

STRENGTH AND COURAGE IN PURITY

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BIG IDEA: God is calling you to purity, and purity is possible! You can be set free from both sexual immorality and from the guilt and shame of past sins.

UNDERSTAND

- The question is not if you struggle with sexual sin. It's how you struggle with sexual sin
- Fighting sexual sin has always been hard, but we face unique temptations today
- Sin thrives in the dark. One of our challenges is that we tend to struggle alone
- God gives us grace to both fight sin and to cover past sins

1 THESSALONIANS 4:3-8

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honour, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

FIGHT

Believe that victory is possible. Refuse to make peace with the sin.

ROMANS 8:13

...If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

MATTHEW 5:29-30

"If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell."

"Be killing sin, or it will be killing you." (John Owen)

Rely on God's power

ROMANS 6:22

Now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.

Bring the sin into the light

JAMES 5:16

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.

1 JOHN 1:7

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

Begin with the heart, not behaviour

PROVERBS 4:23

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.

MATTHEW 15:19-20

"For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person."

According to Joe Rigney, we need to see sexual sin through three lenses:

- Sexual sin as immorality
- Sexual sin as addiction
- Sexual sin as brokenness

Fight both positively and negatively

POSITIVELY:

"The best way of casting out an impure affection is to admit a pure one, and, by the love of what is good, to expel the love of what is evil." (Thomas Chalmers)

"Knowing God is the path to sexual purity. And if you are in bondage to pornography and fantasies or fornication or adultery the immediate and long-term strategy of this war is: Know God!" (John Piper)

NEGATIVELY:

Put off the deeds of the flesh. Take specific actions:

- Delete apps
- Cancel streaming services
- Install filters
- Set boundaries
- Develop an action plan when tempted

Here's a very simple guide for using **HALT** to fight sexual temptation:

HUNGRY

- Eat regular meals
- Keep healthy snacks handy

ANXIOUS/ANGRY

- Don't use sexual thoughts to escape stress
- Exercise or take a walk
- Pray or read your Bible
- Talk to someone you trust

LONELY

- Don't isolate yourself
- Call a Christian friend
- Join a men's group
- Connect with your accountability partner
- Spend time with family

TIRED

- Get enough sleep
- Take breaks when needed
- Don't make decisions when exhausted
- Go to bed early instead of staying up late

GROW

Refuse to give up. Keep going after failure.

Keep hold of two truths: the seriousness of sin, and the grace of God.

SUGGESTED BOOKS

Randy Alcorn, **The Purity Principle: God's Safeguards for Life's Dangerous Trails**

J. Garrett Kell, **Pure in Heart: Sexual Sin and the Promises of God**

Heath Lambert, **Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace**

Nate Larkin, **Samson and the Pirate Monks**

Ray Ortlund, **The Death of Porn: Men of Integrity Building a World of Nobility**

John Owen, **Overcoming Sin and Temptation**

Deepak Reju, **Pornography: Fighting for Purity and Rescue Plan: Charting a Course to Restore Prisoners of Pornography**

Joe Rigney, **More Than a Battle: How to Experience Victory, Freedom, and Healing from Lust**