

# **“STEWARDSHIP OF GOD’S GIFT OF SEX: PROTECTING SEXUAL PURITY.”**

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**February 18, 2024, 10:30 AM**

**Scripture Texts: I Thessalonians 4:3-8; Hebrews 13:4**

## **Introduction.**

If ever there was a time when I feel like the little Dutch boy with his finger in the dyke, it is when I preach on sexual immorality in our culture. How can I hold back the tsunami of sexual immorality that floods our culture, our community, our homes and our hearts?

How do I proclaim God’s truth in a way that both warns us and inspires us to follow God’s path for righteousness, purity and holiness? My heart is burdened by the lack of love for God and His good and perfect wisdom and will, and the lack of a true fear of the Lord and a hatred of sin.

I am grieved by what our culture is spewing out and how it is sexualizing our youth at a younger and younger age. The world, the flesh and the devil, the great trinity of evil, are promoting lies and utter blasphemy in the name of freedom and license and liberty. Satan is waging an all-out assault on all things good, true and beautiful, on what is pure and holy.

All the influencers in our culture are accomplices in this destruction, all the social elites, our government, Hollywood and celebrities and song writers, the media, and the academic community, educators. All of us to one degree or another are caught up in it or going along with it, or at an utter loss what to do about it.

We need to return from the path of sexual suicide to God’s path of sexual purity and holiness. Our text is a call to us all to seek God’s will rather than the world’s ways, to follow the way of life rather than the way that leads to death.

## **This is God’s will for you.**

Paul begins with a clear call, “This is the will of God for you.”

When you hear, “This is God’s will for you” do you hear the implications of that statement? The creator God of the universe thinks about you, He is personally

interested in you. He created you and made you in His image and He has a purpose, a plan, a will for you.

God's will for you is your sanctification. What does that mean?

Sanctification means being set apart from the world, from the world's ways, from sin, from impurity, all that pollutes and defiles us. This is God's will for you, that your life be lived in a Godward direction, toward the one who knows you and created you and loves you and knows what is best for you.

Sanctification is about holiness, increasingly growing in our likeness of Jesus.

The God who calls us to Himself is holy, and when He calls us, He calls us to be holy as He is holy. The Spirit of God is a holy Spirit when He puts His Spirit in us, He enables this to be true.

Paul focuses God's will of our sanctification in a particular area, sexual purity. It was just as big an issue in the first century as it is today, just as much rampant moral chaos.

Nothing works more against our sanctification, holiness and purity than sexual immorality in all its forms and varieties. Paul calls it the passion of lust seen among the Gentiles, among the pagans, the non-Christians, those who have no knowledge of God or care anything about God.

Let me remind us of the basic fundamental truths regarding sex.

Sex has a beginning, a creator. It is created by God, it is God's idea and His doing. As the creator of sex God is the one who designed it and defines it.

Sex is not something that is just out there in the world, and Christians are taking it and trying to clean it up and make it good.

Sex is God's good, pure, beautiful gift. Sex is blessed by God and called good by God. Since it is His, He gets to say what He wants about it and define it, and give instructions for it. And since God is perfect and all wise what He says about it is best and right.

Sex is created by God to be an expression of the one flesh relationship in the permanent covenant of marriage between one husband and one wife. There is no other relationship on earth that is held together by vows to be a permanent commitment, so marriage is the only safe and secure relationship for the most intimate expression of

love when two become one flesh until death. When sex is taken outside of marriage all that is true, good and beautiful about it is lost and destroyed.

This is what the world has done. The world has rebelled against God and stolen His good gift and turned it into lust, soul-depleting and soul-crushing selfish lust. And then the world mocks Christians for being too old-fashion and out of touch with the sexual freedom of the world. But the world doesn't know God and doesn't know what is truly good and beautiful.

### **Four motivations to encourage us to pursue sexual purity rather than sexual immorality.**

*First, because you know God and you know His will.* He could not be clearer in His Word to us.

Sexual purity is God's will, and as Christians we love the will of God, and pursue it and delight to do it. Our daily prayer for us and those around us is "Your will be done."

**Romans 6:12** Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions.

**Romans 8:5** Those who live according ... to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

**Romans 8:13** If you live ... by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

**I Corinthians 6:18, 20** Flee from sexual immorality. ... You are not your own, 20 for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

**Galatians 5:16** Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

**Colossians 3:4-5** If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, ... 5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire.

**I Peter 2:11** Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.

Pursue sexual purity because you know this is the good and pleasing will of God for you.

***The second motivation to encourage us to pursue sexual purity is honor.*** Controlling your own body and desires is a matter of honor, of being an honorable person. Sexual purity is the honorable thing to do.

**Hebrews 13:4** Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled.

All sexual immorality is dishonorable. It is taking advantage of another person, stealing what isn't yours to take or to see. Act in no way as to give an offense, or to defraud another.

Sex outside of marriage isn't love, it is lust, it's selfish. Having sex outside of marriage or looking at or watching sex outside of marriage is only for selfish pleasure and gratification. It is shameful.

We honor God's gift of marriage and sex by keeping all sex and nakedness in the safe, secure holy confines of marriage. Adam and Eve were naked and unashamed. It is dishonorable and shameful when we take sex and nakedness out of where it belongs put it on public display everywhere TV, movies, social media, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, video games, advertising, photo sites, porn sites and on and on. Every time we look at or watch sex or nakedness we are being dishonorable and shameful.

Christians do the honorable thing like Shem and Japheth who covered up their father Noah's nakedness (Genesis 9:20-27). Do the honorable thing like Joseph who fled from the seduction of another woman. Those are honorable men who did the honorable thing rather than let their lust loose or linger in the presence of sin. They turned it off, they didn't click on it, they deleted it.

We honor marriage when we keep God's order of things right, first marriage covenant and commitment before intimacy, and not upside down as the Gentiles do, intimacy before commitment.

You are an image bearer of God, and if you are a Christian, you are a name-bearer, you bear the name of Christ, you belong to Him body and soul, so you honor Him with your body and soul.

This is a matter of self-control, of leading one's self in the right way or honorable direction.

We have heard the word seduce or seduction. Part of that word comes from the Latin word *duco* which means "I lead." When a man is being seduced he is being led and when a woman seduces she is leading. The man may think he is being manly, but he is actually being weak, abdicating his role. This happens whether he is with a real woman or looking at porn.

He is failing to take authority and exercise self-control of his body and soul, he is failing to lead himself and others in a God honoring manner. This failure always leads to ruin.

Pornography and sexual immorality have turned out a generation of weak, effeminate men who need the grace of the Gospel to have strength and courage to fight their sinful desires and curb their appetites and resist the pleasures offered by the world, the flesh and the devil.

**Titus 2:6** Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.

***The third motivation to encourage us to pursue sexual purity is out of love for others.*** Love seeks the good of others and does no wrong or harm to others. Christians are people who don't use others for their own selfish desires or pleasures.

Sexual purity is the loving way to treat others. "That no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter." When we sin sexually we are not seeking the highest good of others, neither the woman or the man we sin with, nor the person we fantasize about nor the person in the pornography.

If a guy says to his girlfriend, "If you love me you will have sex with me" she should say, "If you love me you won't ask that from me. If you love me you will protect me from your lust, from your selfishness. If you love me you will want what's best for me, what God wants for us, you will wait until we are married."

Prepare for the next time you are tempted by some sexual immorality. Turn it quickly from a temptation to lust to an opportunity to love by praying, "Jesus, you are my Lord and my God, deliver me from evil in this moment and turn my desire into love for you and for others. Help me right now to redirect my lust into love. Deliver me right now from the bondage of sin into the bondage of righteousness. Sanctify me right now by your Holy Spirit. Make me strong in His strength."

**I Thessalonians 3:12-13** May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, ... so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God.

### **Implications and application.**

This call to personal holiness is a sign of God's love for us His children, and our response to this call to personal holiness is a sign of our love for God and our fear of God and our faith in God.

Sanctification is a direction, it's a long, hard, narrow path, a journey toward a distant destination. It is a lifelong process with the promise of an exceedingly glorious end. Submission and repentance are a lifestyle; they are the habit of the disciple who follows after Christ.

This is the path of our sanctification, pursue holiness by knowing God and His will, by honoring God's good gifts the way He designed them, by loving others more than ourselves. This is the work of Christ in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us. Press in to know God, to love God. Make the superior pleasure of knowing God and His will your weapon against the deceitful, destructive pleasures of knowing sin.

Pray **Philippians 4:8** Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

**Philippians 1:9-11** May your love abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruits of righteousness which come through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

**Prayer:** Holy Father, have mercy on us and forgive us for our failures in the continual fight against lust. Forgive us for weak and half-hearted efforts and prayers. By the power of your Holy Spirit in us, grant us new resolve and new power and a greater love and knowledge of you. Grant us the will to say no to every temptation and to resist Satan at every turn. Make us deaf his voice, blind to his enticements, fearful of making shipwreck of our souls.

Sever the root of lust in our hearts and replace it with a far greater and purer passion to be like Christ. Help us to see the beauty of holiness, the pure truth of your Word. In the holy and mighty name of Jesus we pray, Amen.