

Keep Yourself Pure

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B. CHARLES HOSTETTER

# PREFACE

The Bible warns people time and again about the sin of impurity. It is a besetting sin for the human family. Few escape the urge to have a fling at impurity. The sex drive is one of man's strongest.

Secular and Biblical history testify that impurity is ever present with the human family. No tribe, people, nation, or generation has gone unscarred by it. History records that many mighty have fallen by its sting. The widespread practice of impurity explains why the Bible has so much to say about it.

During the summer of 1953 I gave nine messages on the international broadcast of "The Mennonite Hour" under the general theme of "Keep Thyself Pure." The purpose was to show the rewards for pure living and the reaping of impure living. Much of the material in this booklet was taken from those messages. However, it has been revised and some material added.

We send this forth hoping it will prove a blessing to many and that it will save young and old from the sin of impurity. We are anxious for people to get the blessings and rewards of pure living.

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CHAPTER 1

# Keep Yourself Pure

IT WAS SHOCKING NEWS to learn that he was dead. The officials called it suicide. He was in his early thirties and was a practicing medical doctor. He had ability and should have been a success. But he took his own life.

How well I remember my last conversation with him about five or six years earlier! With great vigor he had defended the viewpoint that sexual intercourse for unmarried people was not wrong. He said God made us that way and, therefore, sex was a normal desire, just like hunger or any other physical appetite. He contended that if both parties were agreed and they were smart enough to avoid pregnancy, it was no worse than kissing or any other activity between sexes.

He smiled at my defense of purity and scoffed at the Bible position that this was a terrible sin. I warned him that God classed it as immorality, and it would damn his soul unless he repented of it. That really gave him a

good laugh. To him the Bible was a book of superstitions and way out of date. He said science and our enlightened age had long since proved the Bible a has-been. He was standing with the modern philosophy that morality is relative and not absolute.

I suppose we talked an hour that day. No progress was made that I could see, convincing him that immorality was sin. My warnings and admonitions fell as water off a duck's back. To him I was out of date, puritanical, and my interpretation of God was old-fashioned.

But his potentially successful career ended in a few years in a horrible nightmare. He is now just another illustration showing us that "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

I feel constrained to write on the theme, "Keep yourself pure," because we are living in a day when purity is a joke, and high moral standards are being systematically destroyed by Hollywood, modern novels, television, magazines, lewd stories, advertising techniques, and community practices. The prevailing low moral standards and rapid increase in immoralities of all kinds tell us that the doctor's philosophy is a common one. As a spokesman for God, I must tell you what God and the Bible tell us about impure living.

History books are full of glaring examples of past nations, yes, and mighty nations too, which fell to ruin because of internal moral corruption. One of America's

greatest hazards for survival is her low moral standards and practices. We cannot defy the spiritual and natural laws of God and go unpunished. Reaping has a way of catching up with the sower. It is often avoided for a short time, but when the harvest comes it brings bitter reaping. High moral standards make a nation strong and make her a leader among nations.

A good Christian friend of mine worked in a large industrial plant in Detroit one summer. His big reason for taking the job was to be a witness for Jesus Christ; he wanted also to earn money to return to college in the fall. As he became acquainted with his fellow employees who worked near him, they soon recognized that he was different. They tried to induce him to sin. They offered him tobacco. They invited him to go along to their parties and social functions. One day when they were discussing moral standards, he told them he was morally pure. They “Ha, ha’d” him and went back to their machines laughing, not believing him. Later a few came to him and said, “Fellow, you were not serious, were you?” “I surely was,” he said. “I am twenty-one years old and I have no regrets for my high moral standards. I am pure and I am planning to stay that way.” These young men said they didn’t know another young person like him among all their acquaintances. What a tragedy! But this is the picture of the social impurity in our day. How happy I am that I know of hundreds and thousands of pure young people!

I am still young enough to know the tremendous pull that entices young people to impurity. We all have three great enemies that are constantly working hard to spoil our lives with sin and to trap our souls for eternity.

The first enemy we face is our flesh. Our old nature enjoys sin and constantly wants to indulge in it. Jeremiah 17:9 says our hearts are “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” Romans 7:18 says it this way: “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing.” It is natural for the flesh to want to sin. The appetite of our old nature calls for evil. Galatians 5:19-21 tells us: “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” How positive the Bible is that impurity is sin and that sin brings God’s judgment!

When one becomes a Christian, he is born again of the Spirit which gives him a new heart, a new nature, yes, a new appetite. We listed the fruit of the flesh—an ugly picture; now notice the fruit of the Spirit or of the new life in Christ from Galatians 5:22, 23: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against