

"The Danger Of Immorality In The Ministry"

(A Publication Of "The Inner-city Church Planting Mission")

Introduction: I would like us to consider a very important subject today. Unfortunately, it is a subject that is a problem in the realms of the ministry. And I know that every man and woman here today struggles to some degree or another with this problem. It is not a new problem by any means, as we will clearly see from The SCRIPTURES. But it is an age old problem, one that has been with us from the garden of Eden, because man is still as evil as he was in the garden! That problem? . . . "The Danger Of Immorality In The Ministry"

Outline: I. The Causes Of Immorality
II. The Characteristics Of The Immoral Woman
III. The Consequences Of Immorality
IV. The Conquering Of Immorality

I. The Causes Of Immorality

A. Our evil heart.

That is, the great potential we all have within us of sinning in this area. *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?"* Jeremiah 17:9; *"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies, these are the things which defile a man . . ."* Matthew 15:19-20a

Beware! Because if we ever get to the point where we think we could never fall into this sin, that is when it will probably happen! *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."* I Corinthians 10:12

B. Our wandering heart.

The man or woman that falls into this sin is already far away from THE LORD! *"The mouth of strange women is a deep pit, he that is abhorred of THE LORD shall fall therein."* Proverbs 22:14 "strange" = adulterous, immoral

Notice the progression of sin according to James 1:13-15 ...

1. We are "drawn away (by our own) lusts..." This implies that we are already fostering thoughts of rebellion and disobedience.
2. Then Satan comes along and "entices" (tempts) us.
3. Once that "lust has conceived" (or has taken root) ...
4. Then we sin.
5. Then we experience that death.

All of this happens as we begin to make little compromises in our life.

1. Viewing illicit T.V. programs
2. Viewing illicit magazines
3. Going to public beaches
4. Flirting with other men or women
5. Gazing at other men or women
6. Being alone with other men or women

All of these constitute being somewhere where we should not be. (i.e. - King David in II Samuel 11:1)

C. Unfulfillment at home.

This is for all of us married men and women. When a man or woman's marriage is strong and being centered around JESUS CHRIST, their physical relationship is going to be that much better. They will also be less tempted to start gazing at other men or women. *"Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running water out of thine own well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets. Let them be only thine own, and not strangers with thee. Let thy fountain be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe, let her breasts satisfy thee at all times, and be thou ravished always with her love."* Proverbs 5:15-19

One practice that has really proven to be beneficial is abstinence. Leviticus 15:19, 25

Another important principle to remember is the need to keep short "offence accounts." That is, if we've offended our spouse in any way, we better ask for their forgiveness as quickly as possible. Because an offended spouse will not respond to us physically! *"A (spouse) offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and their contentions are like the bars of a castle."* Proverbs 18:19

Those of us that are single or divorced, have to cling to JESUS that much more!

II. The Characteristics Of The Immoral Woman

For this we turn to the Proverbs, and a man who unfortunately knew all too well about immoral women and immorality . . . Solomon.

A. They *"flatter with (their) words."*

"To deliver thee from the strange (immoral) woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words." Proverbs 2:16 (see also Proverbs 5:3; 6:24; 7:5, 14-21)

B. They are not under authority.

(she) *"forsaketh the guide of her youth..."* Proverbs 2:17a (see also Proverbs 7:11)

C. They have no spiritual aspect in their life.

(she) *"forgetteth the covenant of her GOD."* Proverbs 2:17b
(see also Proverbs 30:20)

D. They seduce with their eyes.

"...neither let her take thee with her eyelids." Proverbs 6:25

E. They *"hunt for the precious life."*

"...the adulterous will hunt for the precious life." Proverbs 6:26b
"precious" = dear, costly

This SCRIPTURE can apply to the CHRISTian man, but especially those who are spiritual leaders. But who is really behind such a woman as this? Satan! For we are admonished to, *"Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."* I Peter 5:8. If Satan can get spiritual leaders to fall, he has done great damage to the cause of CHRIST! (see also Proverbs 7:12, 15; 23:28a)

F. They seduce with their dress.

"And behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot ..." Proverbs 7:10a

III. The Consequences Of Immorality

A. Death.

"For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life" Proverbs 2:18-19 (see also Proverbs 5:3-5, 23; 7:22-27; 9:18; Romans 6:23a)

1. Physical. Not only to the man or woman them self, but with A.I.D.S. and all the other sexually transmitted diseases, to the spouse and family as well. *"And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed."* Proverbs 5:11
Illustrations: Samson; David (see II Samuel 12:10)

2. Emotional. Not only to the man or woman them self, but their whole family. i.e. - the spouse's trust in their mate is broken. *"But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding, he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul."* Proverbs 6:32
Illustration: David (see II Samuel 12:11-12)

3. Spiritual.

a. his own testimony and ministry is destroyed. "A wound and dishonour shall he get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away." Proverbs 6:33 (see I Kings 11:3-8 for Solomon's testimony to this principle)

b. GOD's reputation is damaged. When GOD pronounced the different judgements upon David and his household after his immorality with Bathsheba, it was said by Nathan to David, "Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of THE LORD to blaspheme..." II Samuel 12:14a

B. Poverty.

"Remove thy way far from her (the immoral woman), and come not nigh the door of her house, lest strangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labours be in the house of a stranger..." Proverbs 5:8, 10 (see also Proverbs 6:26a)

C. Bondage.

"His own iniquities shall take the wicked (i.e. - those men that fall into immorality), himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins." Proverbs 5:22

IV. The Conquering Of Immorality

A. Guard your heart.

That is, what you put into it (i.e. - immoral television programs, immoral magazines, etc.), and what you allow your mind to think of. "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul, discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee, to deliver thee from the strange woman..." Proverbs 2:10-11,16 (see also Proverbs 7:25; Matthew 15:19)

B. Strengthen yourself spiritually from the WORD of GOD.

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to THY WORD. THY WORD have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against THEE." Psalm 119:9,11 (see also Proverbs 2:1-2, 10-11, 16; 5:1-2, 7; 7:24)

C. Build a strong marriage and home life.

See Proverbs 5:15-19 above.

D. Consecrate your eyes.

"The light of the body is the eye, if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" Matthew 6:22-23

Illustrations: Job (see Job 31:1); David (see Psalm 101:3)

E. Flee from the situations and men/women that might present themselves as temptations.

"Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her (the immoral women's) house." Proverbs 5:8 (see also Proverbs 7:24-25; I Corinthians 6:18a)

Illustration: Joseph (study Genesis 39:1-13)

Warning! Do not meet with men/women alone! *"Abstain from all appearance of evil."* I Thessalonians 5:22

F. Pray the "hedge of thorns" for protection.
(Study Hosea 2:5-7)

A sample prayer: "O FATHER in heaven, in the NAME of THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, I ask you to bind Satan (Matthew 12:29), then, build up a hedge of thorns of protection high and deep around me, so no man or woman would have any interest in me romantically. Also, build a hedge around all other men and women, so I would not have any interest in them romantically! In JESUS' NAME, Amen."

May we be men and women of purity and holiness! May we seek to be the GODly spiritual leaders our churches and ministries need! And thus, may GOD glorify HIMSELF greatly in and through us!

"HE hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth THE LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy GOD." Micah 6:8