

Discipline of Purity

2 Samuel 11 – Lessons from a fallen king.

David had it all.

- 1 Samuel 16:1-14 – David anointed King of Israel as a young man
- 1 Samuel 16:14-23 – David enters into the service of King Saul
- 1 Samuel 17:1-58 – David defeats Goliath the Philistine Giant
- 1 Samuel 18:1-6 – David is hailed as a hero by the people
- 1 Samuel 18:7-29:11 – David pursued by Saul but is preserved by God
- 1 Samuel 30:1-31 – David defeats the Amalekites
- 2 Samuel 1-5:16 – After Saul's death David is anointed King of Judah and his kingdom becomes stronger and stronger until he is anointed ruler over all Israel
- 2 Samuel 5:17-6:23 – David defeats the Philistines and returns the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem
- 2 Samuel 7:1-29 – God makes an unconditional covenant with David promising him and Israel that the Messiah would come from the line of David and the tribe of Judah and would establish a kingdom that would endure forever (The Davidic Covenant).
- 2 Samuel 8-10 – David defeats his enemies and enters a time of relative peace

David's greatest and most significant defeat did not occur on the **military** battlefield, it occurred on the **spiritual** battlefield.

Desensitization - (Deut. 17:14-17, 2 Samuel 5:13) Desensitization often begins with small compromise.

As a military leader David was very disciplined, always alert and vigilant to defend himself from the enemy, but he was not as diligent in his spiritual life. 2 Samuel 5:13 *“And David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron, and more sons and daughters were born to David.”*

The example of Lot:

Genesis 13:8-13 – Lot pitches his tent toward Sodom

Genesis 19:1-14 – Lot is sitting at the city gates

2 Peter 2:6-8 – Lot's reaction to the sin around him

Our tendency as fallen human beings is to grow accustomed to the sin around us and to accept it.

List some of the things in your life that you recognize as helping you become desensitized to sin, especially the sin of immortality.

What disciplines can a man establish in life to help in this area?

Relaxation (11:1-2)

Notice the words of verse 1-2 *“In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house.”*

The narrator makes it clear that David's idleness was not a good thing and it was his idleness that opened the door to temptation.

While rest is a gift that God gives His people it is important to remember that rest is never simply for self pleasure, but is ultimately for worship. This was the principle behind the Sabbath.

In light of this consider how you use your leisure time. Is there any difference between your goal and purpose for leisure and the world's goal and purpose for leisure?

Fixation (11:1-3)

Bathsheba was "very" beautiful. The Hebrew word for "very" is *mâ`od* [meh·ode] which literally means "to abundance, to a great degree." This word is often used to describe women of tremendous beauty (Rebekah -Genesis 24:16; 26:7, Vashti - Esther 1:11, Esther - Esther 2:7). The idea here is that David could not take his eyes off of her.

"Dietrich Bonhoeffer made the observation that when lust takes control, 'At this moment God...loses all reality...Satan does not fill us with hatred of God, but with forgetfulness of God.' What a world of wisdom there is in this statement! When we are in the grip of lust the reality of God fades. The longer King David leered, the less real God became to him. Not only was his awareness of God diminished, but David lost awareness of who he himself was—his holy call, his frailty, and the certain consequences of sin. This is what lust does! It has done it millions of times. God disappears to lust glazed eyes." (p.25)

Fixation results in a loss, not only of our **peripheal** vision but our **upward** vision. Not only do we cease to give thought to the people around us but we cease to give thought to the One above us. Our hearts and our vision become hopelessly earth-bound.

Rationalization (11:3-5)

Because of the wickedness of the human heart, man is able to justify almost anything he desires.

Self becomes one's god at this stage. Everything centers upon my needs, my happiness, and my fulfillment. Once a man gets to this stage his eyes, the ears, and the heart close and the counsel and admonishment of friends is shut out or rationalized away. Satan has a tight grip on the heart and no amount of human wisdom or logic will sway this person.

Consider the holiness of God (cf. Isaiah 6:1-7). God's tolerance of sin is zero. Evaluate your life and ask "What impure and unholy things am I tolerating and rationalizing in my life?"

Degeneration (11:6-27)

To give into temptation in "small" or "manageable" sins is to plant seeds that will bring forth costly fruit that we do not want down the road (James 1:14-15)

Sin is never content with "just a little." There is an old, but very true saying "Sin will take you farther then you want to go, it will cost you more than your willing to pay, and it will keep you longer than you want to stay."

Romans 6:23 – “*For the wages of sin is death...*” Wages – Gr. *opsonia* – this wage is not only a final wage but also a daily wage.

While the fruit of sin is ultimate death it also brings a daily death. In what ways does sin bring a daily death?

Consider this: David’s sin was a large part of the legacy of His reign. It overshadowed his earlier accomplishments as king and led to the deterioration of his reign. What will your legacy be?

Purity and God’s will: 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

God’s will is that we be holy. Holy – *hagios* – holiness, i.e., dedication to the Lord, and/or dedication to moral purity” [DBLwSD]

Disciplining yourself for purity:

Accountability – Proverbs 27:17 “...iron sharpens iron...” Christians are called to live in community. Independent and loner are not part of the Christian’s vocabulary. God calls us “out” (ekklesia) and places us “in” a body. 1 Corinthians 12:13 “*For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*”

In Colossians 3:12-17 we are called upon to “*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom...*” Admonish means to warn or to call out sin. Men need other men who will be honest and who are willing to encourage and admonish when necessary

Prayer- James 1:2-8 – God promises to give us wisdom if we ask.

Memorization- Psalm 119:11. God’s word is God’s answer to temptation. (Matthew 4:1-11)

Mind - Avoid mindless living. The best way to avoid falling into temptation is to be diligent in 1 Corinthians 10:13 – God provides a way of escape. What is my escape.

Hedges- Numbers 15:37-40 - Tassels – “The reason for the tassels is given in this paragraph. As one would walk along, the tassels would swirl about at the edge of his garment. These would be excellent memory prods to keep faith with the Torah, to obey the commands of God. Each step of the believer was to be encircled by tassels that symbolized the restraints and freedoms of knowing Yahweh” (cf. Deut 6:8-9).- *Ronald B. Allen*

Immoral acts are not always physical acts. Matthew 5:27-28. Be careful not to put yourself into situations where you can be tempted. Recognize areas of vulnerability in advance and don’t go there.

Reality- Remember we are sinners saved by grace and we must always contend with an unredeemed flesh (Romans 7). Never think you have “arrived.” 1 Corinthians 10:12

Divine awareness - The ultimate casualty of David’s sin was not his kingdom, Bathsheba and Uriah’s marriage, or even Uriah’s life, it was David’s relationship with God. Notice the closing words of chapter 11 “*And when the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.*”

Remember, holiness is not keeping a list in order to remain pure; it is about loving God so much you want nothing to come between you and Him. A passionate love for God recognizes that my sin's ultimate casualty is broken fellowship with the One who created me, loves me, and saved me.

Sin is ultimately an offense before God. David recognized this. Notice his prayer of repentance over this sin in Psalm 51 *"For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight,*

Remember, the best preventative measure against sin is an all consuming **love** for God.

Discipline of Marriage

Love and marriage...just what is exactly is love anyway? - Ephesians 5:25-33

Sacrificial love (v. 25)

The husband should display a love that places self last. He should be willing to go to great lengths, even death, to provide for and protect his family both physically and spiritually. Just as Christ laid down Himself down for the church the husband must lay down himself for his wife.

- *Death* "Marital love is like death – it wants all of us" – Mike Mason

Christian marriage vows are the inception of a lifelong practice of death, of giving over not only all you have, but all you are." (p. 35)

Consider this: The marriage ceremony and the marriage vows are not simply motions we go through in order to get a piece of paper to "make it official." They represent our deliberate and willful entrance into a sacred covenant with our spouse and God in the presence of man.

Remember, marriage is not ultimately about happiness, it's about death. In marriage happiness follows death, not vice-a-versa. A joy filled, happy and God-honoring marriage demands the death of self.

The most obvious and literal implication of this command is that we must be willing to give up our very life for our wife. But there is more, we must die daily for her. For most men the act of laying down their physical life is easy in comparison to the daily laying down of self.

- *Suffering* Just as Christ died for His bride (Eph 5:25) and suffers with her (Acts 9:4) we too are called, not to be indifferent to the suffering of our wives but to suffer with them. Romans 12:15 applies to all believers but takes on significant meaning for Christians marriage *"Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep."*

- *Intercession* – A Husband who loves his wife like Christ loved the church will intercede on her behalf the same way He intercedes on behalf of His church.

Sanctifying love (v. 26-27)

Sanctify: ἁγιάζω, ἁνασώζω [hagiazo /hag·ee·ad·zo/] v. From 40; TDNT 1:111; TDNTA 14; GK 39 and 420; 29 occurrences; AV translates as "sanctify" 26 times, "hallow" twice, and "be holy" once. 1 to

render or acknowledge, or to be venerable or hallow. 2 to separate from profane things and dedicate to God. 2a consecrate things to God. 2b dedicate people to God. 3 to purify. 3a to cleanse externally. 3b to purify by expiation: free from the guilt of sin. 3c to purify internally by renewing of the soul. [*Enhanced Strong's Lexicon of the Hebrew and Greek languages*]

Sanctify is to **holiness** what justify is to **righteousness**. To justify is to make righteous. To Sanctify is to make holy.

The purpose in laying down our lives for our wife is not to make her love **us** more but to make her love **God** more. We should not try to conform our wife into the image we desire but we should seek to help conform her into the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29). We must “purify” our wife, set her apart unto Christ.

Look at it this way: At the end of the day Jesus’ question for you will be “How much does your wife look like me and what have you done to help her in this?”

In the spiritual sense then, the primary role of the husband’s leadership in the home is to see that his wife is conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

Practical ways a husband can sanctify his wife.

- 1.) Pray for her and with her,
- 2.) Teach her from the Word of God,
- 3.) Encourage and provide opportunities for her to fellowship with other Godly women,
- 4.) Lovingly address sin in her life,
- 5.) Live your own life for the glory of God. – It has been said the best thing a Dad can do for his children is love their mother. The best thing a husband can do for his wife is to love his God.

Self-Love (v. 28-30)

It may come as a surprise to some but the focus of the “self love” spoken of in Ephesians 5 is not our self but our wives.

“To love our wives as our own bodies is a grand and great thing. It means granting her the same importance, the same value, “the same existential gravity that we take for granted in ourselves.” She becomes as real as we are to ourselves. *She is me.*” (p. 38)

Consider how many times a day we look out for self and take care of self, even in ways we take for granted. To the degree we are selfish we should also be selfless, to an even greater degree.

Physical incarnation “This is the way we must love. Her body is our body, her comfort is our comfort, her adornment our adornment, her care our care.” (p. 38)

Emotional incarnation 1 Peter 3:7 “*Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.*”

Our wives emotional differences do not make her somehow inferior to us. These differences are designed to complement us and we should see them as an extension of ourselves.

“No man can claim obedience to God and do this! (degrade his wife’s emotional differences.) It is a flat-sided masculinity which imagines that understanding another is a feminine trait. Actually such understanding of the complementary natures God gave man and woman is the mark of a fully developed, mature man.” (p. 39)

Social incarnation: Make an effort to get to know what life is like for your wife. Don’t just come home after work and plop down as if this is your time. Remember your wife, especially if she is a mother, has likely had no time of her own all day either.

Help her with “her” work wherever possible, remembering it is also your work. Have the mindset that you are working together to finish the job at hand so you can have together time not “your” time.

Commitment & Fidelity

Colossians 3:14 tells us to “put on love.” How does affect our perspective of love?

The love we are called to as husbands is a “colorless” love (agape) meaning it can exist under ice blue conditions as well as red hot conditions. It is not dependent upon a feeling. Marriage is not about “being in love” it is about “putting on love.”

God tells us in His Word that He “*will never leave or forsake*” His children (Hebrews 13:5). If our love for our wife is to be patterned after Christ’s love for us, then they should always feel secure in it. Never threaten, or even insinuate that you would walk out on or leave your wife.

Likewise, God is always faithful to His Children, even when they are unfaithful to Him, (Hos. 2:1-113, Mal. 2:10-16) therefore we must never allow our feelings to lead us toward another or to pledge our love to another. Never give your wife reason to doubt your faithfulness to her, not even in a joking way. Remember the Lord is our pattern.

Communication

Proverbs 1:5 “*Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance,*”

Make it a habit to read the book of Proverbs often. There is much practical wisdom concerning communication.

Husbands have a reputation for not listening to their wives. A few men may “hear” their wives but only a few of them “listen” to their wives. Remember, when dispensing counsel and advice to your wife, how you say something is equally as important as what you say. Remember again 1 Peter 3:7.

Elevation

Ephesians 4:29 says “*Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.*”

Corrupting – Gr. *sapros* – means “to cause to decay.” When speaking to our wives we should ask ourselves, “Is what I am about to say going to build up my wife or cause her “to decay” spiritually, emotionally, or physically?”

Our speech should “give grace” (lit. give enablement) to our wives. Our wives should delight when we open our mouths not fear.

Deference/ Time/Romance

Marriage is a wonderful gift of God to be enjoyed by those who enter into its covenant. Marriage is also an investment and if you invest nothing you should not expect a return.

This area of marriage may sound simple but the longer you are married the more you will realize it is one of the areas most often overlooked.

Like all other areas of life discipline in this area of marriage requires planning. If you do not plan to spend time with your wife and romance your wife it will not happen.

A few practical suggestions:

- Keep the TV off. TV is a relationship killer because it is a communication killer. Turning it off will put you one step closer to actually talking to each other.
- Leave a note, send an e-mail, or a card to your wife spontaneously throughout the week. Be creative when you write. It doesn't have to be long.
- Go to bed earlier than usual and go together. This is a great time for conversation.
- Plan a date night. No money required (take a walk, sit on the porch, etc..)

=====PREPARATION & APPLICATION=====

1. Pray: Ask God to give you wisdom and discipline. Ask Him to protect you from sensuality and to point out areas of your life where you need to be more vigilant. If you are married, commit to pray daily and specifically for your wife. If you are single and intend to marry one day pray for your future wife and pray for God's help in remaining pure until your wedding day.

2. Invest: If you haven't already seek a brother from the study and commit to meet once a week to discuss what you're learning and what God is teaching you. Also agree to hold one another accountable in the area of moral purity when you meet.

Married men – Before next Monday plan a night out with your wife without telling her (the actual date can be anytime in the next month). You make the plans, you set aside the money, and you line up the sitter. Tell your accountability partner the date you have planned.

3. Read pp. 45-67 for next Monday. Highlight/underline things that stand out to you. Remember; read the Scriptures listed in the book as well as the ones referenced, don't skip over them.

Single men – Read Proverbs 1-9. Underline each warning against sexual immorality you see and circle each consequence accompanying it.

Married men - Take time to read the Song of Songs this week with your wife in mind, and make a concerted effort to romance her.