

We will only grow spiritually as we should when we do so together as true children of God and members of the Body of Christ. But sin not only brings conflict, it requires us to be on guard in many areas for our own sake and the sake of our fellow believers. Living in purity is one such area that we work at together.

Review of “purity” in general:

- The meaning of purity is to be clean, having nothing present that should not be there (*cf.* Psalm 24:3-4).
- The core issue of purity concerns our hearts. The thoughts and actions which come out of our hearts make us “unclean” (Mark 7:20-23). God cleanses us when we come to Him through Jesus (*cf.* Titus 3:5-6), and continues to cleanse us when we sin (1 John 1:9). Never-the-less God wants us to avoid getting dirty and have “no hint of any kind of impurity” (*cf.* Ephesians 5:3).
- We help keep ourselves – myself and others – pure by guarding what goes into our hearts (*cf.* Matthew 6:22-23) and guarding our actions, so that we do not cause others to sin.

I. The challenge of teaching sexual purity:

For some it may be an embarrassing topic. But most are influenced by the world, which views this very different from the Bible. Sexual activity is beginning at an ever lower age. Sex education in schools has increased without godly, moral guidelines. Sexually explicit material is more accessible than ever before.

II. A biblical definition towards sexual purity:

1. God created man as male and female. He instituted marriage and intended the sexual relation to be within marriage. *Cf.* Genesis 1:27; 2:23-24.
2. The Old Testament law limited sexual relations to a man and woman within marriage.
3. The pure relation of a husband and wife pictured our spiritual faithfulness to God, thus heightening the importance of sexual purity.
4. Jesus affirmed these truths in His own teaching.
5. Jesus included the importance of purity in a person’s thoughts.

Sexual purity confines sexuality to the Biblical framework of marriage. Sex is right and pure within marriage but wrong and impure outside of marriage. *Cf.* Hebrews 13:4.

III. Commitments to make in order to live together in sexual purity:

1. I will not have a sexual relationship with anyone besides my spouse, i.e., fidelity within marriage and abstinence outside of marriage.
2. I will not do or say anything that might provoke a sexual response in anyone other than my spouse (*cf.* 1 Thessalonians 4:2-7).

We should control ourselves so as “not to transgress, that is, go beyond proper limits in behavior, and to defraud in this matter a brother”. Crossing these proper limits stirs up passions and desires which cannot be rightfully fulfilled and thus the other person is cheated or defrauded. This can happen through words, clothing, touch, etc.

3. I will not look at another person to desire them other than my spouse. *Cf.* Matthew 5:28; Job 31:1.
Men are often tempted visually. Women, though not exempt in this area, generally face the temptation of romanticizing.
4. I will flee temptation and anything that arouses wrong desires. *Cf.* 2 Timothy 2:22.
Fleeing temptation may require restricting where we go and what we have in our homes.
5. I will not listen to flattery, a primary tool of the “wayward woman”. *Cf.* Proverbs 5:3; 7:5, 21.
6. I will not participate in joking about sex (or being entertained by such).

God wants us to be pure (1 Thessalonians 4:7) and we must therefore be careful to live wisely (Ephesians 5:15). Since all kinds of evil come out of our hearts, we should “above all else, guard our hearts” (Proverbs 4:23).

The challenge to live a pure life is great, but true children of God have the Holy Spirit and are joined together into one Body. By His power and working together, it is possible.