

Community Group Discussion Questions

“Kingdom Purity” Matthew 5:27-30 Sept 7, 2019

Getting Started

Purity is more than a line, it is direction.

A parable was once told of a man who lived in a house on top of a mountain. Since his eyesight was failing, he was trying to hire a driver to take him up and down the winding mountain road. As he interviewed the first candidate for the driving job, he asked, “How close can you drive to the cliff’s edge without falling off?” The driver bragged, “I can drive within inches without worrying”. The next candidate was asked the same question. He responded, “Mister, I have no idea. I drove as close to the mountain wall as I possibly can.” He was hired on the spot.

In a similar way, Jesus warns us not to think of purity as a line we can edge up to but not cross over. Jesus wants us to think of purity as a direction in which we travel, a lifestyle we choose to live, and a commitment we hold dearly.

As you grew up, what were you taught about purity?

Going Deeper:

Avoid the Temptation of Adultery: “*You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ (Vs. 27)*”

Sacred Covenant:

One Flesh: “*hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*”
(Genesis 2:24)

One place of Fulfillment: “*marriage be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed be undefiled*” (Hebrews 13:4)

Adultery is what happens when a married person chooses to having sexual intercourse with someone to whom they are not married. God’s design for sexual fulfillment is that it happens within the confines of a committed and faithful marriage relationship.

What messages does our culture (music/television/movies) send about adultery?

Why do you think so many people cheat on their spouses?

Using the four words in green above, what is God’s message to us?

Serious Consequences:

Trouble is certain: “*he who does it destroys himself*” Proverbs 6:32

Trust is broken: “*he will get wounds and dishonor*” Proverbs 6:33

“It seemed like a good idea at the time” is what people often say as they look back at the carnage they have caused by a bad decision. From the people and relationships you know of (no names please), what consequences have you seen occur from unfaithful spouses?

Abstain from Thinking Lustfully: “*But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*” (Vs. 28)

Pattern of Enticement:

To Observe: “*looks at a woman*”

To Obsess “*lustful intent*”

Generally, men take in the world through their eyes, so they tend to notice women quickly. However, a married man has already made the choice to find his

satisfaction and fulfillment only with his wife. So when his eyes see an attractive woman, he has to make the decision to bounce his eyes away and not let his eyes linger. The longer he looks, the more likely it can turn into mental imagination and become a lustful intent.

With these words, Jesus is warning us that adultery is not just an action, but a thought process. If I don't get started thinking wrongly, I won't ever act wrongly. So, let's short-circuit the process and keep our eyes where they belong!

Place of Entrapment (To Obtain/Covet): *"But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown, brings forth death."* (James 1:14-15)

Capture every Thought: 2 Corinthians 10:5

Claim every Truth: Psalm 119:11

None of us can blame God or anyone else for bringing temptation into our lives. It is our own selfish desires that get us in trouble when we act on them. James paints a graphic picture of temptation as something that has to be stopped right away before it can grow into sin that will destroy us. When we recognize our thoughts are taking us toward sin, we have to take them captive, asking Jesus to remove the temptation and give us something else to think about.

How do you recognize when you are tempted, and what do you do about it?

Acquire a Testimony of Accountability: *"If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell. (Vs. 29-30)*

Requires an Extreme Decision: “*tear, cut, throw*”

Establish Boundaries: Can't Do!

Establish Barriers: Must Do!

Rescued from Eternal Destruction: “*thrown into hell*”

In this final portion of the passage, Jesus uses hyperbole (great exaggeration) to make a strong point. If you feel like you are incapable of stopping yourself from sinning due to temptation, then you should remove your body parts that make you sin! OR, you could establish boundaries and barriers.

Knowing yourself as you do, what things can you just not do that will always lead you to temptation?

What things must you do to keep yourself from temptation?

TAKE AWAY: The Law of the Triangle

The Triangle can help you identify where your temptation is coming from and show you what you need to do to deal with it.

When I want to achieve Ambition/Success, it brings me to Lust of the Eyes which leads me to Guilt (I'll never accomplish enough). I can instead pursue Sonship.

When I want to feed my Appetite/Satisfaction, it brings me to Lust of the Flesh which leads me to Fear (I'll never have enough). I can instead pursue Faith.

When I want Approval/Significance, it brings me to Pride of Life which leads me to Shame (I'll never be enough). I can instead pursue Grace.

Prayer: