Pure for Jesus

(Selected Scriptures)

5/26/02

Introduction:

We live in an impure world!

2 Corinthians 11:2

**** All of us should be pure for Jesus!***

2 aspects of Purity:

I. ***To be Pure for Jesus is to be*** **PURE IN <u>HEART</u> (Matthew 5:8)**
("Blessed are the pure in heart. . ." v. 8)

A car may have a beautiful body, but if under the hood you have a greasy-grimy, blown-broken motor, you don't have much.

A girl may be a "knock out" with unblemished external beauty, but if in her heart purity is absent, she is nothing more than an empty shell, vain veneer, hollow plastic.

This mighty statement of Jesus in verse 8 was a rebuke to the mere outward, superficial, hypocritical religion of the Scribes and Pharisees.

The call to "purity in heart" perfectly conforms to the theme of the Sermon on the Mount - namely: "True Righteousness" (Mt. 5:20).

"Blessed" = to be fortunate, well off, in a state of divine favor.

"Heart" = kardia (Eng. cardiac, etc.) - "the chief organ of physical life ("for the life of the flesh is in the blood - Lev. 17:11), occupies the most important place in the human system. By an easy transition, the word came to stand for man's entire mental and moral activity, both the rational and the emotional elements. In other words, the heart is used figuratively for the hidden springs of the personal life." (Vine, p. 206-207).

"The heart is the center of the inner life of the person where all the spiritual forces and functions have their origin" (TDNT)

Our heart (kardia) is that inner aspect of man that **<u>thinks</u>** (Lk. 9:47), **<u>reasons</u>** (Mk. 2:6, 8), **<u>ponders</u>** (Lk. 2:19), **<u>imagines</u>** (Lk. 1:51), **<u>remembers</u>** (Lk. 1:66), **<u>purposes</u>** (II Cor. 9:7), **<u>wonders</u>** (Lk. 3:15), **<u>determines</u>** (Lk. 21:14), **<u>questions</u>** (Lk. 24:38), **<u>believes</u>** (Lk. 24:25; Acts 8:37; Ro. 10:9, 10), and **<u>motivates</u>** (Mk. 7:21).

The heart encompasses man's intellect (Mt. 13:15; Prov. 23:7); emotion (Jn. 16:22), and will (Ro. 6:17, Col. 3:15). It enables him to think, feel, and do.

The heart is your "hidden man" (I Pet. 3:4); the real you that lies deep beneath that part of you that everyone sees.

"Pure" = katharos (i.e. Katherine) to be clean

The phrase "pure in heart" has great significance!

It shows that:

--Internals are more important than externals (EX: the Pharisees of Jesus day majored on the externals (Mt. 23:25-28)

--What you think does matter to God

--True happiness is being cleansed from sin ("blessed. . .")

Jesus' statement shows that not everyone's heart is pure (clean).

By nature, our hearts are depraved. Such depravity is evidenced by sin.

Because of the inner, deep-rootedness of our hearts, we often do not even know our hearts (Jer. 17:9).

"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Prov. 30:12).

"The problem that caused God to destroy the earth in the flood was a heart problem" (MacArthur, p. 202). (Gen. 6:5 - *"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.")*

The signs of "heart disease" are revealed by the Great Physician in Mark 7:21-22.

One's fruit is an indication of one's heart (Lk. 6:45 - *"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh").*

--Religion is no substitute for being pure in heart.

--Knowing Bible facts is no substitute for being pure in heart.

Living in a "glass bubble" (in isolation from the "rif-raf" of society) is no substitute for a pure heart (Monasticism does not eradicate our problem).

What is a pure heart?

1. It is a sincere heart

   I Pet. 1:22 - *"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently"*

   The word "pure" (katharos) was a Greek term "often used of metals that had been refined until all impurities were removed, leaving only the pure metal. In that sense, purity means unmixed, unalloyed, unadulterated" (MacArthur, p. 204)

2. It is a righteous heart

   God's standard for purity of heart is perfection of heart (Mt. 5:48).

   100% purity is God's standard (MacArthur, p. 205). Such a standard can only be met if God gives us a heart transplant!

Being pure in heart is the opposite of:

--Lustful thoughts (Mt. 5:28 - *"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart")*

--Materialistic thoughts (Mt. 6:21 - *"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also")*

We need a pure heart in order to truly love *(I Tim. 1:5 - "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned") (Cp. I Pet. 1:22 - "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently")*

We need a pure heart in order to truly call on God (II Tim. 2:22 - *"Flee also youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.")*

Our only means of cleansing is Christ's blood shed on Calvary (I Jn. 1:7 - *"the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin")*

ILLUS: the hymn - "There is a Fountain" - "Sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains"

God purifies people's hearts by faith (Acts 15:9) after He opens their heart (Acts 16:14).

The Holy Spirit resides in the "heart" of the believer (II Cor. 1:22; Gal. 4:6) and makes an indelible impression on our hearts (II Cor. 3:3).

"They shall see God" - Such a promise is eschatological (future). No one living sees God now!

"Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face" (I Cor. 13:12).

"Whom having not seen ye love" (I Pet. 1:8).

"And they shall see his face" (Rev. 22:4).

Now, the pure in heart see God through eyes of faith (I Cor. 13:12; Heb. 11:27), but throughout eternity, the pure in heart will see God literally (I Jn. 3:12 - *"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.")*

(Psalm 17:15 - "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.")

"They shall see God" - A promise of entering His holy presence and viewing His splendor and glory forever (SEE: Ps. 24:3-4)

Absolute pure if heart is the prerequisite for seeing God.
REASON: He is holy (Is. 6)

II. *To be Pure for Jesus is to be* PURE IN BODY (I Thessalonians 4:1-8)

Briefly explain verse 3.

Sanctification = to be holy; to be "set apart"

Fornication = Gk. "porneia"

1)Generally, refers to any sexually-oriented immorality -prostitution and harlotry; homosexuality; pornography; incest; masturbation and all other forms of lust.

2)Specifically refers to premarital sex (I Cor. 7:2). it is distinguished from adultery (Gal 5:19; I Cor.
6:9, 18).

A. THE IMPORTANCE OF SANCTIFICATION (v. 1-3a)

(God's Plea for You to Stay Clean)

v. 1

"Furthermore then" introduces the second half of Paul's letter. The first half (chap. 1-3) was personal; the second half is practical. The first part was historical; the second part hortatory.

Paul now will instruct and exhort as a wise father (cp. 2:11).

There is a sense of urgency in Paul's words. This matter of sexual purity is of extreme importance!

"We beseech you, brethren" = as a friend pleading in love to another friend. Personal appeal.

We need each other's support in the matter of our sexual morality in the society we live in. The world is saying "Fornication and adultery are okay." We must say, "No, it is not!" Keep yourself pure in mind and body.

"We exhort you in the Lord" = we urge you in a manner that deserves your attention. Authoritative appeal.

"By the Lord" = lit. in the Lord. The appeal to moral living is based on our union with the Lord (we are one with Christ - I Cor. 6:15-17).

Paul is saying: What I am about to exhort you to do is not something new; we already told you this but will do so again.

This shows the extreme urgency and importance of repetitious teaching on the matter of moral purity.

"Ought to walk" - Ought = it is necessary; it is a must - no option! We are morally obligated to live right. It is our duty!

1. IT PLEASES GOD (v. 1)

Contrary to the lost world, we don't "walk" with a view to obtaining the maximum amount of satisfaction for ourselves, but to please our Lord.

If you love the Lord, you will do that which pleases Him.

In the last days, "men will be lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God."

The world seeks to get pleasure; the Christian seeks to give it.

We must conduct our lives in a way that pleases God. Are you more interested in God's pleasure than your own?

"To please God" is the goal of the way we live. (walk)

Our primary goal is not to keep ourselves pure so that:
1)We can offer ourselves pure to our spouse at the wedding altar (though this is a noble and praise-worthy reason) - but to please God.

2)We won't ruin our lives and the lives of others who are watching us - but to please God.

3)We won't get AIDS or other communicable diseases - but to please God!

Joseph said: "how then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9)

Our primary desire in life ought to be to please God.

Is that your desire?

If it is, you will say to yourself:
"I can't look at pornography, I want to please God."
"I can't look at women with lust in my heart, I want to please God."
"I can't read Harlequin romance books, I want to please God."
"I can't commit fornication or adultery, I want to please God."

Paul said that he didn't live to merely please men, but God (v. 2:4)

"Abound more and more" = Paul is not saying that they were committing immorality or that their lives were displeasing to God. As a matter of fact, their lives were pleasing to God (cp. 4:1 in NASV), but he wanted them to keep in growing, keep

on pleasing God - to overflow ("abound") or go beyond the pleasure they were already bringing to God.

Don't ever be satisfied with how far you have arrived. Never give up striving for higher levels or moral purity!

Some people seem to think that our goal is to see how close to the world's morals we can get without getting burned.

Our goal should be to stay as far away as possible!

"Can a man take fire into his bosom and not be burned?" (Prov. 6:27)

2. IT IS THE <u>WILL</u> OF GOD (v. 2-3a)

v. 2

"Commandments" = orders. A military term which conveys a tone of authority. When a superior officer gives orders, they must be carried out.

How much more the orders from Christ, our Commander-in-chief! Like Paul, the exhortation I am giving is not just my opinion. It's from the Lord! (cp. v. 8)

Jesus spoke out severely against divorce and adultery (Lk. 16:18); and He stated that thought was as built-worthy as action (Mt. 5:27-29).

Paul gave the newly saved Thessalonians exhortation regarding their sanctification (sexual purity). He knew that new converts needed this instruction! (Preventive and corrective medicine) He was wise enough to know that "their conversion would not automatically undo the moral habits of a lifetime." (Hiebert, p. 166)

v. 3

Paul knew that the temptation for sexual immorality was great in 2 places - Corinth and Thessalonica. Why these two places?

Both cities were geographically, economically and morally like NYC - very loose morals.

Both cities were seaports and had traffic from all points of the world passing through.

With mixed nationalities and mixed religions prevalent, there would also exist mixed moral standards. Confusion in sexual matters was prevalent.

As a matter of fact, Paul is writing to Thess. from Corinth, and no doubt is reminded of the existing perversion daily.

Liberals try to say that the teachings of the N.T. came from (were adaptations from) the society in which Paul, etc., lived. Not true! The Bible's "moral demands stand in stark contrast to the immoral practices of that day." (Hiebert, p. 167)

The world then, like today, regarded all forms of immorality with indifference. They even defended it (like today) as a necessity of nature, like eating and drinking. (if it was a necessity, God would not forbid it)

They got perverted to the point of viewing it as "spiritual" in some religious cults of the day.

No matter how bad the world is, God's will remains the same!

If God's will is that we be sexually pure, then we (as his children and servants) have no choice but to obey.

--No situation ethics - it's God's will! (ILLUS: of woman who committed adultery with the prison guard so that they would free her husband)

--There's nothing to think about or pray about - it's God's will!

If you are involved in fornication (in any manner), you are living outside of God's will for your life (cp. Ro. 12:1-2). God's hand of blessing is not on your life because of: unconfessed sexual immorality, unconfessed wrong thoughts.

Whenever God says "No" to something, Satan comes along and tempts us to wonder why? (EX: Adam & Eve) "You must be missing out on something."

We are not missing anything that is beneficial for us when we are within God's will. Real, lasting pleasure is in God's will! Ps. 16:11 - "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

B. THE MEANING OF SANCTIFICATION (v. 3b-6a)

(God's Plan for You to Stay Clean)

"Sanctification" = is related to the word "holy" and "saint" It means to be "set apart" from something morally evil, unto God.

In verses 3-6, God describes what He means by "sanctification" (v. 3) by using four explanatory infinitives.

1. Sanctification is:
SEPARATING YOURSELF FROM SEXUAL IMMORALITY (v. 3b)

God's plan for our sexual purity is not that we be like "Simeon the Stylite," who in 423 A.D. built a house up on the top of a pole (60 foot high pillar) and never came down; nor that we become a monk at a monastary.

You can keep yourself clean without having to move somewhere to some isolated island. We are in the world but not of it.

"Abstain from" =

1.It takes personal determination - Middle voice. You must "hold yourself off from" or "separate yourself" from fornication.

It's not enough to pray, "God, keep me from it." God has told us to keep ourselves from it. God tells us to flee from fornication (I Cor. 6:18). Run from it! Don't flirt with it! Don't sample it! It will ruin you! Does God ever deny us anything that is good for us? NO!

You must decide also to keep yourself away from anything that might lead to sexual impurity (whether in thought or action). If premarital sex is wrong, then anything that would lead to it is wrong also (EX: petting). If adultery is wrong, thena nything that would lead to it is wrong also (EX: reading wrongmaterials, developing emotional relationship with secretary, etc.)

2.It takes continual determination - Present tense. Keep on abstaining. We can't rely upon past victory over wrong sexual thoughts, etc., and think the battle is over! We must continually keep ourselves away from it!

Satan may tempt you to take liberties in your sexual life when:
1)Close to marriage
2)You let your guard down (EX: David)
3)You have committed fornication in the past (developed an appetite) When you give in to something, it gets harder to resist the next time.

SEE Prov. 5:1-8 **v. 8 "Remove thy way far from her" (EX: Joseph - Gen. 39:10
SEE Prov. 7:5-27
a.The victim wanders aimlessly into temptation (v. 6a)
b.The huntress uses planned-out tactics
--shock treatment (v. 13)
--spiritual story (v. 14)
--flattery (v. 15)
(he is the very one she had to find)
--sensuous appeal (v. 16-18)
--reassurance (v. 19, 20)
c.The kill (v. 22, 23)
***V. 25 - Keep away!

2. Sanctification is:
STRENGTHENING YOURSELF AGAINST SEXUAL IMMORALITY
(v. 4-5)

v. 4

"Every one of you" - Purity is for all in the church. No exceptions. The same moral standards hold for all - not just pastor, deacons, and Sunday school teachers.

Sexual purity requires 2 things:

1.Instruction - "Should know"

--know your weaknesses (sinful tendencies)
Know what leads up to your wrong thinking, etc.

--know God's Word - memorize Scripture dealing with purity and Biblical sexual relationships in marriage.

NOTE: This knowledge is more than theoretical; it is practical

2.Self-Discipline - "Possess his (own) vessel"
"Vessel" refers to our physical body (which is also called a "temple" - I Cor. 6:19) Paul speaks about having "this treasure in earthen vessels" (II Cor. 4:7).

"Possess" = lit. to "gain ownership"; to acquire or obtain something. Hence, to have mastery or control over.

That which I possess, I am in control over.

Proverbs tells us it is better for a man tob e able to control himself than to be able to conquer a walled city.

God wants all of us to attain complete control over our bodies ("vessel") (over the wrong way of satisfying fleshly appetites).

The world does not have control (v. 5)

God wants us to know what it means to gain mastery (control) over our bodies.

To gain mastery over our bodies means positively:

1.Keep your body pure for God's use - "Sanctification" = set apart for God. View yourself as "holy unto the Lord" - Zech. 14:20.

"Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body" (I Cor. 6:13).

Immorality will zap your interest in godliness. You will lost your appetite for righteousness. Why?
a.Coveteousness (obsession) is idolatry
b.You grieve the Spirit
c.You will lost interest in praying, reading Bible, fellowshipping with God's people, etc.

God only fills clean (holy) vessels. God only uses clean instruments.

2.View your body as valuable - "Honor"

In II Tim. 2:21, Paul refers to the man who purges himself from impurity as being a "vessel unto honor."

"Honor" = that which is valuable (precious). You don't throw away that which is valuable. You protect that which is valuable. You save that which is valuable.

Your virginity is priceless! Don't throw it away! (like meat to the dogs or pearls to the pigs)

Determine to save yourself for the one spouse God has for you.

Sexual immorality cheapens God's design for sex in marriage. That which is common is not valuable. That which everyone has access to is not priceless. EX: Diamonds and gold are valuable. Why? Because diamonds are not a common stone and gold is not a common metal.

--Pornography degrades women (it does not honor them)

--Pre-marital sex takes the thrill and anticipation out of marriage (it does not honor marriage) Heb. 13:5 - "Marriage is honorable in all and the bed [sex in marriage] undefiled..."

--Pre-marital sex is a sin against your own body (I Cor. 6:18) (it does not honor the body)

You will lose self-respect, respect for others.

v. 5

To gain mastery over our bodies means negatively:

1.Don't satisfy your appetites like the world. "Gentiles" = nations of the world. Non-Christians.

The world is out of control - "lust of concupiscence" = desires of passion or a passionate lust (desire). Appetites that spring out of a restless, suffering passion.

Paul is describing a lust out of control; ungovernable; no restraints. The world's lust is like a lion out of a cage, like a raging river with no dam, like a fire out of control (no barriers, no walls, no fences)

The world says, "If you have an appetite, feed it. If you have a desire, satisfy it. If you have anger, vent it. If you have something to brag about, display it." etc.

The world says, "Let it out! It's wrong to hold back; do your own thing (right or wrong); have it your way."

As believers, we are to have fences - not boundaries (restraining walls) that we think up (EX: celibacy of RCC priests) but that God has set up, and revealed in the Scriptures.

Four walls:

--Think right (beware of what you think) (Mt. 5:28; Phil. 4:8) "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

--Do right (beware of how you behave) (Phil. 4:9)

--Dress right (Beware of what you wear - modesty) (I Tim. 2:9)

--Look right (Beware of what you see) (Mt. 5:29)
(cp. Job 31:1 - "Covenant with mine eyes") Prov. 6:25a - "Lust not after her beauty in thine heart"
We, like the Thessalonians, have no excuse; we know "the living and true God" (1:9).

The world does not know God, nor His word; so therefore they go unrestrained.

The Gentiles in Paul's day invented gods that were like the people who made them up - gods of sexual immorality.

NOTE: progression in Rom. 1 -
Willful 1) ignorance 2) idolatry 3) immorality

3. Sanctification is:
NOT STEPPING INTO FORBIDDEN TERRITORY (v. 6a)
V. 6
"Go beyond" = transgress; to exceed the proper limits; to overstep the God-ordained boundaries.

Satan lies to us, saying: "The grass is greener on the ohter side of the fence." God says: "Eat out of your own orchard." (Prov. 5:15 - "Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.")

God's plan for sexual relations was not limited to propagation, but also for pleasure (to please your spouse - I Cor. 7:3-4).

Your physical relationship in marriage is a reassurance of love and affection.

Pre-marital sex is not love but lust.

It is a physical demonstration of the unity (oneness) of husband and wife (I Cor. 6:16).

So with anyone other than your spouse, it is acting out a lie!

Just as Christ has a unity with his church and no one else (Eph. 5), you are to have a unity with your mate and no one else.

Any other form of sex, other than between husband and wife is a perversion.

4. Sanctification is:
NOT STEALING WHAT BELONGS TO SOMEONE ELSE (v. 6a)

V. 6
"Defraud" = to selfishly take that which belongs to someone else. To cheat or take advantage of someone else; to steal.

When someone has illicit sex with someone they are not married to, they are doing 2 things:

1)You are stealing from that person (robbing virtue; EX: like robbing a piggy bank - money that had been saved for the future and you stole it).

2)You are stealing from the one who will marry that person. The future partner of a person like this should be able to marry a spouse who has been preserved.

Do you like buying packages that have been opened and the contents tampered with? Don't defraud someone of what is rightfully theirs.

Don't even think about it!
You must think, "This woman belongs to that man. I can't think of stealing that which is his." "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house or wife!" (Ex. 20:17)

C. THE REASONS FOR SANCTIFICATION (v. 6b-8)

(God's Provocation for You to Stay Clean)

Paul gives three serious reasons why we must stay clean (sexually pure):

1. SEXUAL SIN WILL BE JUDGED BY GOD (v. 6b)

(Look ahead to what you will reap!)

V. 6b

"The Lord" = Jesus Christ is the Judge (Jn. 5:22; II Th. 1:7-9) who will avenge/reward you for what you did. Justice will be righteously carried out.

People think they will get away with it. "Fornicators and adulterers God will judge!" (Heb. 13:5)

"Of all such" = all forms of fornication (sexual immorality)

"Forewarned" = Paul's warning was not something new.

"Testified" = to "seriously affirm"

"It was a warning intended to penetrate their conscience. `Men's dullness,' says Calvin, `is such that unless they are struck forcefully, they have no sense of the divine judgment.'" (Hiebert, p. 174)

Today the catch word is "safe sex."

Do you want to be really safe? Obey God or else!

2. SEXUAL SIN IS CONTRARY TO GOD'S PURPOSE FOR SAVING YOU (v. 7)

(Look back at what God did for you!)

v. 7

"Called" = shows that God took the initiative in pulling us ut of darkness of sin into the light of salvation.

Immorality is inconsistent with God's gracious call. It's a slap in the face.

God did not save us to sin!

Our song is not:
"Free from the law, Oh, happy condition,
Now I can sin and still have remission."

Those who practice a lifestyle of sexual immorality will not enter the kingdom of God. (I Cor. 6:9-10)

God saved us to be like Him - Holy. "Be ye holy, for I am holy."

We are united to Christ and therefore must be clean. (I Cor. 6:15-17)

3. SEXUAL SIN IS <u>REJECTING</u> (rebellion against) GOD (v. 8)
(Look <u>up</u> at who you are rejecting!)

V. 8

"Despiseth" = reject, set aside.

Some may turn me off and not listen, but it is really God you are rejecting.

"He that despiseth" - present tense. Describes one who is a deliberate, continual rejector.

The world laughs and mocks at moral purity. They are laughing and mocking God.

Some so-called "Christians" would take what I'm saying lightly. God is very serious here!

Why does Paul mention the "Holy Spirit"?

1)The Holy Spirit convicts us that the command to moral purity is <u>from God</u>

2)The Holy Spirit is just that -- holy! Holiness (sanctification) is the emphasis in this context. Because He lives in us, we must not grieve or quench him.

3)The Holy Spirit is our <u>source of victory</u> over the flesh. "Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." This is a promise!

My Vow of Purity

Today I make the following promises
to the Lord Jesus Christ:

I purpose in my heart to keep myself pure
from all sexual defilement;
I will be careful to avoid any circumstances
that would tempt me to be impure
in my thoughts or actions;
I will not date a non-believer;
I will pray for God's leading
as to who and when I should marry;
I will obtain my parent's blessing
on my courtship and marriage;
I will keep myself a virgin until my wedding day.

_____
Name

_____
Date

_____ _____
Parent(s) Pastor

1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Hebrews 13:4

Pure for Jesus

(Selected Scriptures)

6/10/05

Introduction: 2 Corinthians 11:2

**** All of us should be pure for Jesus!***

2 aspects of Purity:

I. *To be Pure for Jesus is to be* PURE IN <u>HEART</u> (Matthew 5:8)

II. *To be Pure for Jesus is to be* PURE IN <u>BODY</u> (I Thessalonians 4:1-8)