

Message for THE LORD'S DAY MORNING, September 16,2012
PURITY PLEDGE SUNDAY
Christian Hope Church of Christ, Plymouth, North Carolina
by Reggie A. Braziel, Minister

Living A Life of Purity In An Impure World II Timothy 2:22 NKJV

Please turn with me in your Bibles to II Timothy 2:22.

*“Flee also youthful lusts: but pursue righteousness, faith, love,
peace with those who call on the LORD out of a pure heart.”*

P R A Y E R

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Go to any grocery store or a Wal-Mart and you will see many products with the word “pure” on the label.

- *There's **PURE** DRINKING WATER.
- ***PURE** VANILLA EXTRACT
- ***PURE** Florida Orange Juice
- ***PURE** CANE SUGAR
- ***PURE** BEEF
- ***PURE** SILK
- ***PURE** COTTON
- *There's even **100% PURE MAKE-UP** made of all-natural ingredients.

We have **PURE-BRED DOGS** and **PURE-BRED HORSES**.
We have **PURE GOLD** and **PURE SILVER**.

We use the word “pure” in our vocabulary.....

- “He's a **pure** genius.”*
- “The tee-shirt is **pure** white.”*
- “He's as **pure** as the driven snow.”*
- “His motives are **pure**.”*
- “Its **pure** and simple.”*

What does the word “pure” suggest? It suggests the product is free of impurities or contaminants; that it is 100% what it is represented to be.

But this morning I would like for us to consider a different kind of “purity.” And that is the kind of “purity” God speaks about in His word; more specifically, “sexual purity.”

What is “sexual purity?” Sexual purity means: *“To remain sexually pure until marriage and to remain sexually faithful to one’s mate after marriage.”*

God Himself has set this standard for pure living. The Bible clearly teaches us that the sexual relationship was designed by God to be an intimate relationship between a husband and wife. And any intimate relationship outside the bounds of marriage is a sin and is therefore condemned by God.

Genesis 2:24 (NKJV) *“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”*

Hebrews 13:4 (NKJV) *Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*

For just a few minutes I would like to share with you three simple thoughts about **“Living A Life of Purity In An Impure World.”**

First of all, let’s consider.....

I. The CALL To Pure Living

1. The word of God is filled with verses of scripture that call you and me to live a life of purity. Let me just share a few of these with you.

We’ll begin with the scripture we read at the outset of the message.....

II Timothy 2:22. *“Flee also youthful lusts: but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the LORD out of a pure heart.”*

Matthew 5:8 *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”*

I Thessalonians 4:3-5 *For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; **VERSE 7 goes on to say.....** “ For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.”*

I Corinthians 6:18-20 *Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*

2. In these scriptures and many more like them God warns us to “*flee from any and all forms of sexual immorality.*”

Now that concept of “fleeing” is not hard to understand is it?

I mean, if you're like me, and you come up on a snake, you don't care if it's **a live snake, a dead snake or stick that looks like a snake** you “flee” it.....you run away from it.....you avoid it at all cost!

3. That is what GOD commands us to do when it comes to all forms of “sexual immorality.” **Flee from it..... run from it.....avoid it at all cost! Don't play around with it.....don't mess with it.....leave it alone!**
4. Today these wonderful young people desire to honor **God's Call to Pure Living.**

But these young people aren't the only ones God is calling to a life of purity. **God's call to pure living is for all of us who profess to be Christians.**

Romans 6:12, 13 (NKJV) *“Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.”*

The second thing for us to consider is.....

II. **The CHALLENGES To Pure Living**

1. If we lived in a **PERFECT and PURE WORLD** where everyone lived by God's standards of purity, then living a pure life would be easy. But the fact of the matter is, we live in a world that is far from perfect or pure.
2. The challenges to pure living are obvious and that is sexual temptation is everywhere. In fact, our American society is among the most sexually immoral nations on earth.

- Its all over the internet.
- Its in our movies.
- Its in our television shows.
- Its in our commercials.
- Its on the billboards along the highway.
- Its on the front of the magazines at the grocery checkout.
- Its in the music we listen to.

Our society is permeated with sexual immorality!

3. Teenagers , especially, face tremendous "peer pressure" to engage in immoral sexual relationships. Now let me give you some good news and bad news. First **the BAD NEWS**.....

-In the U.S. about **820,000** teenagers become pregnant each year.

-**34%** of teenage girls have at least one pregnancy before their 20th birthday.

-**80%** of teenage pregnancies are unintended.

-**25%** of teen mothers will have a second child within two years of the birth of the first birth.

-**80%** of unmarried teen mothers end up on welfare.

-**One out of every two** babies born in the United States is illegitimate.

4. But now here's the **GOOD NEWS.....**

According to a recent survey on teenage sexuality in America.....

-54% of teenagers are still virgins.

-58% of the teens surveyed said they do not believe it is right for teenagers to engage in pre-marital sex even if they take precautions.

-63% of the teenagers who had engaged in pre-marital sex said they made a big mistake and wish they had never done it.

-82% of the teens surveyed said they hope to be married to one person for their whole lifetime.

5. You see, the truth is **“not everybody is doing it.”** Christian teenagers, just like ours' here at Christian Hope, from all across the country are rising up to uphold God's righteous standards by pledging to live a life of sexual purity until they are married. And I believe we need to applaud these young people for taking such a bold and courageous stand. (applause!)

Well we have considered **The CALL To Pure Living**
And **The CHALLENGES to Pure Living**

Thirdly, let's consider.....

III. The COURSE To Pure Living

1. How does one **live a pure life in such an impure world?**
How does one **go “against the flow” of a society that promotes sexual immorality as much as ours' in America?**
2. We find our answer in Psalm 119. Reading from the **New International Version** beginning with **verse 9 and following.....**

Psalm 119:9-16 (NIV 1984)

- 9 How can a young man keep his way pure?
By living according to your word.**
- 10 I seek you with all my heart;
do not let me stray from your commands.**
- 11 I have hidden your word in my heart
that I might not sin against you.**
- 12 Praise be to you, O Lord;
teach me your decrees.**
- 13 With my lips I recount
all the laws that come from your mouth.**
- 14 I rejoice in following your statutes
as one rejoices in great riches.**
- 15 I meditate on your precepts
and consider your ways.**
- 16 I delight in your decrees;
I will not neglect your word.**

- 3.** Here we see a young man facing an evil world where sin and temptation come at him from all sides every day.

Seeing this daunting road ahead of him, this young man stops and asks a question: ***“How can a young man keep his way pure?” “How can a young man live a pure life in such an impure world?”***

In the very next sentence we find the answer: **“By living according to Your word.”**

- 4.** In this “sin-sick” world there is only **ONE PATH** that is right.....**ONE PATH** that promises peace and happiness and security and safety.....**ONE PATH** that protects us from the guilt and shame and consequences of sin..... **ONE PATH** that leads to salvation and eternal life..... and that is **THE PATH** we find in God’s word.

CONCLUSION

Young people, before we go into our “Purity Pledge Ceremony” let me just say on behalf of your Church family how proud we are of each and every one of you.

We commend you for your courage to make the commitment you are making today!

We commend you for upholding the high moral standards of God’s word!

We commend you for doing your part to preserve the sanctity of the marriage relationship.

This is a “life-changing” day for each of you. I know you can’t see it now, but your future mates and your future children are going to be greatly blessed because of the commitment you are making today.

TRANSITION INTO PLEDGE CEREMONY

At this time we want to go right into our “Pledge of Purity” ceremony. All of you should have received a copy of the ceremony. If you did not please raise your hand and we’ll get a copy to you.

I would like to ask all of our pledges to please stand up and line up in front of the pulpit facing the congregation.

Go into ceremony.

