

Standing Strong

A Bible Study exploring sexual purity

What does the Bible say about sexual purity?

Every media source available in our modern culture will flaunt the idea of sexual freedom: do whatever you want, enjoy the moment, ignore the consequences. Therefore, it is very important that we women know for ourselves what the Bible says about sex and sexual purity.

Read the following passages and answer the questions that follow:

1 Corinthians 6:12-2

In what ways can you flee from sexual immorality (v. 18)?

1 Corinthians 7:1-9

In what circumstances does the world condone sex? According to this passage, what circumstances does Paul outline as necessary for sex?

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

This passage is talking about being a stumbling block to others. What does it mean to be a stumbling block? How can inappropriate physical contact be a stumbling block for the other person and for people outside the relationship?

1 Corinthians 15:33

How can fellowship with others influence your ability to make God-pleasing decisions?

Galatians 5:19-24

How does operating from the fruit of the spirit encourage a woman to pursue holiness and purity?

Ephesians 5:3

What does a “hint” of sexual immorality mean? Give examples.

Colossians 3:5

How does one put to death her earthly nature?

Genesis 39:7-12

Why does Joseph say it would be a sin against God? What example does he set when faced with temptation?

A Closer Look: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

This set of verses is a must-read for any woman desiring purity in her relationships.

Sexual purity flows from a love relationship with God rather than from a list of rules. As you understand God’s heart, a commitment to sexual purity moves from a belief (intellectual agreement) to a conviction (an action). Read Thessalonians 4:1-8 and discuss the following questions:

1. It has been said that everyone lives to please someone. Who, besides God, could you be living to please?
2. What is God’s will? This is a question that often baffles us and lingers in our minds. Not often is it so clearly laid out in Scripture. Write out here what God’s will is according to 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8.
3. What is sexual immorality?
4. Besides sexual intercourse, what could be considered immorality?
5. In your own words, describe the contrast that is painted in verses 4-5.
6. List every motivation you can find in this passage of why we should live a life of sexual purity.
7. Summarize “this instruction” (v. 8).
8. If you reject this instruction, what does it reveal about your heart?
9. How will it affect your relationship with God?
10. What steps do you need to take in order to avoid sexual immorality? Be specific.

The Purpose of God's Boundaries for Sex

God wants the best for us in our sexuality. This section will explore this further.

Why do you think God wants to protect and provide for you in the area of sexual purity? Look at the following verses and answer in your own words:

Romans 8:38-39

Psalms 103:17-18

Deuteronomy 10:12

God protects us by giving us boundaries and limitations to our activities. They are an expression of His love and wisdom. Not only do His commands keep us safe from harm but they are also targeted to provide for us in specific ways.

Our Mind

Protect: our mind from the images of past relationships.

Provide: freedom to enjoy our future spouse without detracting mental images.

Trust in Relationships

Protect: us from mistrust and suspicion in relationships.

Provide: a foundation of trust for our current and future relationships.

Intimacy in Relationships

Protect: us from confusing the intensity of sex with the intimacy of love.

Provide: us with intimacy — the true knowledge of the other person outside the physical.

Our Bodies

Protect: us from the fear and consequences of sexually transmitted diseases.

Provide: us with peace of mind as we enter into a marriage commitment.

Our Witness

Protect: our Christian testimony.

Provide: integrity in our Christian witness that ministers to others.

Fellowship with God

Protect: our fellowship with God.

Provide: the abundant Christian life.

Let's Talk

Talking about sexual things with your disciple can help lead to healing and freedom.

We have recently been talking about being sexually pure in our relations with the opposite sex. We have covered what the Bible has to say, the purpose of God's boundaries for sex, and His love for us.

Not all of us have learned or followed what God would desire for us in this area. Oftentimes women continue to stray in the area of sexual immorality because it is not talked about in the open and because there is no real accountability with another sister in Christ.

Let's begin today by talking about our current relationships or friendships and making a commitment to honor God in purity. The three main areas to explore are heterosexual relationships, pornography, and homosexual urges:

1. In your current relationships (or friendships), what is the extent of the physical relationship? (This includes inappropriate touching, lying on top of each other, touching inside the bathing suit lines,

etc.) Has it progressed to the point of oral sex or intercourse?) Has this been an ongoing part of your relationship? How do you feel about what is happening?

2. Sometimes things we look at or listen to can cause harm to our relationship with God. Have you ever viewed pornography (even by accident?) Was it print, online, video, TV? How often? How do you feel about it?
3. Do you struggle with lustful thoughts or actions with a person of the same sex as you? How often? How do you feel about it? Are you trying to stop? Have you ever been in a homosexual/lesbian relationship? Are you in a homosexual/lesbian relationship right now?

Spend some time in prayer and then answer this question: Do you desire to follow God in the area of sexual purity and remain pure until marriage?

A Clean Heart for a New Start

This can help your disciple forgive herself and let go of past mistakes.

One of the greatest mistakes women can make is to assume that since they have failed to keep God's command regarding sex, God wants nothing to do with them. This is simply not true. God is well aware of our sinful tendencies — that is why Jesus Christ came.

For King David, what began with a stare led not only to adultery and an unwanted pregnancy, but also to murder. David really blew it. But consider what happened next.

Read Psalm 51:1-17. What stands out to you in this passage?

David admitted his sin and asked God for forgiveness. Like David, we can receive God's complete forgiveness and make a clean start. Here are several important steps to take:

Confess the Sin

Specifically name your sin before God and ask His forgiveness.

Forgive Yourself

If you are not willing to forgive yourself, you are saying two things to God. One is that Christ's death was not enough for your sins, and the other is that you are a higher judge of what can be forgiven than God Himself. God's grace is extended to you out of His heart of love. When you do not forgive yourself, you throw God's grace right back into His face. If God's grace can't cover your sin, it can't cover any sin.

Be Filled with the Holy Spirit

Allow God's Spirit to fill you with His power to say no to future temptation.

Show the Fruit of Repentance

"Repentance" means "turning around" or "changing one's mind." Matthew 3:8 says, "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance" (NIV). This might mean breaking off a relationship or perhaps making a decision not to be alone together. It might be something else. Whatever it is, your actions should show you have changed.

Writing Your Convictions and Standards

Help your disciple think through what she desires for herself and her future mate.

What characteristics do you desire in a mate?

What are your purity standards in a relationship?

Double-Checking Your Answers

Do the guidelines you have set above cause impure thoughts in you or them?

Do the guidelines you have set above ignite passion in another that cannot be rightfully fulfilled?

Are the guidelines you have set above glorifying to God?

What are the benefits of total purity?

What are the consequences of impurity?

Helpful Tips

- ❖ Practice accountability. With whom in your life can you share your new purity standards? Who could pray for you and ask you regularly if you are sticking to them?
- ❖ Spend time with people who will help your walk with the Lord, not hinder your growth.
- ❖ Spend time praying and committing yourself to God and asking the Holy Spirit to help you walk in purity.

This Bible study is a compilation of several morality Bible studies and worksheets I obtained over the years in my ministry with Cru (Campus crusade for Christ) as well as some of my own original material.