

# Purity...

What are your thoughts on purity? This is more than just another Bible study on purity. This is a new beginning! But before you can make preparations for your future purity, you need to look honestly at your past ...

## I. Where Have You Been?

You may have struggled with at least one aspect of purity at some point in your life. It's an issue many believers still struggle with. You may have become a Christians after you had already had some sexual experience. But this is important for you to understand: No matter what your past experience has been, God offers you total forgiveness when you repent. He also offers you complete healing and restoration of the areas that have been broken - either by your own sin or someone's sin against you.

Look up the following verses and write them out in the space provided.

**Hosea 14:4** - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Ezekiel 36:25** - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Micah 7:19** - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Take a few minutes now and reflect on these verses. Let the Holy Spirit speak these truths to your heart. The Holy Spirit may be leading you to pray in repentance or to receive the forgiveness and love Jesus offers you. Use the space below to pour out your heart as you feel the Holy Spirit leading you.

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This is just a reminder that God's forgiveness and healing are available to you in the area of your purity. Depending on the extent of your experiences and wounds, you may need to do further study on God's forgiveness and healing. One thing you can know now is that from this moment on, you can start over with a clean slate. You can decide right now that you want to make good choices in the future regarding your purity.

## II. Purity Takes Planning

Purity doesn't just happen, and the heat of the moment is not the time to decide what your boundaries are. Purity takes planning!

Look up the following verses and write them in the space provided:

**Prov. 14:15** - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**1Corin. 10:12** - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Lam. 3:40** - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\*Do you agree or disagree with the importance of "giving thought to your steps" and "examining your ways"? Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\*Think of a personal situation or experience you were in that you shouldn't have been. Did you have a plan beforehand to prevent you from getting there? How might a plan have helped you prevent it?  
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Which of the following scenarios might benefit from some advanced thought and planning?

- \*Whom will I (or won't I) date? What characteristics am I willing to let go of and which are a definite necessity if I am going to date him?
- \*Where will I (or won't I) go with him? How much time will we spend alone together weekly?
- \*What is my physical standard of purity? Am I willing to discuss this with him? (Does he respect my boundaries?)
- \*When will I say "I love you" to someone? When is too soon? What needs to happen first?
- \*How important is it to me that we spend time together seeking & worshiping the Lord? What will I do to assure that we do it?
- \*If the relationship needs to end, how can I do it or accept it with forgiveness?

Can you think of any others? If so, add them below:

- \* \_\_\_\_\_
- \* \_\_\_\_\_
- \* \_\_\_\_\_

It's important to know that there aren't necessarily right or wrong answers to the above situations. Your answers may differ from someone else's because you've had different experiences and have different areas of weakness and temptation. This is why it is very important to involve the Holy Spirit in the process of deciding your standards or boundaries. He can lead you into truth as you submit this area of your life to Him. You will then be able to stand firm in your convictions instead of struggling to adhere to someone else's.

### III. Purity 101: Godliness

One of the clearest passages on purity is 1 Thess. 4:3-8. These verses address our conduct (our godliness), who is affected and how. Let's look at them now.

#### 1 Thess. 4:3-8:

“<sup>3</sup>It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; <sup>4</sup>that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, <sup>5</sup>not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; <sup>6</sup>and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. <sup>7</sup>For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. <sup>8</sup>Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.”

\*What does sexual immorality have to do with our sanctification? \_\_\_\_\_  
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(note: in vs. 3, “sexual immorality” in the Greek includes any sexual sin.)

\*How does considering your brother-in-Christ's purity before the Lord affect your purity choices?  
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(note in vs. 6, the Greek words used mean to “go too far; beyond what is right” and “to take advantage, defraud.”)

\*What are some ways you can ‘*look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others*’ (Phil. 2:4) regarding purity and godliness? (consider specific areas such as how you dress, movies you go to, etc.)

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\*What is God's will for you regarding your purity? \_\_\_\_\_  
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Obedience isn't really obedience until the choice is between your will and God's will. This is where the ‘rubber hits the road.’ It's easy to follow God when you're in agreement with his will for you, but when your will for yourself is different than God's will for you, you have a choice to make between obedience and sin (See Ro. 6:16).

\*Why does Paul conclude this section with the reminder that God has given us his Holy Spirit?  
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#### IV. The Purity And Contentment Connection

There's one area of purity you may have not given much thought to. It is your thoughts - more specifically - your fantasy life. Do you have a fantasy life? You know, how you innocently day dream about meeting Mr. Right - when or where it will happen; what he'll say to sweep you off your feet; or how Mr. Right will come one day and rescue you from your current ho-hum life and make everything exciting and perfect? Maybe your fantasies don't involve a 'Mr. Right.' Maybe they begin with the 'if only' trap. If only I had that other job, then I could be different. If only I won the lottery, then I could do what I need to. Does any of this sound familiar? This area is one that grips many women. One of the problems is that it isn't really talked about. Living in a fantasy world can be very destructive to both your present and your future. Why? Fantasizing will destroy your contentment. What does contentment have to do with purity? Let's look at it together.

In the Greek, the word for contentment is defined as "sufficiency with oneself as spoken of a satisfied mind." When you're living in a fantasy world or even if you just visit there to escape the real world, you are not letting your mind be satisfied - you are not being content with where Jesus has you. The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, works to lead you into truth, and you limit His work when you live in a fantasy life.

Sin's battles are often fought and won in the mind (See Romans, chapters 6-7). If you are playing your desires out like a movie in your mind where you not only wrote the script, but you are also the director, you will begin to find that nothing in reality satisfies you. You may even begin trying to manipulate your relationships to look like the fantasy. Or, when the world offers you the chance to have what you've been fantasizing about, it will be much harder to walk away from it and see it as it really is - a poor substitute for Jesus. This is addressed in James 1:14-17:

Write out **James 1:14-17** and reflect on each verse as you write it out.

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\*Read verses 14-15 again. Do you see a progression? How does someone get from desire to death?

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(note: entice means to deceive by false reasoning)

\*Read verses 16-17 again. Why do you think James follows the warnings in verses 14-15 with the truth that every good and perfect gift is from God? \_\_\_\_\_

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How appropriate it is that James tells both sides of the story. On the one hand, you can nurture your desires in your mind until you are so deceived by them that you begin to act them out until they are all you are living for. Or you can live in truth, knowing and experiencing that every good and perfect gift is from your Father. It's only in this truth that you can be content. And only when you are content with letting God be God, trusting His good plan for you, will you be able to make choices that will encourage your purity and godliness.

That is why Paul could say, *'for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstance.'* (Phil. 4:11b). He knew Jesus as his truth - his reality, regardless of his circumstances, so he was able to accept whatever God had for him without escaping into the 'if only' or 'what if' traps of fantasy.

Now you have some time for personal reflection. Take a few minutes to journal (or you can use the back of one of these pages) as you examine the kind of fantasy life you have. Has it compromised your purity? Take it to the Lord and tell Him about it. Tell Him what hurts and why you've been trying to escape it. Tell Him what your hopes and dreams are (i.e. if you want to get married one day, what your dream job is, etc.) and ask Him to help you trust His plans for you. Pour out the contents of your heart to the God of all comfort and the Father of compassion.

## V. Conclusion: Where do we go from here?

Do you remember what this study offered you in the first section? A new beginning! Review the sections of this study. What areas is God leading you to really concentrate on and apply to your life?

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Write down your conviction/commitment regarding purity. \_\_\_\_\_

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\*Write down your boundaries where you can easily review them.

\*Pray and pray and pray again about the decisions/convictions that resulted from this study.

\*Choose at least one of the verses from this study to memorize and meditate on. You will need quick access to the truth during times of temptation.

My verse is: \_\_\_\_\_

**1Ti.6:6** says: "*But godliness with contentment is great gain.*"

\*What does this verse mean to you? \_\_\_\_\_

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\*Has this study changed or expanded your understanding of godliness, contentment or purity and how they all work together? If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_

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Other Resources:

1. What does God want in my dating relationship?

Choices by Stacy and Paula Rinehart

Too Close Too Soon by Jim Talley and Bobbie Reed

Why Wait? By Josh McDowell

2. How can I please God in my private life?

Calm My Anxious Heart by Linda Dillow

Pursuit of Holiness by Jerry Bridges

Practice of Godliness by Jerry Bridges

The Discipline of Grace by Jerry Bridges