

The Bible From 20,000 Feet Part 45
ECCLESIASTES PRACTICAL APPLICATION: SEXUAL PURITY

Tuesday Night Bible Study, March 30, 2010

--OUTLINE:

- I. INTRODUCTION
- II. GOD'S COMMAND TO LIVE IN SEXUAL PURITY
- III. COMMON OBJECTIONS TO FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES OF SEXUAL PURITY

--INTRODUCTION

--In the last study we saw an overview of Ecclesiastes and Solomon's conclusion – "Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: **Fear God and keep his commandments**, for this is the whole [duty] of man." (Ecclesiastes 12:13)

--We then saw how obedience takes on a whole new meaning in light of our relationship with God through Christ...

--When the barrier of sin between us and God is removed through Christ, we are connected to God in heaven through His Spirit, and **the commandments of Scripture become guidelines for walking in step with God's Spirit** – God wants us to be His hands and feet and voice on the earth ("the body of Christ" –1 Corinthians 12:1)

--God doesn't expect us to be perfect, but He expects us to **change our attitude** about sin which starts a supernatural process of God changing us...

--In the words of Romans 8:13-15: "For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but **if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body**, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

--"Repentance" (Luke 24:46-49) is the biblical term for the change of attitude that starts this supernatural process of changing the patterns of sin in our lives through God's Spirit.

--After Jesus rose from the grave He said, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations."

--Christ died for our sins to remove the barrier of sin between us and God (remission of sins) so that the Spirit of God could enter our lives and walk us through the process of becoming more like Christ!

--In the words of Hebrews, He died to release us from bondage... "Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood He Himself likewise has shared in the same that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Hebrews 2:14-15)

--"fear of death..." – not only fear of physical death but also fear of death to the ways of the flesh!

--Galatians 5:24: "Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with it's passions and desires."

--It's easy to fear the loss of things that we want in our flesh, but through faith we can rest in knowing that where there is a crucifixion there is also a resurrection!

--God will replace what we lose with something better – even if it is simply being closer to Him!

--GOD'S COMMAND TO LIVE IN SEXUAL PURITY

--God's view on sexual immorality...

--Under the law of Moses during Old Testament times, sexual immorality (sex outside of marriage) was a capital crime punishable by death! (Deuteronomy 22:13-30)

--The Pharisees brought an adulterous woman to Jesus to see what He would say, and rather than condemning her under the law He forgave her and told her to sin no more – echoing what He would later commission his disciples to tell the world: "repentance and remission of sins."

--John 8:2-12: "Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them. 3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, 4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" 6 This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. 7 So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." 8 And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. 9 Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" 11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." 12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

--Sexual immorality is especially dangerous because it is a sin against our own body which is the temple of the Holy Spirit...

--1 Corinthians 6:18-20: "Flee from **sexual immorality**. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. 19 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. **Therefore honor God with your body.**"

--Sexual immorality is serious enough to be cause for breaking fellowship...

--1 Corinthians 5:9-11: "I wrote to you in my epistle **not to keep company with sexually immoral people**. 10 Yet I certainly **did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world**, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. 11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with **anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral**, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner — not even to eat with such a person."

--When we follow God's commands and walk in His Spirit we are "salt...and light of the world..." as Jesus said. (Matthew 5:13-14)

--When we fall into sin our light grows dim, but when we turn from sin our light shines brighter... "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

III. COMMON OBJECTIONS TO FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES OF SEXUAL PURITY

--*It's ok to have sex before marriage because nobody is perfect...*

--Again, what matters is our attitude about sin, making it our aim to turn away from sin rather than find excuses to continue in sin; and when we change our attitude about sin, God's Spirit begins to work in us and help us change the patterns of sin in our lives.

--*It's too difficult to wait until marriage for sex.*

--1 Corinthians 10:13 states, "God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."

--It can be very difficult to say no to sin, but God provides a way out. If Jesus endured the agony of dying for our sins then we can endure the agony of saying no to sin!

--Luke 9:23-25: Jesus said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, **let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.** 24 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it."

-Times have changed and the Bible was written for more conservative cultures...

--The principles of sexual purity laid out in the New Testament were originally written for Christians living in the midst of the Roman Empire which had moral standards that were far worse than American culture today!

--Sex is overrated... what's the harm in having sex before marriage?

--Apart from violating clear principles of Scripture, premarital sex violates common sense! One of the primary functions of sex is reproduction, and until a man and woman are committed to each other for life they are not ready to bring a child into the world!

--Sex is a profound emotional bonding experience which makes it much more difficult to be objective about relationships. Sex is designed to help permanently cement two lives together, and until there is a lifelong commitment it is unnatural and unhealthy for two lives to be cemented together through sexual union! The Bible calls the process of bonding through sexual union "becoming one flesh" (Ephesians 5:31)

-It's judgmental to tell people that sex before marriage is a sin...

--Holding up God's standard may seem judgmental and narrow minded but it opens the door for God to work in supernatural ways. Overlooking sin and avoiding confrontation makes it harder for the Spirit to work, like a flame that dies down when there is less oxygen – compromise is void of spiritual power!

--We must avoid the pitfall of relying on man's wisdom... 1 Corinthians 2:13: "This is what we speak, **not in words taught us by human wisdom** but in **words taught by the Spirit**, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words."

--Isaiah 55:8-9: "'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the LORD. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.'"