

Personal Purity

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First paragraph from: Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest, Reading from March 25.

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“Purity is not innocence, it is much more. Purity is the outcome of sustained spiritual sympathy with God. We have to grow in purity. The life with God may be right and the inner purity remain unsullied, and yet every now and again the bloom on the outside may be sullied. God does not shield us from this possibility, because in this way we realize the necessity of maintaining the vision by personal purity. If the spiritual bloom of our life with God is getting impaired in the tiniest degree, we must leave off everything and get it put right. Remember that vision depends on character -- the pure in heart see God.”

A sexual predator is not only the one who acts out sexual deeds. It is also the one who allows sexual stimulation to occupy thoughts and speech. Males and females can and do perpetrate these thoughts if not actions, which appear innocent toward each other.

Recently, an incident in a group of people who might be thought of as safe contained a sexualized experience. Somewhat stunned, it brought to mind, unwanted sexually focused boundary violations I have worked with as a therapist over the years. Reluctantly, I give voice and exposure here to one of the evils of the age.

When people use each other in any way, it is a violation. It is a violation of God's creation and His beloved. Manipulation of others or shocking communication with others rings of controlling people for fun or power. This is a violation and it is sin. It doesn't matter if the manipulator is conscious of the manipulation or not. Add to this a: "I absolutely am not wrong" or "I couldn't possibly be that sinful," belief on the part of the perpetrator, or manipulation via sexual references occupying seemingly harmless communications, is a great personal intrusion and a real 'crazy maker.'

The message of this short piece is this. One cannot be wholly serving God and be regularly entertaining predatory thoughts of any kind toward anyone else. Certainly one cannot indulge in a "little fun" regarding sexual joking and outright sexual behaviors toward another person if he or she is a serious follower of Christ.

Is any hint of this a problem for you? Allow God in to this area of your life. If you have been the target of sexualized manipulation, or the perpetrator of the same,

move on it. Move it to the light of God's healing, forgiveness and grace. Sexual sin is a cancer. The beginning of serious and harmful sexual acting out often starts in casual sexual thought and speech. Using other people or yourself this way is not pleasing to God. The denial of the damage and sinfulness of casual sexual speech or encounter stunts people from being in full fellowship with the One who loves us most. The acting out and acted upon have resulting blocks in the flow of relationship with God. In addition, the affected are certainly impaired in safety and trust. Ask God for purity. Keep asking. He will provide the 'go power' for you. Purity is His will for you. He does the work, but He needs your cooperation and honesty. As you continue to renew yourself in Him, character and vision will improve. The spiritual bloom of purity will thrill you. "The pure in heart see God."

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