***Sexual Purity  
  
RV179-02***

Our subject is "The Victorious Lamb." This is section number three in Revelation 14:1-5.

**The 144,000**

In John's vision, recorded in the Revelation of the future tribulation era, the scene suddenly shifts down to the end of that seven-year period. The tribulation period is terminated by the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the earth. John sees the returned Lord standing in triumph on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, surrounded by the 144,000 Jewish evangelists who have been proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom for that seven-year period. These 144,000 Jewish men bear on their foreheads the name of God the Father and God the Son, which they received at the beginning of the tribulation, when they were assigned their mission of world evangelism. The names of deity act as a divine seal, marking the men as God's servants. The seal also makes them immortal in the face of the antichrist's attacks so that they cannot be killed. They start out with 144,000 and they end up with 144,000 to the man.

**A Song from Heaven**

Now, at the end of the seven-year period, their ministry is at an end, and they stand there victorious with Jesus Christ on Mount Zion. John is also aware of the fact that he suddenly hears from heaven a sound which has the forcefulness of a large volume of rushing water, and the intensity of a peal of thunder. This sound is made up by a large group of harpists who are playing together. The harpists are accompanying themselves to a song which they are singing. The singing harpists are probably the tribulation martyrs – people who were born again during the tribulation, and who, because of their faith and commitment to Jesus Christ, have been put to death by the agents of the antichrist. The song, which they sing is described as a new song in the sense that it is particularly designed for the occasion. This song is sung in heaven, we are told, before the throne of God the Father, and in the presence of the four living creatures; the angelic honor guard that stands around the throne; and, the 24 elders who represent the church, which at this time is in heaven.

The song is apparently a joyful expression of praise to God, whose grace has carried these martyrs courageously through the persecution, faithfully standing by their commitment to Jesus Christ, and the Lord has carried them into heaven. Those who have not experienced their suffering that they have gone through simply cannot relate to the particular message of this new song, and so it says, "They cannot learn to sing it." They just cannot enter into this song.

There are some songs that have an intensity of feeling – a message that some people simply do not have the background or experience to be able to enter into it to sing. There is a lack of maturity sometimes, such that there is a song that has a deep spiritual message that some people just cannot get hold of to sing effectively, because they do not have themselves the personal experience to be able to enter into the message of that song.

Well, that's the kind of thing that these people are faced with here. Those who have not been in their place cannot relate to this joyful message in song. However, the 144,000 have been under the gun of the antichrist, and by God's grace, they have been saved through the tribulation alive. So, they can relate to this new song which describes God carrying us along. God carries us through. So, they, we're told, are able to learn it.

**Holiness**

Music in the Bible is an expression of joy, and it is always associated with heaven. It is characteristic of God to be happy, and thus it is characteristic of heaven to be surrounded with the joyful sounds of music. God's happiness is based upon the fact of His Holiness. It is the holiness of God that is the foundation of His personal happiness. For the believer, the same is true. There can never be any real inner happiness apart from personal holiness. The sinning Christian is not a happy Christian. The Christian who is out of temporal fellowship is out of step with his Heavenly Father, and he doesn't feel like singing. Things are not coming up roses, and he's not a happy person. It is the holiness of the believer, the Bible tells us, that compels him to burst out in song. We saw this in Psalm 40:2-3 and in Ephesians 5:18-19. A holy people are singing people.

**Happiness**

Now, these martyred saints in heaven, who now have been transformed into the sinless image of Christ are euphoric. The suffering and the hard times are passed, and they break out in this joyful song. God has always been happy, and it is characteristic of those who are on good terms with Him to be happy also.

My granddaughter, Charis, after last Sunday night's sermon, when I pointed out that God is always happy, came home and asked me if Jesus was happy when he was suffering on the cross. I told her that Jesus on the cross did not find His circumstances of suffering and humiliation fun. But He was filled with an inner happiness, because he was obeying God the Father, and because He maintained His personal sinlessness. He maintained His Holiness. The Holiness of Jesus freed him from any guilt feelings, and any unhappiness that would have been His in broken temporal fellowship. So, I told her that while He was on the cross, he received great joy, and in fact, His happiness was based upon the fact that, as He hung there for that six hours, His mind was occupied with doctrine. That is the tremendous thing that the Word of God reveals – that His mind on the cross was preoccupied with the doctrines that he had learned from childhood on through manhood. He was engrossed in looking forward to the final blessed outcome of His sacrifice.

If you'd like to turn to Psalm 22 for a moment, this is a psalm in which King David is speaking concerning his personal circumstance at one point in his life. But it is one of those psalms in which God the Holy Spirit is making a double application. When we get to the New Testament, the book of Hebrews takes this Psalm, and applies it to Jesus Christ. So, we know that what David is speaking about relative to his circumstance goes beyond him, and is actually describing the death of Christ upon the cross.

Psalm 22 is clearly a preview, 800 years beforehand, of the death of Christ upon the cross. While King David speaks, his words have a double-reference, down the years to Christ, as we note in Hebrews 2:12, On the cross, it was a doctrine that carried Christ through the ordeal, and gave Him the inner happiness and joy as He look forward to the results. He was praising His Father before the people of Israel for raising Him from the dead.

Please notice Psalm 22:19: "But You, O Lord, do not be far off. O You, My help, hasten to my assistance." Here He was crying out to God the Father for the enablement (for the help) to carry Him through this terrible time: "Deliver My soul from the sword; My only life from the power of the dog. Save Me from the lion's mouth, and from the horns of the wild oxen, You do answer Me." Here, the Lord Jesus Christ is describing all of the agony that is before Him of the people who are surrounding Him at the cross.

In verse 22, His mind turns to the doctrine of Scripture: "I will tell of Your name to My brethren. In the midst of the assembly, I will praise You." He is looking forward to praising the Father before the people of Israel when He is raised from the dead. "You who fear the Lord, praise Him; all you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, and stand in awe, all you descendants of Israel. For is not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, nor has He hidden His face from Him. But when He cried to Him for help, He heard Him." Here he is bringing salvation to poor sinners of humanity. Here he is looking forward with joy to the fact that God is going to carry Him through because God carries through those who are afflicted, and who turn to Him.

In verse 25, He says, "From You comes My praise in the great assembly. I shall pay My vows before those who fear Him." Here, He is talking about leading the whole world to recognize the mercy of God, and to pay His vows. When He says, "I'm going to pay My vows," He does not mean what Bob Tilton, in "Success in Life" on television means. When He says, "For you to pay your vows." Tilton means to pay your vows with dough. He means to pay your vows with money. When the Scripture says, "To pay your vows," it is not talking about money. That's one of the subtle tricks that this con artist does, and you should be aware of it. You can see from this particular passage (and it's even clearer in other passages, if you want to look up the passages that deal with paying your vows) that it is: "I have made God a vow that if you will carry me through this tight spot, You shall have my praise." And then God carries you through this tight spot, and you don't go back and thank him. You don't go back and praise Him.

Verse 25 says, "From You comes My praise in the great assembly." He is saying, "In the assembly before the people, I'm going to stand up and give a testimony of praise." Why? "Because I'm going to pay My vow that I made to You: Carry Me through, O God, and all the world is going to know what You have done. I will praise You before the assembly of believers." That's what it means to pay your vows.

Verse 26: "The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied. Those who seek Him will praise the Lord. Let Your heart live forever." God's provision through Christ is going to serve all of mankind. The result will be that all the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nation will worship before You." He is seeing all of mankind being led in the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ to worship the Father.

In verse 28, he says, "For the Kingdom is the Lord's, and He rules over the nations." That's what Jesus was thinking about. He said, “This is terrible. This is awful suffering. I will not deny My Father. I will not sin. I will not break down, as did the first Adam. I will be true to My true Father. But we're not through with this. After I'm dead, and after He has raised Me, I will be ready to bring all the nations of the world into a new world order of a united Kingdom of God upon this earth, and the Millennial Kingdom of 1,000 years, with Christ Himself as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords ruling, will come to pass." He looked forward to that great event in His life. Why did He look forward to that? Because all the Old Testament prophets repeatedly talked about this kingdom, and repeatedly described that this was going to happen. This was going to be the destiny of the Messiah Savior King when He arrived. Jesus knew His doctrine. Therefore, He knew how to act and how to live.

Verse 29: "All the prosperous of the earth shall eat and worship, and those who go down to the dust will bow before Him." Those who die (all of mankind that dies) will bow before Him. The unbelievers do not understand that when they die, the Christ against whom they have thumbed their nose is the one before whom they will bow in subjection. All mankind living, and dead, will bow in subjection to God the Father in submission to His laws and to His Son. All the prosperous of the earth will bow down to Him, "Even He who cannot keep his soul alive."

Verse 30: "Posterity will serve Him. It will be told of the Lord to the coming generation." Jesus Christ will be exalted before all mankind, until His enemies are His footstool: "They will come and will declare His righteousness to people who will be born, and He has performed it." Jesus knew that generations of humanity would hear what He did on that cross, and that they, as a result of that, would find eternal life and would find escape from the slave market of sin in which Satan had captured them.

This is just a little preview of what was going on in the mind of Christ on the cross. As He thought about this, He was the happiest man in Jerusalem that day, while He was in the greatest agony of any man in Jerusalem that day. Jesus was extremely happy on the cross, because He was holy, and because He knew doctrine.

The 144,000 witnesses are described as men who have not defiled themselves with women. Revelation 14:4: "And these (the 144,000) are the ones who have not been defiled with women. The word "defiled" means "to smear yourself" with mud, or to smear yourself with something that is filthy. Here, it refers to sexual impurity. These men had maintained personal sexual purity. They were chaste in their conduct. Sexual relations, by God's design, are inherently ennobling, or they are inherently defiling to a person. This is strange. There is this powerful force within the human body. It goes either way. It is enormously ennobling, or it is enormously defiling, and it has long-range eternal results.

**Sexual Love**

It is amazing how, in our day, Satan has captivated the minds of people, and they are willing to accept his lie that illicit sex doesn't make any difference. It has eternal consequences. Sex within the marital relationship is, by God's design, an ennobling experience. It is an expression of "agape" love. Sex within marriage is not abusive. It is mental attitude goodwill. It is "agape" love. Sex outside of marriage is a defiling personal experience, and it is an expression of "eros" love. It is the lowest quality that a human being is capable of. The word "eros" is one of those Greek words for a love that is so degrading that the Bible doesn't even use it. The Bible uses "agape," and it uses "philos" – two different kinds of love: a mental attitude love; and, emotional attachment. But it won't even touch that dirty word, because it is the defiling quality of sex outside of marriage.

I remind you that this difference is by divine arrangement, and it is clearly explained in the Bible. Now, don't miss those two points. This is by divine arrangement – that sexual relations either are noble or defilement. And it is clearly explained in the Bible. There is no reason for anybody to be confused, or to not understand, or to think that God has not made things clear to us. He has done exactly that. You may ignore it, and you may violate it, but it is still true. Sex within marriage produces one quality that has long-range eternal consequences. Sex outside of marriage has a terrible quality in a different direction of long-term eternal consequences.

The point is that illicit sex is degrading to one's manhood or to one's womanhood, which are made in the image of God. It is degrading to your personhood. That's why the Holy Spirit makes the point here, concerning these 144,000 Jewish evangelists. If ever there was a group of men who were given a mission, such that it was enormously important, and extremely difficult to execute, and took the highest quality of manhood to perform, these men had that mission. It is hard even to put ourselves in a place where you have a ruler of the whole world that is against Christians. We know enough about that now – how Hollywood portrays Christians as fools, and bumpkins, and buffoons; and, how the sophisticated, smart, arrogant, intelligent people of the world look down upon biblical Christians.

**The 144,000**

What is it going to be like to stand up and to proclaim the name of Christ, and to give a true gospel of grace message in a world that thinks you're crazy, and to stand firm? It's going to take some real manliness to do that. The mission of the 144,000 demands this kind of quality – the highest quality of manhood, rather than reducing themselves to mere animal conduct. These men cannot afford to be under mental and emotional trauma resulting from besmirching themselves with sexual sins. That's the point. When you besmirch yourself with sexual sins, count on it – whether you know it or not, you under mental and emotional trauma.

**The Mission of the 144,000**

Their mission, as God's witnesses in the tribulation, is not one that can be executed by fornicators, adulterers, or sexual perverts. It is kind of interesting that when the Bible talks about men who are responsible for such a vital mission at such a critical point in human history, that God stops and says, "This is one of the reasons they can execute." And that's what you want to know in a combat situation. You want to know who it is that you can put in charge that can execute. And you don't put the guy in charge such that you have questions about his capacity to carry through, and his determination, and his drive, and his manly character and courage. It is interesting to God the Holy Spirit says, "These men have that kind of ability to execute because they have been men of sexual purity." The temptation to sexual impurity in the tribulation will be greater than it is today. It is already the accepted norm.

I could not believe what I heard Magic Johnson say on television after he found out that the kiss of death was upon him. He may be changing his viewpoint, and hopefully he is. But I cannot even (in a mixed audience) repeat to you what he said on public television. It showed that he had totally missed the point that – the 2,000 women he'd been with has brought upon him a debasing quality, and now, finally, the death at the hands of God for besmirching himself, and to degrading his manhood. Why would he do that? Well, every town you come into, there are the girls waiting in line. You're the hero; this is the thing to do; and, society doesn't object. In fact, society thinks, “Gee, that's wonderful. I hope I can be like you someday, and that people will rush to me."

The temptation and the tribulation is going to be widespread. You'll see things on television. (Well, not you people – you better not be there.) But the gang that's left behind will be seeing things on television that will just blow your mind, and you'll never get it back. But you will not believe what public degradation will be out there, because, as the Bible says, "It's not only that people want to do sin, but they take great pleasure in carrying others along with them." And that's the great pleasure today – to undermine the manhood and the womanhood of Americans by this key factor within the human body. It is the easiest way to degrade a society, and to make it incapable of rising to a moment of crisis.

These 144,000 may be married men. They probably are. The point it is making is that their sexual conduct is kept within the divine order of their own marriage with their own wives. Don't miss that point. It is not saying that they are celibates. That would be something we would read into the text that is more than it says. It simply says that these are virtuous men. It says they are men who do not besmirch themselves with sex, but they are men who ennoble themselves with sex.

So, the issue of human sexuality is interjected here by God the Holy Spirit, because it is critical to understanding the capacity of these men in their mission. God has, as I said, made it very clear that He has certain laws governing sexual relationships. It is always said when people forget that, and it is always even sadder when Christians forget it. Christians may think that because they are Christians, that they are immune from this temptation. You are not. Given the opportunity, you might be surprised what you do. Most Christians are immune because they never have the opportunity. This capacity lies deep within the human heart. The Christian who gets out of touch with doctrine, and steps out of that inner circle of temporal fellowship, because he doesn't keep his known sins confessed (which means he shucks off), and changes his mind, and turns his way – he is on the path of negative volition toward the God who is trying to keep him pure.

God has certain laws governing sexual relationships. These laws come under the under the category of a divine institution. Because it is a divine institution, these laws apply to believers and unbelievers alike. The sexual laws of God do not apply only to believers. It is a divine institution, and divine institutions are established by God in order to preserve the human race from destroying itself, and to enable it to survive in Satan's world. This these laws of God, as a divine institution, preserve the human race in Satan's world relative to your personal health; to your psychological stability; and, to your social structures.

Do I need to describe to you how social relationships and familial relationships are shredded and torn apart by illicit sex, and by besmirching yourself with sexual sins? Discerning people do not seek out a close relationship with people who are impure sexually. If you're in your right mind, you don't want to marry somebody who's willing to be sexually impure. That kind of a person, you will find to your bitterness in time, is untrustworthy. Only madness would drive you to accept in marriage a person that was willing to besmirch himself or herself sexually, and violate the laws of God. If you don't believe that, and you choose to make the mistake going in that direction, just remember that we gave you an opportunity to know better. Is this by the preacher's opinion? No on your life. This is by the opinion of the God who made you; who knows how you work; and, who has given you an owner's manual on your personhood. That owner's manual is the Bible.

**Acceptance**

It takes a lot of personal courage, and it takes a lot of personal manhood or womanhood to be surrounded by people who are violating this, and not to be caught up in their opinion and go along with it, especially if you have to be related to them socially in business or in a variety of ways, and you want to be accepted. How many stupid sins are Christians willing to descend to be accepted?

**Rejection**

People who study the activities of youth and the nature of youth tell us that this is one of the greatest problems that young people have. One of their greatest fears is to be rejected. I suppose that that's true in the ministry as well. You learn that that's a luxury you cannot afford. In the ministry, you have to take Rejection, Course 101" in the seminary, and you have to go on several field trips to be rejected by people, so that you have experience in rejection. And they say terribly ugly things to you. You wouldn't say the ministry for five minutes if you were the type that could take being rejected. In fact, I feel bad if people don't reject me now. I've learned my lesson so well. But for some people, they just can't stand not being accepted.

So, they say, "I'll play ball with your sin to show you that I'm just a regular guy like the rest of you." What you've shown is that you're a wimp and a twit – not that you're a regular guy, or not that you're a really staunch woman. That's not the kind of a person you want to get a close relationship with.

Intimacy between a man and a woman, for maximum happiness, has to go through the stages of a relationship that has been laid out by God in 1 Thessalonians 5:23. The apostle Paul closes this book by saying, "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely. May the God who brings stability and peace in your soul sanctify (set you apart) entirely, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. When the Lord comes over for you, Paul says, "I pray that He will find because of your learning of the word and your positive volition to it, that you have been preserved blameless (not sinless, but you've taking care of your sin) in your spirit, soul, and body."

**Spirit, Soul, and Body**

You notice how we twist that around when we talk about our personhood. We talk about body, soul, and spirit. We have an inherent defect of reversing this. This is a very important sequence. If you want to get to know somebody in the ultimate intimacy of marriage, you go by stages of intimacy. And the first intimacy is spirit. First, you get to know the person spiritually. First you get to know this woman or this man on the basis of the things of the Word of God. You find that they know God; that you can relate to each other relative to doctrinal principles of the things of God; and, that you share the principles upon which your being has been structured – the spiritual factor that God has placed within you. You are not just a dog. You don't have to act like a dog. You are not just an animal. You've been made in the image of God. The first way that people should get to know each other is spiritually. If you find some guy that's a dolt spiritually, you should wash your hands of him immediately. If you find some woman that's off the wall – a little, giggly charismatic spiritually, you ought to wrap her up and send her home, because you are dealing with a dangerous firecracker that will explode in your face.

After you get to know a person spiritually, and you get a little more serious, then you step into the sole area: the mind; the emotions; and, the will – the personality: "I want to know you as a personality. Now we get to sharing things that we wouldn't share before: thinking; attitudes; feelings; will; choices; and, desires.” You get to know that person in the normal routines of life, because there you're going to find that you need one thing more. You can't afford to just love a person. You can't just say that this person loves me. Now, you want to find whether this person is your friend. It is terrible to be married to somebody that loves you, but who's not your friend. When you get to know them in their soul, you get to know whether you've got a friend or not.

Then, within marriage, you get the intimacy of the body, and then the intimacy is complete, and it's ennobling, because you went in the right direction. When people start with the intimacy at the body level, it's very difficult to get to know the person in the soul, and then they find that they end up with no spiritual relationship. This is Hollywood. This is entertainment. This is TV personalities. They're all animal-structured orientation human beings. They start with the body, and then he try to learn something about the soul, and they get a little smattering of religion.

This is an order that you cannot afford to ignore. The word rebels against God's order of intimacy development, and so they rebel against God's sex laws because they want to start with the body. People hurl themselves into their destruction, both personally, and now we are hurling our society into its destruction.

Yes, God has a policy for us as Christians. God has a sexual policy for us as Christians. I direct your attention to 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 for that policy. The apostle Paul is calling upon Christians, by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, to live up to that which befits their status as the children of God. This is God's policy for the sexuality of Christians today. Here are the guidelines within the owner's manual, the Bible, that God has given you. Verse 3: "For this is the will of God: your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality." God's will for a Christian is to be sanctified, and the word "sanctified" means "to be set apart" to moral integrity. The word "sanctification" could also be translated as "holiness." He's talking about your experiential sanctification – your personal daily godliness. It is the will of God for you to maintain a level of personal godliness. And he spells it out:

"That is, you abstain from sexual immorality in general." Here is that general word for sexual immorality. It covers fornication – sex between unmarried people. It covers adultery – sex between married people. So, it covers premarital fornication and extramarital adultery sex. It refers to homosexuality, lesbianism, incest, and bestiality. All of that is encased within this word "sexual immorality."

In the Thessalonians culture of the Christians to whom Paul was writing, violations of biblical laws for sex were commonplace. Not only were they commonplace, but they were encouraged. It was even an act of worshiping the gods at the temple to engage in illicit sex with the temple prostitutes. God says that holiness is the basis for happiness. Therefore, sexual immorality is out of line. Personal happiness and sexual immorality are mutually exclusive. If you haven't learned that, you better start learning it now. Long-range, personal happiness and sexual immorality are mutually exclusive.

It is not a freedom of our grace for us to be sexually immoral. There are some Christians who say that: "I can do anything. Grace makes me free." Grace never makes you free to do evil. Grace never makes you free to do what is wrong.

Verse 4: "That each of you know how to possess his own vessel and sanctification and honor;" to use your own body sexually in sanctification and honor; that is, to control the sexual desires through doctrine and through the filling of the Holy Spirit.

In 1 Corinthians 10:13, Paul says, "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man. God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation, will provide a way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it. In the next session, we'll talk a little bit about those temptations that people deliberately put themselves into, and that people deliberately create so that they reduce their capacity to maintain sexual purity. But the Word of God tells us that the temptations that our society and the world can throw against us will not overwhelm you; not if you're using the power system that God designed for the humanity of His Son: the knowledge of doctrine stored in your human spirit; and, the filling of the Holy Spirit – that is an unbeatable Christian. You will never be the fool in any respect, in any element of life, in your conduct, if that's operating. When that is shut down, you will break down.

This verse tells us that sexual immorality is a volitional act. Sexual immorality is a volitional choice. It is not a victimization. So, you learn to deal with your own sexuality in a way that is holy and honorable before God. In the previous session, we looked at 1 Corinthians 6:13-20, which remind us that we Christians now form the place in which God himself dwells. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. It is in 1 Corinthians 6:13-20 tells us that sexual relations with a person creates an eternal bond. And there, he asks, "So, you're going to take a prostitute and make yourself a psychological, emotional, internal bond that cannot be broken by engaging in relations with that person.

People don't understand the full implications of the union of two bodies – that God says makes them one flesh. We reap a variety of blessings or distresses from our sexual conduct.

Verse 5: "Not in lustful passion, like the gentiles who do not know God." Do not follow the sexual practices of the people around you in Satan's world. You cannot follow the sexual conduct of Satan's world and obey God. The world is against God's moral laws. Unbelievers, furthermore, do not know God, let alone His guidelines that He has put here in the owner's manual, the Bible.

How many Christians choose to follow Satan's manual? And why? Because it's better? Because the results are more desirable. Not on your life. The unsaved are slaves of Satan, so they cannot maintain sexual integrity. That is a power from God given to his children. Christians do know God, and Christians who have been taught doctrine, know His moral laws.

Verse 6: "That no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before, and solemnly warned you." Illicit sex always victimizes somebody. It leads the partner into a personal degradation and shame before God and man. Furthermore, it calls down God's wrath upon the person that you have led into sexual sin. It certainly enters a marriage relationship, and it destroys a family's integrity.

The apostle says that God exercises judgment on sexual sin in a variety of ways. He exercises judgment by inserting disease; impotency; frigidity; loss of respect; personal esteem; broken human relationships; and, ultimately, in death. Is that worth it? Is it really worth it? Paul says, "I'm speaking to you solemnly." He says, "I haven't just warned you about this. I have solemnly warned you, that you should understand, as Christians, the horrendous consequences, eventually, of sexual sins. This is something that God does not take lightly. As you will learn in the next session, it was a capital crime. This was such a terrible sin in Israel that it called for the death penalty. It had such horrendous consequences. It was so destructive to the individual; to the family; to the relationship to the family; and, to the society, that it called for the death penalty in the theocracy of Israel.

Paul here, while not telling us that we are living under a theocratic system, and we should execute adulterers and fornicators, he is making it clear that the solemnity of this evil was demonstrated by how God did treat it among his people, Israel.

**Sexual Immorality vs. the Inerrancy of Scripture**

Verse 7: "For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification." God does not call his people to sexual immorality. People do not deny that this is what the Bible teaches. You know that. What they say is that the Bible is unreliable. People who practice sexual sins do not say that the Bible condemns those things. You can't. It's too clear. But they do say the Bible is filled with the mistakes of people who interjected their own opinions. That's why people who are sexually immoral also do not hold to the inerrancy the Scripture. They can't. They have to say that the book has mistakes, because they have to have some conscience out. You can't rub conscience out. Conscience is what distresses and tears up the person internally, because you know that God has spoken. God is glorified in a Christian who maintains his sanctification from evil, and his devotion to divine good. God has not called you, as His child, to the sexual practices of a bunch of barnyard animals. He has called you to live in the pattern of Jesus Christ. Just act the way the Lord acted. It's just as simple as that. Sexually, just act the way Jesus Christ acted. He obeyed the moral laws of God, because that was the best way.

How sad it is when a Christian frustrates the blessings that God has for him by descending to sexual evil. All that you could have been; all the capacity you have; and, all that God has designed you for – it just goes out the window is nothing. You live your life; you die; and, then you look back and say, "Where in the world were my brains? How could I have done that?" That is especially so when you know better.

Verse 8: "Consequently, he who rejects this (the moral laws of God concerning biblical sexuality) is not rejecting man, but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you." When you reject God's moral laws, it is not simply a negative response to the preacher or the teacher who has taught you the doctrine of sex. It is to God Himself. When you learn the doctrine of sex in the next session, it is not going to be some preacher giving you his summary. It is going to be God who is giving you his eternal, unbreakable laws. Sexual conduct is to be based on the revelation of God in the Bible. That's the only place we can find it. Violating biblical laws of sexual conduct, then, is a rejection of God, not a rejection of some human opinion.

Biblical laws for the use of sex are not the opinions of the men who wrote the Bible. You are quite mistaken if you think that those men were just a bunch of prudes who were trying to keep folks from having a lot of fun, and that these men wrote these things and said, "This is what God says." That's not true. The Bible is a book that has authenticated its own trustworthiness, and its own veracity.

In order for the Christian to maintain sexual integrity, God has given him the power system of the indwelling Holy Spirit to enable him to do right. Even the Jew did not have that. Even the Jew did not have the capacity of the power of God to keep him from indulging in sexual sins. But we do have that. We have the power of doctrine in our human spirit, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who is free to guide because our sins are confessed, and our evil ways have been changed. When you confess, that means you're ceasing and desisting. That kind of a Christian finds that he doesn't have a taste for being a barnyard animal. If you do, then you know that you're out of the power structure.

It is significant that Paul says, "You who reject these laws are not rejecting the laws of men, but the laws of God. And God has given you His Holy Spirit to enable you to keep his rules. The epitome of Holy Spirit conduct is holiness to obey the divine standards.

So, what is God commanding? What is God's plan for human sexuality, particularly for the Christian? It is that God commands the Christian to maintain sexual integrity, and then the Holy Spirit enables him to obey. It's as simple as that. The system works. God commands a Christian to maintain sexual integrity, and then the Holy Spirit enables him to do so.

**Confession**

May what we have learned be sealed to our knowledge and our thinking; may we to act upon it; and, may we, as believer, know that we can act upon it. If this has been a problem, and if the violation is already there, then you must do something. Do not listen to the preachers who tell you that once the sin is committed, your avenue to God's service and your usefulness to God is at an end; or, that your leadership is at an end. That is the most ignorant violation of the grace of God that you can imagine. I could name the famous preachers that you know who have said exactly that. 1 John 1:9 is the principle. Whatever the immorality: confession brings forgiveness; forgiveness brings forgetfulness on the part of God; and, forgetfulness opens the door for full service and restoration.

In the Christian age, you are not partially forgiven in your fellowship with God. You are partially restored, any more than when God heals you, He only partially healed you. You should remember what God said about King David – that he was the man (of all things) after God's own heart. This is what God said about him. Outside of myself and maybe Charlie Boozer, I don't think God would say that about anybody. But to say that about somebody: "David, the man after My own heart" – that is something. What did the man after God's own heart do? First, he murders somebody so he can get a husband out of the way, because he wants to cover the adultery that came before. And he grits his teeth and says, "This was the right thing. I'm the king, and I should have done this. And I don't know why you're putting this misery on me, God." And it goes on for a year. Finally, he sits down; he takes his pen and his parchment; and, he writes Psalm 51. He says, "I'm going to write a psalm about what a fool I've been, and I'm going to express my confessions (what I have done) to my Father in heaven. And the heavens burst open with sunshine, and the grace of God poured down upon King David. And for the next 25 years, he had the most effective impact on his nation and on society of his day as a man of God.

Don't listen to the ignorant preachers. Listen to the God who has instructed us, and gives us the straight scoop in the manual that He has made for your guidance. Just believe it, and do it. Straighten out with Him, and go on.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1993

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