

For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:3



CHAPTER 21

Sexual Sin and the Aphrodisiac of Power

Given the nature of the Capital Community, many people live away from their home environments for regular, extended periods of time. The temptation for those in the public eye to succumb to sexual sin is ever present, and I have seen too many legislators, staff, and lobbyists fall prey to it. Power is an aphrodisiac that makes those elected to high office much more susceptible than those not in power. Let's look at some key Biblical insights related to maintaining sexually purity in a surreal environment like the U.S. Capital.

Obey God Regarding Sexual Purity

No pragmatic means of avoiding sexual sin will ever supplant the primary necessity of submitting one's life to God. One must first come to faith in Christ and experience the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit to bring sexual passions under control. Even then it is difficult in a sex-laden culture like America. However, Galatians 5:16 does provide a promise that the believer can have victory over sinful sexual desire:

Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

Salvation is the first necessity for walking in sexual purity. Without the indwelling Holy Spirit, God's power cannot be enabled in us and implemented by us to give us victory over our fallen, fleshly nature.

Additionally, we must dedicate ourselves to meditating on Proverbs chapters 5, 6, and 7, giving special attention to the passages that relate to the end results of fornication and adultery. We must possess a sober understanding of what the real results of sexual sin are in order to help quell the irresponsible, selfish urge to be sexual outside of wedlock. The results are manifold and deadly.

Protect and Nurture the Sexual Aspect of Marriage

Since most everyone possesses sexual desire, get married! Marriage is God's intended means to satisfy and fulfill the God-given desire for sexual relations. If you do not have the gift of celibacy (and very few do!) then you should be seeking to get married. That is God's delightful design for most people. Genesis 2:24 states in this regard:

For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

It is a natural, wonderful propensity that God has placed in His creation. He created sex to be practiced within the confines and commitment of matrimony as husband and wife, male and female. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7:9 in regard to this desire and its fulfillment:

But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

It's not as if the One who created men and women with a *passionate* desire for sex doesn't realize it or comment about it! The fulfillment of sexual desires should be an impetus for us to attract and marry the right godly person. God does not want those to whom He gave a sexual drive to be continually frustrated by a lack of fulfillment. Get married and then nurture the sexual aspect of your marriage! But before marriage, God's revealed will is for us to practice abstinence.

Surveys indicate that married people have much more regular sexual fulfillment than people who are unmarried.¹ Within the confines of a marriage commitment a husband and wife can nurture trust and fulfillment over many years of communication and practice. This is simply not the case outside of a marriage commitment.

View Sex within Marriage as Good

Couples should view sex within marriage as a good thing that God desires for them. God intends for their sex life with their spouse to be creative, enjoyable, and fulfilling, as evidenced in Hebrews 13:4:

Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

God says that the *marriage bed* is not sinful, in contrast to sex outside of marriage. *Fornication* is the sin of sex while unmarried, and *adultery* is the sin of sex with another person while married. God wants sex to be a huge blessing in your life within the confines of marriage, not outside of it. Viewing sex within marriage as a good thing is a vital starting point in the quest to avoid sexual sin.

Be Sexually Unselfish with Your Spouse

Once married, your body becomes the property of your spouse. First Corinthians 7:1–5 says:

Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband. The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

God intends for spouses to be unselfish when it comes to meeting the physical needs of their mates. And due to the general tendency toward lack of sexual self-control explicit in this passage, spouses are to be sensitive to one another's needs so as to remove the temptation of sexual fulfillment outside of wedlock.

These points can be summarized by the cliché, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” This Biblical construct for sexual fulfillment leads to blessing and less temptation brought on by frustration.

What follows are some other insights aimed at preventing sexual passion from resulting in sin.

Do Not Allow the Planets of Privacy, Promotion, and Passion to Become Aligned

When the privacy of a hotel room combines with ungodly Internet or pay-per-view television options, alongside unfulfilled passions, the temptation to sin is greatly increased. This can be so even in the most mature, Spirit-filled follower of Christ. Therefore, one must adhere to the sage advice of the writer of Hebrews who said:

Make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.
(Hebrews 12:13)

In other words, if you are really serious about avoiding sexual temptation, you must plan out your life so as to avoid it! Travel with your spouse; stay with friends or business associates while on the road. Do whatever it takes to avoid rehearsing situations that have proven to be destructive in the past.

Since the advent of the Internet, the porn business is now four times larger than the combined total of the Hollywood movie industry, largely due to the various new forms of private delivery and promotion of their product. Therefore, we must be wise and think ahead, creating habitual disciplines in our lives so that these planets do not align. Meditate on Proverbs 9:13–18 the next time you are tempted by pornography or adultery:

The woman of folly is boisterous, She is naïve and knows nothing. She sits at the doorway of her house, On a seat by the high places of the city, Calling to those who pass by, Who are making their paths straight: “Whoever is naïve, let him turn in here,” And to him who lacks understanding she says, “Stolen water is sweet; And bread eaten in secret is pleasant.” But he does not know that the dead are there, That her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

Lest there be any doubt that sex outside of marriage is considered sinful in the NT, Paul’s letter to the church at Thessalonica addresses sexual purity. He states,

For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. (1 Thessalonians 4:3–7)

Beloved ones in the Capital Community, sexual sin can destroy your life, and it will destroy your life if you let it get hold of you.

Do not pander to your fallen sin nature; rather, mortify the flesh.

The good news is that it doesn't have to be that way. Sex is not bad! God intends for you to enjoy sex within marriage. Notice what Solomon tells Rehoboam in this regard:

Drink water from your own cistern And fresh water from your own well. Should your springs be dispersed abroad, Streams of water in the streets? Let them be yours alone And not for strangers with you. Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice in the wife of your youth. As a loving hind and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; Be exhilarated always with her love. For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress And embrace the bosom of a foreigner? (Proverbs 5:15–20)

Commit to the aforementioned disciplines in order to enjoy a fruitful and sexually fulfilling marriage!

If you want an excellent career you have to discipline yourself to perform. If you want excellent financial stability you have to discipline your spending. If you want a strong spiritual walk with Christ, you have to discipline yourself to memorizing His Word. If you want great kids, you have to discipline yourself to discipline them. If you want a car that lasts a long time you have to discipline yourself to maintain it. If you want a healthy body you have to discipline yourself in what you eat and how you exercise.

The same is true with sex: if you want an excellent marriage that provides sexual fulfillment you have to discipline yourself to do it God's way. It is my prayer for you that you discover the joys of godly fulfillment.

While sexual sin can topple marriages and the careers of Public Servants, it is not the only destructive force that we must be aware of. Another enemy of righteousness is alcohol. We will turn to that difficult topic now.

Notes

1 Dr. Justin Lehmler, "Who Has the Busier Bedroom: Single People or Married Couples?," *Science of Relationships*, accessed March 20, 2018, <http://www.scienceofrelationships.com/home/2011/8/18/who-has-the-busier-bedroom-single-people-or-married-couples.html>.