

Pastor Chris Session 2 Sermon Notes

Avoiding the Three Big Pitfalls: Maintaining Sexual Purity in Ministry

Today, we will explore the biblical foundation for sexual purity, understand the dangers of sexual sin, and discuss practical steps to ensure we finish well in our ministries.

I. The Call to Holiness

Let's begin by reflecting on the high calling we have as ministers of the Gospel. The Apostle Peter writes in 1 Peter 1:15-16:

"But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy.'" (1 Peter 1:15-16, NIV)

Holiness is not an option for those who serve in God's Kingdom—it is a command. We are called to model the holiness of God in every aspect of our lives. This is especially true in the area of sexual purity. Our personal integrity is foundational to our ministry. As Paul reminds us in 1 Timothy 3:2:

"Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach." (1 Timothy 3:2, NIV)

A life of purity begins with a commitment to live according to God's standard of holiness. This standard is not about legalism or perfectionism but about a heart fully surrendered to God, empowered by the Holy Spirit to live in a way that honors Him.

II. Understanding the Dangers of Sexual Sin

Next, let's consider the very real dangers of sexual sin. The book of Proverbs offers a stark warning:

"Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned? Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched? So is he who sleeps with another man's wife; no one who touches her will go unpunished."
(Proverbs 6:27-29, NIV)

Sexual sin, whether it is adultery, pornography, or even the lustful thoughts that Jesus warns against in Matthew 5:28, can have devastating consequences. It can destroy families, shatter trust, and ultimately disqualify us from effective ministry. Paul further emphasizes the severity of sexual sin in 1 Corinthians 6:18-20:

"Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies." (1 Corinthians 6:18-20, NIV)

Sexual sin is uniquely destructive because it affects not just our bodies but our souls and spirits. It creates a barrier between us and God, and it undermines our witness as spiritual leaders.

III. Practical Steps for Maintaining Sexual Purity

Given the high stakes, how do we guard ourselves against sexual sin? Paul gives us clear guidance in 2 Timothy 2:22:

"Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." (2 Timothy 2:22, NIV)

Let's break down some practical steps we can take to maintain sexual purity in our lives and ministries:

1. Accountability:

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity

anyone who falls and has no one to help them up." (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, NIV)

Establish strong accountability with trusted fellow leaders or mentors. Regularly check in on each other's spiritual and moral well-being.

2. Guarding Your Mind and Eyes:

Jesus said, *"But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."* (Matthew 5:28, NIV)

Be vigilant about what you allow into your mind and eyes. Avoid situations, media, or content that could lead to temptation.

3. Strengthening Your Marriage:

For married leaders, invest time and effort in your marriage. Paul instructs us in Ephesians 5:25-27:

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless." (Ephesians 5:25-27, NIV)

4. Avoiding Isolation:

Ministry can be lonely, but isolation is dangerous. Hebrews 10:24-25 encourages us:

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:24-25, NIV)

Maintain close relationships with others in ministry who can offer support, encouragement, and correction when needed.

5. Daily Spiritual Disciplines:

The psalmist wrote, *"How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word."* (Psalm 119:9, NIV)

Regular prayer, Bible study, and meditation on Scripture strengthen your resolve and keep you focused on God's will.

IV. Finishing Well in Ministry

Now, let's talk about finishing well. The Apostle Paul, at the end of his life, declared in 2 Timothy 4:7-8:

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:7-8, NIV)

Finishing well requires ongoing perseverance in faith and moral integrity. We must be diligent, not just in starting well but in running the race to its completion. Paul also reminds us of the importance of self-discipline in 1 Corinthians 9:27:

"No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize." (1 Corinthians 9:27, NIV)

Your legacy as a leader is shaped by your faithfulness to God's call. A life of sexual purity not only honors God but also leaves a positive example for others to follow.

V. The Role of Grace and Forgiveness

Finally, we must acknowledge that we are not perfect, and there may be times when we fail. When this happens, we must remember the power of God's grace. 1 John 1:9 offers us this assurance:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9, NIV)

God's grace is sufficient for restoration, even after failure. Confession, repentance, and accountability are key steps toward healing and restoration. The church should be a place of healing and restoration for those who have fallen, as Paul instructs in Galatians 6:1-2:

"Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:1-2, NIV)

As leaders who have been forgiven, we must also extend grace and forgiveness to others, helping them to be restored to a place of holiness and service.

Conclusion:

As we conclude, let us recommit ourselves to the high calling of maintaining sexual purity in our ministries. The stakes are too high to allow compromise in this area. By implementing these practical steps and relying on God's grace, we can finish well and leave a lasting, Godly legacy.