

## SEXUAL IMMORALITY

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The Christian Church must renew its dedication to uphold God's high standards of purity. And God's standard for sexual purity is *chastity before marriage* and *loyalty after marriage*.

We are living in the midst of a tremendous moral revolution. New "belief-systems" are springing up everywhere. Most of our society is pleasure oriented. The mood is permissive and daring. There is an attitude of irreverence toward God and toward sacred things. There has been a very definite change from the standards accepted just a few decades ago.

We are living in an age that is reeking with sexual immorality. Because of modern birth control methods and a general loosening of moral standards, the volume of sexual perversion has multiplied. Boys sometimes wear tee-shirts imprinted with the words, "Help stamp out virginity." Girls sometimes wear sweaters imprinted with the words, "If you rape me, keep this side up." Bulletin boards on college campuses advertise, "Sleep with a stranger tonight." Homosexuals are openly demanding "gay rights." Moral standards are indeed very low.

What's behind all this madness? The primary answer to the question is that the religion of humanism and of moral relativism is gradually replacing the message of Christianity and the standards set forth in the Word of God. The Bible speaks clearly about the sins of sexual impurity and emphatically condemns them (**1 Corinthians 6:9**), while at the same time it holds forth the hope that those who have been guilty of practicing them can be saved (**1 Corinthians 6:11**).

### **1. HOMOSEXUAL PERVERSION**

Homosexuality is sexual activity between persons of the same sex. Both men and women may be homosexuals. Female homosexuals are sometimes

called *lesbians*. Scientists estimate that four percent of the adult males in the United States feel sexually attracted to members of their own sex, and about half that percentage of adult women prefer their own sex. Homosexuality has been known throughout man's history.

Today homosexuals are demanding that their lifestyle be accepted as valid. They are pressuring courts to grant them the right to adopt children. They are asking to become teachers in our nation's public schools. Avowed practicing homosexuals are seeking to become pastors in more and more churches. There are a few biblical teachings about homosexuality that we should note.

#### *(a) Homosexuality is unnatural.*

When God created human beings, He made them male and female. Way back at the time of creation, the man (Adam) was created to be in union with another – and that other was the woman. Their relationship was ordered by God. Jesus says as recorded in **Matthew 19:45**, “Have you not read that he who made them, from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this reason shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife?’”

It is not normal to be attracted to a member of the same sex. It violates the basic sexual structure which God created. It is a perversion. It is against nature. The passage in **Romans 1:26-27** makes that clear.

#### *(b) Homosexuality is sinful.*

The Bible classifies homosexual practice as “sin.” It is a violation of the will of God. A simple reading of **Genesis 19** (about the two angels who paid a visit to Sodom and stayed in Lot's home) indicates that sodomy is a great wickedness (**Genesis 19:4-5**).

**Leviticus 18:22** says that to lie with a person of the same sex, is an abomination. The Scripture in **1 Corinthians 6:9** condemns all homosexual activity without qualification. The two Greek words translated “abusers of themselves with mankind” apply to any continuous homosexual activity, whether it is a covenanted permanent relationship or a promiscuously lustful relationship. Homosexuality is an insult against God.

#### *(c) Homosexuality is curable.*

There is hope for the homosexual. The male homosexual and the lesbian can experience the forgiveness of God. They can have a changed life if they really want it!

Some of the Christians at Corinth had at one time been involved in homosexual activity, but they were delivered from it. The writer in **1 Corinthians 6:9** mentions homosexuality (along with some other sins), and then says in **verse 11**, “**And such were some of you, but you are washed, you are sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus.**” These people were no longer practicing homosexuals. Homosexuality is curable.

The Bible message offers hope to those who practice sodomy, but before one can be delivered – he must *acknowledge* his sin; he must honestly *desire* deliverance; he must *want to do* what is right. Nearly all studies show that homosexual behavior is *learned* behavior – and what has been learned, can (with God’s help) be unlearned.

We need to look with compassion toward homosexuals and see their struggles and their rejection and their personal agony. It is not easy to lose a job, nor is it easy to be rejected by one’s own family. We need also to remember that there is a sense in which those of us who are not homosexuals, are just as sinful as those who are gay. We have tendencies and drives and inclinations that can be equally sinful. *But there is one basic difference:* The homosexual in our day is saying, “*My gayness is good. My sodomy is not sinful. God made me this way. God accepts my style of living as good. It is natural to me, and it’s time for you folks to accept me as I am, and to join me in saying that a homosexual style of living is acceptable.*” The rest of us are not saying that! We are not saying that at all! We are not seeking to have anyone tell us that our sins are okay. We will look at heterosexual immorality in just a few moments, but there is one more factor related to the homosexual issue that ought to be mentioned first.

If we come out in favor of putting a stamp of approval on homosexuality, do you know what is next on the list? The next cry for freedom is going to be a call for the legalizing of incest. A book entitled ***Incest: Sex Within the Family*** appeared only recently. The writer approves incest, and says, “Left to our biological drives and desires, we human beings are capable of, and desirous of, warm, close, sensual, and sexual expression with our own blood kin.” According to the news media, a recent issue of ***Penthouse*** tells how incest is being fictionalized in the leading women’s magazines and claims that incest is harmless. In fact, to quote, “It is often positive and beneficial.” One abomination is followed by another.

In a moment, we want to let God’s Word speak to those of us who are not gay. Homosexuals have a valid point when they say to the rest of us, “Why don’t you face your sins of fornication and adultery as seriously as you want us to face our homosexuality?” We want to do that right now.

## 2. HETEROSEXUAL IMMORALITY

A heterosexual is one who is characterized by sexual attraction to those of the opposite sex. It needs to be stated clearly from the very beginning that sex in its own right is not immoral. There's nothing inherently wrong with the normal sex act when it functions in the right place. The sexual relationship is a gift from God, but it must be disciplined and used within the bounds of true and honorable marriage. The key passage is **Hebrews 13:4**, which says, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

Many ask: "But why within marriage? What's really wrong with a sex relationship outside of marriage?" One answer is that God knew that a physical relationship between a man and a woman might lead to the birth of a child, and God knew that the child would need the loving tender care of a father and mother, and therefore He has given His blessing to the sex relationship only within the family situation of marriage, where the children will get that loving care. Any sexual activity outside the honorable marriage bond is immoral and impure – and is naked, shameful, wicked sin.

### *(a) The sin of fornication.*

Fornication is illicit sexual intercourse among the unmarried. Those who commit fornication disobey God (**Colossians 3:56**) and cause themselves needless sorrow. Intercourse affects a person's mind and heart, as well as his or her body. It is the closest relationship two people can have. When kept within marriage, it gives much joy and satisfaction. When used outside the commitment of marriage, it can cause much heartache and suffering, for God is displeased. Wrong use of intercourse can also cause serious disease and sometimes bring about an early death. Fornication is a scourge that is often overlooked in our churches.

More than a million girls in our country every year leave the high school desk for the hospital maternity ward. Those fathers and mothers who love the Lord ought to have the courage and common sense to take their sons and daughters and sit down with them and explain the wonders of human reproduction. We need to give our children decent teaching concerning sex and morals. The small book entitled "Almost Twelve" written by Kenneth Taylor can serve as a helpful tool for the parent.

### *(b) The wickedness of adultery.*

The word "adultery" in its broadest sense includes any violation of the sanctity of sex. It includes incest, rape, seduction, unfaithfulness, promiscuity, whoredom, and a whole realm of related impurities. However, in its more limited sense, it is the act of sexual

intercourse with a person other than one's own married partner. **Leviticus 18:20** spells it out plainly: **"You shall not lie carnally with your neighbor's wife."**

Some of you may actually have gone to bed with another woman and have been unfaithful to your wife. Or, as a wife, you may have had illicit relations with another man, and have been unfaithful to your husband. Unless you have made sincere apologies, and righted things with God and man someday you'll find yourself a sinner in the hands of an angry God.

Physical adultery (just described) is not the only kind of adultery. Another kind of adultery is *mental adultery*. It is possible not to touch a woman and yet at the same time dwell on books and pictures and magazines in such a way that the imagination runs wild. There are all kinds of what we might call X-rated magazines (*Playboy, Penthouse, Hustler*) which are available at newsstands – all of which must be avoided by men of God. Jesus not only forbids outward acts of filthiness, but He also condemns unchastity of heart (**Matthew 5:28**).

Looking on a woman to lust after her constitutes adultery, and it can lead to more and more illicit activity. In Old Testament times, Job set us an example: He said, **"I have made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?" (Job 31:1)**. One translation of the passage says, **"I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I look lustfully at a girl?"** One who has taken sides with Jesus Christ, like Job, should make a covenant with his eyes and choose a life of purity, and look upon a woman not as an object for sexual gratification, but as a soul for whom Christ died.

Another kind of adultery is *legalized adultery*. Divorce and remarriage have become legal for most any cause in our country today, but Jesus plainly states that **"Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, commits adultery against her" (Mark 10:11)**, and the same words are spoken about the woman who divorces her husband.

It was legal to divorce and remarry in Paul's day, in John's day, under Roman law – but John the Baptist plainly told Herod, **"It is not lawful for you to have your brother Philip's wife."** In God's law, the marriage vows unite a man and a woman for life. Only death can separate that union. The remarriage of divorced persons constitutes a state of adultery, and while it is legal in the eyes of the state, it is sinful in the eyes of God.

There is also something like *provoked adultery*. Jesus said that one who puts away his wife **"causeth her to commit adultery" (Matthew 5:32)**. The point is that it is possible to make it easy for another to sin, and those who provoke others to sin are guilty of sin themselves. The courts in most lands agree that if one is a partner in crime; if he

helps plan the crime; if he provokes crime –he stands as guilty as the one who committed the crime (even though he did not himself actually commit the act).

Some delight in stirring up other people's passions by telling dirty stories, showing filthy pictures, and constantly dwelling upon the unclean. Others dress immodestly, parading themselves in form-fitting clothes or clothes that do not properly cover the nakedness of the body. The practice of displaying bosoms and revealing the bodily form and exposing the thighs is heathendom, and heathendom is wickedness, and those who dress in such a way will face the judgment of God.

### *(c) The cure for immorality.*

Every one of us is living in a world full of suggestions to commit immorality. And thus, such of us needs a defense-system that is strong in order to withstand the temptations to become lascivious. The mark of a real man and of a real woman is self-control (self-discipline).

For one thing, we must dare to be different from the world about us. The world about us is living under the rulership of Satan (**1 John 5:19**), is ignorant of the will of God (**John 16:3**) and is destined for judgment (**1 Corinthians 11:32**). The body of the disciple of Jesus Christ is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and it is inconsistent for him to follow the ways of the unconverted world.

Another remedy for overcoming adultery is to avoid circumstances that may lead to problems. God's answer for each person who seeks purity is to "flee." We are admonished to "flee fornication" (**1 Corinthians 6:18**) and to "depart from iniquity" (**2 Timothy 2:19**). This means that we must steadfastly avoid any activity or occasion which might cause us to fall. We must make a covenant with our eyes (as Job did), and stop our ears against filthy conversation, and read nothing which defiles the imagination, and stay out of places and away from people who lean toward immoral activities. The old proverb is appropriate: "If you don't want to do business with the devil, then stay out of his shop!"

A third remedy for becoming victorious over immoral behavior is to turn constantly to Christ for the gift of moral strength. We must habitually cultivate a sense of the presence of God, realizing that "the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (**Proverbs 15:3**). We need to pray often the words of the prayer-hymn;

*"Purer in heart, O God, help me to be;  
That I thy holy face, one day may see.*

*Keep me from secret sin; reign thou my soul within;  
Purer in heart, O God, help me to be.”*

For one who truly wants help, the Lord Jesus will provide the power to say yes to purity, and no to the frightening pull of sin. The indwelling Holy Spirit becomes a kind of Custodian who helps guard the body and helps keep it pure and clean.

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**NOTE:** This article was written more than 40 years ago and is faithful to God’s Word about the sinfulness of homosexuals and the sexual sins that can be committed by heterosexuals. Sadly, it has only gotten worse since 1979. Homosexuality is mainstream all over the world and marriage is presumed passe by our culture.