

## INTRODUCTION

Our Lord Jesus said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

In applying our Lord’s words to us, His congregations, the apostle Paul has written to us that we are to be an example, so that people will not despise our doctrine, but will be convinced by our example that the truth we proclaim about Jesus Christ is true.

So far, we have considered what it means that the Bible says we are to be an example in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, and in faith.

Today we finish this topic by considering just one more aspect of the Christian life in which we are to be an example to other believers, and to unbelievers as well.

## TEXT

1 Timothy 4:12 Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

## BODY

### I. What Is Meant By “Purity”

#### A. Our Bibles all say either purity or pureness

1. the word “pure” is still in common use in our language today
  - a) a container of something, if that is all that is in the container, it is pure
  - b) if anything else gets in there, then it is impure; it has impurities in it;
  - c) because of our familiarization with scientific terms, we often use the terms “contaminated” and “uncontaminated;” purity is the state of being uncontaminated
2. the meaning of the Greek word also expresses the idea of cleanness, something being clean
  - a) by keeping from getting dirty
  - b) by washing out any slight dirt that gets in or that gets on
3. so, purity or cleanness
4. but in the Bible the term does not refer to physical cleanness, but to moral cleanness

#### B. What kind of purity? Pureness from what?

1. this word can be used of purity from any kind of sinfulness
2. but we have something here in 1 Timothy that tells us what kind of purity the apostle means in this case
3. the same word for “purity” is used just a few lines down, 1 Timothy 5:2 [exhort] older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.

- C. There is the desire that a man has to be with a woman, and that a woman has to be with a man; the longing to lie down in bed together and share the wonderful feelings of the union or one-ness that a man and a woman can share
  - 1. that intimacy between a man and a woman was created by God when He created Adam and Eve; Adam and Eve shared that one-flesh relationship before ever they sinned, when they were still in a state of innocency; and so it is not itself sinful, but wholesome
  - 2. the enjoyment of it also was created in us by God. and so is not itself sinful, but wholesome
  - 3. the desire for it also was created in us by God, and so is not itself sinful, but wholesome
- D. God ordained that union between man and woman to be for marriage only; for it to be only between a man and a woman who are married to each other
- E. But when we sinned in Adam and Eve, our human nature was so corrupted that now people are tempted to seek the joys of that marriage relationship in many perverted, twisted, unclean, impure ways
- F. Purity is the keeping of that man-woman union exclusively within the marriage relationship
  - 1. also keeping all desire for it directed only to the marriage relationship
  - 2. also seeking the enjoyment of it only in the marriage relationship
- G. In English, we have a term for this kind of purity - chastity; chasteness; being chaste
  - 1. this word is being lost in our English language
  - 2. like so many other words for virtues, as the virtue itself is disappearing from our society, so the word for it is disappearing from common use

To be an example in purity, understand that purity means keeping the man-woman union that God created for Adam and Eve exclusively within the marriage relationship

## II. Purity Commanded In the Ten Commandments

- A. 7th - Thou shalt not commit adultery
- B. 10th - Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife
- C. Psalm 119:9-11 How can a young man cleanse his way [or keep his way pure]? By taking heed according to Your word. 10 With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! 11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.
- D. Our Lord Jesus's words on this subject
  - 1. Matthew 5:27-28 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.' 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
  - 2. Matthew 5:29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.
  - 3. Matthew 5: 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

To be an example in purity,

-understand that purity means keeping the man-woman union exclusively within the marriage relationship

-meditate on God's commandments, especially as our Lord Jesus has expounded them for us

### III. A Biblical Example of Purity - Joseph

#### A. See in Potiphar's wife an example of *impurity*

1. to be discontent, dissatisfied with how God is providing for you as to marriage (7a)
  - a) 1. in this case a married woman dissatisfied with her husband
  - b) 2. in other cases a single person discontent to wait
2. to cast longing eyes on the form and appearance of someone to whom you are not married (6b, 7b)
3. to tempt someone to whom you are not married (7c)
4. to refuse good moral instruction about sexual purity (9-10)
5. to seek out unlawful sexual pleasure day after day (10a)

#### B. See in Joseph an example in purity

1. to take seriously the stewardship God has given you (8b-9a)
2. to appreciate the generosity of God (9b)
3. to grasp the great wickedness of adultery (9c)
4. to grasp that impurity ultimately is sin against God Himself (9d)
5. to refuse to heed the arguments of temptation (10b)
  - a) we know from Proverbs 7 what they are
    - (1) It will feel so good
    - (2) It is an expression of love
    - (3) No one will find out
  - b) to remain chaste, to stay pure, is to reject such arguments
6. to refuse any physical intimacy with someone who is not your husband or wife (10c)
  - a) she initially demands that Joseph lie "with" her
  - b) then she asks that he at least lie down "near" her
  - c) it is all too common for your flesh to say, "I am staying pure" even though you are trying to enjoy every physical intimacy short of actual fornication or adultery
7. to avoid even being alone with the one who tempts you (10d)

To be an example in purity,

-understand that purity means keeping the man-woman union exclusively within the marriage relationship

-meditate on God's commandments, especially as our Lord Jesus has expounded them for us

-look to how Joseph set an example in purity

- IV. The Apostle's Prescription for How To Be An Example In Purity - 1 Timothy 5:1-2
- A. The relationships we have within the church are to be very loving; but as such they require special care to be kept proper
  - B. Have the regard for each other that you have for members of your family, according to whether you are male or female
    - 1. as a man, treat women as your mother or sister
    - 2. implied: as a woman, treat men as your father or brother
  - C. Keep those relationships completely pure
    - 1. Ideally, a man has a very close relationship with his mother and with his sisters; but there is absolutely nothing going on that would be in the direction of the special one-flesh relationship that a husband has with his wife
    - 2. Ideally, a woman has a very close relationship with her father and with her brothers; but there is absolutely nothing going on that would be in the direction of the special one-flesh relationship that a wife has with her husband
    - 3. So, in the church, men and women have a relationship that involves very strong love and a kind of commitment to each other; but to be an example in purity is to keep that relationship pure from anything that would be appropriate only for the marriage relationship
      - a) thoughts
      - b) words
      - c) actions
  - D. This same principle can be applied outside the church
    - 1. you have family relationships with in-laws, uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces, first cousins, step-relatives, half-siblings; there is love there because you are family; there may be displays of affection like hugging and kissing; but to be an example in purity is to keep those relationships pure from anything that would be appropriate only for the marriage relationship
      - a) thoughts
      - b) words
      - c) actions
    - 2. you have relationships with your friends, with your neighbors, with your co-workers, with your business customers, etc. to be an example in purity is to keep those relationships pure from anything that would be appropriate only for the marriage relationship
      - a) thoughts
      - b) words
      - c) actions

To be an example in purity,

-understand that purity means keeping the man-woman union exclusively within the marriage relationship

-meditate on God's commandments, especially as our Lord Jesus has expounded them for us

-look to how Joseph set an example in purity

-take special care regarding those with whom you have some close relationship, that you maintain the relationship in all purity

## V. Your Pastor's Own Practice of This

### A. On the inside, in my mind

1. from my mother: she said that when I notice someone's good looks, I should not let my thoughts go downward to sinful lusts, but take my thoughts upward to giving glory to God as the creator of everything beautiful
2. from the larger catechism on the commandments: when I notice someone's goodness, whether in looks or in other ways, I try to delight in how God has blessed that person's husband or wife; to be thankful to God for their happiness

### B. On the outside, in actual actions

1. I try to keep a degree of old-fashioned formality in your relationships
2. I reserve my physical displays of affection for the brothers
3. I avoid being alone together, one man with one woman
  - a) I heard this long ago; I don't remember where I heard it first
  - b) this was taught me in a seminary class on counseling
  - c) you might have heard this is the practice of Mike Pence, who has been governor of Indiana and who was the previous vice president; he received severe political criticism over that, but did not relent, as far as I know

## CONCLUSION

To be an example in purity,

-understand that purity means keeping the man-woman union exclusively within the marriage relationship

-meditate on God's commandments, especially as our Lord Jesus has expounded them for us

-look to how Joseph set an example in purity

-take special care regarding those with whom you have some close relationship, that you maintain the relationship in all purity

-understand your own pastor's attempts to practice this

Jeremiah - Call to Worship - Psalm 148

Thad - Scripture Reading - Genesis 39:1-12

Dillon - Congregational Prayer

Benediction - Philippians 4:8

Allison - Prelude

Allison - Trinity 151 "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Allison - Copied Sheet "All Creatures of Our God and King"

Jeff - Trinity 580 "It Is Well with My Soul" (Andrew lead)

[see Ephesians sermon 078 “Things Not Named Among Us”](#)

[see Ten Commandments sermon 14 “The Seventh Commandment”](#)

C. G47 *hagneia*

1. from G53 *hagnos* clean, innocent, modest, perfect - chaste, clean, pure
2. G48 *hagnizo* to make clean, purify

1 Timothy 5:1-2 Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, 2 older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.

2 Timothy 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts [ESV passions]; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

1 John 3:2-3 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

