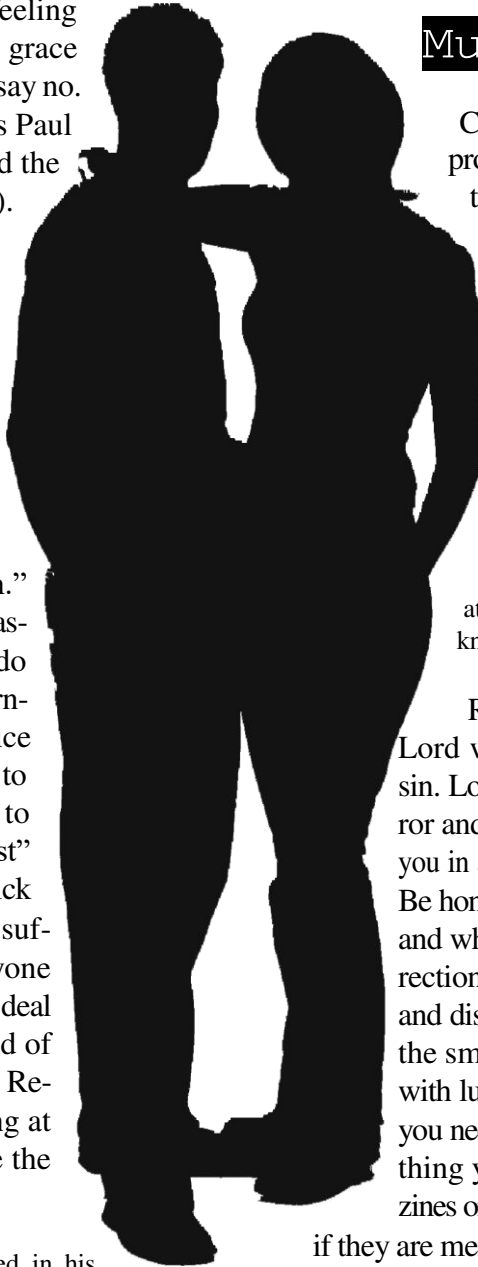
Must Learn

Controlling our bodies is a learning process. Note in the following passage that we must "avoid sexual immorality," reminding us once again that we must run from sexual sins. Each person "should learn to control his own body."

It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5

Run to the prayer closet and ask the Lord what causes you to stumble into sin. Look at yourself in the spiritual mirror and take note of the things that point you in a direction sexually (James 1:23-24). Be honest about your heart and your flesh and what things move your steps in a direction toward sexual sin. You will find and discover, with the Holy Spirit's help, the small things that cause you to burn with lust. Perhaps you have thoughts that you need to take captive, or there is something you like to look at, books, magazines or even the company you keep. Even

if they are members of your own church, family or a special friend it is time to come to our senses about sexual sin and stop sinning.



Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.” Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God—I say this to your shame.

1 Corinthians 15:33-34

Jesus said if you can be trusted with little you can be trusted with much (Luke 16:10). The Holy Spirit will show you many times seemingly unrelated events that can set your lust into motion. Perhaps a rich meal and too much resting and relaxation causes your mind to drift off, where you end up in an ocean of lustful desires. Without God’s grace you will not overcome sexual sin - it is that simple. If you are unwilling to obey God in everything do not expect Him to give you victory over sexual sins. God doesn’t just deliver us from the sins we don’t like, He seeks to make us wholly righteous. It requires complete surrender and without it no man will overcome, (Revelations 21:7).

The Church

Unfortunately the church has tried to sanitize sexual sin by calling dating courting, divorce and remarriage a “new beginning” and singleness a greater hardship than marriage. In short, the church refuses to tell brothers and sisters to crucify the desire to date, marry, and fulfill “normal” desires. No wonder so much sexual failure occurs within the church and among pastors today. When we play with small matches we are bound to set something ablaze.

The empty dryness of today’s church causes individuals to feel lonely and in their mind justify the need to marry. Or there is the old classic line that a man uses to marry a divorced woman—her children need a father and so out of nobility he marries her. A church full of the love and purity of Jesus will accept neither one of these excuses. The church has been unfaithful to God’s word, committing adultery with the world while it preaches from the Bible. It causes

many to fall under judgment for spiritual adultery. If you desire to overcome and truly outrun sexual immorality, then seek the Lord, and only the Lord. Accept all of God’s Word for what the Holy Spirit declares it to mean. Only those who flee and pick up their cross will be set free from the trap and chains of sexual sin. Only God grants grace to those who please Him.

I find more bitter than death the woman who is a snare, whose heart is a trap and whose hands are chains. The man who pleases God will escape her, but the sinner she will ensnare. Ecclesiastes 7:26

All Other Sins

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Sinning sexually means we sin directly against God. We were made in God’s image and when we use our bodies to sin sexually we are using the person of God to sin. All other sins are against others, but to sin sexually is to strike at God directly.

When we masturbate, we do so in the image of God and are therefore using God in an unholy manner. When those in the church dress in a way that draws attention to themselves they are like Satan that wanted to use his beauty to be noticed. Let us then understand that God has given us a spirit of self-discipline and we should bring our bodies, from dress to behavior, under the discipline of grace.

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. 2 Timothy 1:7