

PitfallImmoral

The Pitfall of Immorality

In our studies we have been on a journey exploring the many pitfalls, particularly from the Book of Proverbs. Today we want to look at the pitfall that is connected to last weeks, "Idolatry," since it is the parallel to unfaithfulness to God, being unfaithfulness to people. The Great Commandment was to love God completely and to love our neighbor as ourselves. The direct opposite of this commandment is idolatry and immorality. Idolatry is putting faith in a God-substitute. Immorality is idolatry because it puts our desires in the place of God. It is unloving because it puts self before others.

In 2 Peter 1:4 the apostle writes,

"...by them (God's promises) you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust."

John also speaks of the world's corruption,

"Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever." (1 John 2:15-17)

Lust – epithumia – to set the heart upon; to desire, long for, have earnest desire, to lust after, to covet, impure desire

"A desire to fulfill the lower nature"

A pitfall is a hole that we can fall into that is very hard to escape.

It's similar to a grave, only you're not dead yet.

God wants everyone to overcome the pitfalls of immorality.

"Sexual purity is absolute commitment of your sexual needs, desires, thoughts, and actions to God."¹

God demands our holiness.

¹ Randy Alcorn, *The Purity Principle*, (Nashville: LifeWay Press, 2004), p. 7.

Ex. 20:14 “You shall not commit adultery.”

Acts 15:20 New believers were instructed to “abstain ... from fornication”

1 Cor. 6:18 “Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”

Col. 3:5 “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

1 Thess. 4:3-8

“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. So, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.”

Pr. 23:27 “For a harlot is a **deep pit** and an adulterous woman is a **narrow well**. Surely she lurks as a robber, and increases the faithless among men.”

The subject of purity is one of the easiest to support biblically, but one of the most difficult to live out consistently.

Randy Alcorn in *The Purity Principle*, writes,

“The bottom line is: God commands purity and forbids impurity. Purity is right. Impurity is wrong... the Purity Principle: purity is always smart; impurity is always stupid. Not sometimes. Not usually. Always. You’re not an exception. I’m not an exception. There are no exceptions.”²

Impurity Destroys

² Alcorn, pp. 7-8.

“In one movie some shipwrecked men are left drifting aimlessly on the ocean in a lifeboat. As the days pass under the scorching sun, their rations of food and fresh water give out. The men grow deliriously thirsty. One night while the others are sleep, one man ignores all previous warnings and gulps down some salt water. He quickly dies.

Ocean water contains seven times more salt than the human body can safely ingest. Drinking it, a person dehydrates because the kidneys demand extra water to flush the overload of salt. The more salt water someone drinks, the thirstier he gets. He actually dies of thirst.

When we lust we become like this man. We thirst desperately for something that looks like what we want. We don’t realize, however, that it is precisely the opposite of what we really need. In fact, it can kill us.”³

I talked with a man who was a part of a ministry called *Setting Captives Free*. He said that the statistics today show that 67% of church-attending men were viewing pornography. Essentially it paralleled the world’s stats.

I went to their web site and found out some things:

- It is estimated that there are 4.2 million porn Web sites -12% of total sites – allowing 72 million visitors monthly.
- ¼ or total daily search engine requests or 68 million are for pornographic material where 40 million Americans are regular visitors.
- According to ComScore Media Matrix, 71.9 million people visited adult sites in August 2015, reaching 42.7 percent of the Internet audience.
- As of Oct. 5, 2014, 47% of Christians said pornography is a major problem in the home

Jesus said,

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matt. 5:27-28)

True morality is loving people and using things.

Immorality is when that is reversed: loving things or using people.

Solomon wrote these words from Proverbs 2 (Message)

³ Craig Brian Larson, *Engaging Illustrations*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), p. 438.

“Wise friends will rescue you from the Temptress – that smooth-talking Seductress who’s faithless to the husband she married years ago, never gave a second thought to her promises before God. Her whole way of life is doomed; every step she takes brings her closer to hell. No one who joins her company ever comes back, ever sets foot on the path to real living. So – join the company of good men and women, keep your feet on the tried-and-true paths. It’s the men who walk straight who will settle this land, the women with integrity who will last here. The corrupt will lose their lives; the dishonest will be gone for good.” (Prov. 2:16-22 Message)

Paul wrote to the Ephesian church:

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.” (Eph. 5:1-12).

Instruction

Insights

I. Instruction

The truth about the pitfall of immorality is that it is a dangerous reality.

The Scripture records that when God created man and woman, in their pure state of innocence, He described their sexuality as “very good!” But after the fall sin perverted all of God’s gracious gifts. The simple limitation of God’s gift of sex is

that it right only between a married man and woman. All other sexual relationships are forbidden, sinful and have grave consequences.

Sex is like a fire: in the right place and under control, it keeps the house warm.
In the wrong place and out of control and it burns the house down.

1. Deceptive Seduction of Impurity:

“For the lips of an adulteress (lit. strange woman) drip honey
And smoother than oil is her speech;
But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.
Her feet go down to death,
Her steps take hold of Sheol.
She does not ponder the path of life;
Her ways are unstable, she does not know it.” (v. 3-6)

Deception: What seems delightful ends in destruction.

2. Warning of the Dangers of Impurity

Now then, my sons, listen to me
And do not depart from the words of my mouth.
Keep your way far from her
And do not go near the door of her house,
Or you will give your vigor to others and your years to the cruel one;
And strangers will be filled with your strength
And your hard-earned goods will go to the house of an alien;
And you groan at your final end,
When your flesh and your body are consumed;
And you say, ‘How I have hated instruction!
And my heart spurned reproof!
I have not listened to the voice of my teachers!
Nor inclined my ear to my instructors!
I was almost in utter ruin
In the midst of the assembly and congregation.’ (v. 7-14)

Destructive: End of Life Regret for wasting God’s gifts of life and youth.

Purity Principle: Purity is always smart; impurity is always stupid.

3. Portrait of Purity in the Marriage Covenant

Contrast: Sexuality as God intended.

“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?**

For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord,
And He watches all his paths.

His own iniquities will capture the wicked,
And he will be held with the cords of his sin.

He will die for lack of instruction,
And in the greatness of his folly he will go astray.”

(Pr. 5:15-23)

Exhilarated – idea of being intoxicated

Two end-warnings:

1. God is watching and knows all our secrets
2. Impurity incarcerates its victims on death-row.

II. Insights

Overcoming Impurity

What do we say if someone longs for purity?

Hope in God

Love God

1. Hope in God.

Paul wrote,

“...the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?
Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers,
nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor
drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.
Such were some of you;
but you were **washed**,
but you were **sanctified**,
but you were **justified**
in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ
and in the Spirit of our God.” (1 Cor. 6:9-11)

2. Love God enough to trust and obey daily.

Remember! Today’s decisions bring long-term results.

Practical obedience:

Avoidance: Flee immorality

Amputation: Cut off all things that cause you to stumble. – (cancer)

Attentiveness: Build God’s Word into your life daily.

Remember!

Solomon’s wives turned his heart away from the Lord.

David’s lust for Bathsheba led to terrible consequences.

Samson was taken captive by his sin and then enslaved, blinded.

- Cost him everything

What impurity did for God’s greats it will do for you!

Accountability: Be a part of a struggle with others fighting the same battle.

The best way to get out of a hole is for someone to throw you a rope.