



The Dangers of Sexual Immorality among God's Ministers

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1. PREAMBLE

Ward (2002:242), "God expressly forbids irresponsible sexual behavior, in order to spare us the disastrous consequences: we are told that, 'The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord. . . Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body' (1 Corinthians 6:13, 18)." Ward (2002:242) quote Billy Graham as saying: "Premarital sexual relations are always a mistake. . . This is why the Bible condemns sex outside the bonds of matrimony. The fact that immorality is rampant doesn't make it right."

This research has made the researcher to desire to know the real purpose of sex. I desired to know what was in the mind of God the "Manufacturer," the one who designed sexuality, the one who created the male and female sex organs, when He created the urges and passions which led to the sexual union. This research revealed what was in the mind of the originator of sex, and the basic purpose was to create unity. McDowell & Lewis (1981:29-30) affirms, "Sexual intercourse is intended to be a demonstration of the unity between a man and a woman. Sex is to give a man and a woman "one-fleshness" an experience in the physical realm which illustrates the intensity of the spiritual relationship a man or woman has with God when he or she is reborn through Jesus Christ."

McDowell & Lewis (1981:30) stress, this unity in sexual intercourse provides for a man and woman the most lasting enjoyment and maximum fulfillment they can possibly know. That is why sex at the right time, with the right person, in the right relationship is so incredibly perfect. And that is why the abuse of sex ultimately produces such enormous disappointment.

According to Jim and Murphy (2002:33), "God intended this powerful force to be used as a bond, holding husband and wife together. God intended it to be used with love and gentleness as a blessing to mankind as well as for reproduction." But the devil has perverted sex. In his scheme sex is "high entertainment." To the devil, it is for all to use anytime, anywhere, with anyone, and in any manner. The devil has succeeded in selling this concept among many in the world today. The devil has learned that when he can contaminate a Christian leader with this lie he has accomplished his mission.

This article would feature the following; definition of sexual immorality, the causes of sexual immorality, the dangers of sexual immorality, the consequences of sexual immorality, and how to overcome sexual immorality.

2. DEFINITION OF "SEXUAL IMMORALITY"

- 1.) "Sexual immorality is any sexual activity that risks your own wellbeing or that of another

Jesus says, to look at a woman with lust in the heart, is sexual immorality" (<https://answers.yahoo.com>: Accessed 12/02/2022)

- 2.) The definition of sexual immorality according to the Bible, the English word is "fornication" (1 Cor. 6:18; Gal. 5:19), (The Holy Bible, NIV, 2005:952, 971).

3. THE CAUSES OF SEXUAL IMMORALITY

Among many other factors, this paper would address and attempt to mention few factors that are responsible for the sexual immorality among the Ministers of the Gospel. First, Ward (2002:243) reveals that, "it is lack of a vital relationship with Christ is a primary contributing factor to an immoral lifestyle." Second, Agwai (2010:32) agree with Ward, that, "denying your spouse sex as a punishment will widen the gulf between the two of you and create opportunities for immorality to invade and destroy your home." Third, Lee (2007:133) stress the fact that, sexual immorality come as a result of our own lust. Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed, (James 1: 13, 14). We all know that the lust of the flesh and of the eyes . . . is of the world. Fourth, they are instigated by the devil. Remember Eve in the Garden of Eden, she said, Satan beguiled her, and she did eat (Genesis 3: 1-6, 13). Again, Satan . . . provoked David to. . . (sin and did foolishly), (1 Chronicles 21:1, 7,8).

4. THE DANGERS OF SEXUAL IMMORALITY

According to O'Donovan (1995:284) the dangers are many, ministers of the gospel need to be careful. First, under God's guidance, sex is one of God's blessings to married people. "Ignoring God's guidance, sex can destroy the home and ruin human lives. It is observed that when people try to satisfy their sexual desires outside of marriage, marriages are destroyed, families are ruined and individual lives are brought under the curse of God's judgment." In the case of King David, although God forgave his sin of adultery with the wife of Uriah, David's family life was ruined from that time on (2 Samuel 12:11-13).

Earley (2012:31) gives the second danger, as a pastor, you would lose your integrity (trust). The implication of this sin is that, "you will not be able to lead a church again effectively because people will not trust you anymore. They have lost confidence on your spiritual ability."

Third, the dangers and harm of sexual sin are nowhere presented more vividly and forcefully than in Proverbs. 'The lips of an adulterous drip honey, and smoother than oil is her speech' (Prov. 5:3). The basic truth applies to a prostitute or to any other woman who tries to seduce a man. It also applies to a man who tries to seduce a woman. The point is that sexual allurements are extremely enticing and powerful. It seems nice, enjoyable, and good. It promises nothing but pleasure and satisfaction. But what it ends up giving 'is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death, her steps lay hold of Sheol. She does not ponder the path of life; her ways are unstable; she does not know it' (vv. 4-6). The first characteristic of sexual sin is deceit. It never delivers what it promises. It offers great satisfaction but gives great disappointment. It claims to be real living but is really the way to death. Illicit sexual relationships are always 'unstable.' Nothing binds those involved except the temporary and impersonal gratification of physical impulses. That is poor cement. Another tragedy of sexual sin is that often those involved do 'not know it' is unstable, do not realize perhaps for a long time that their relationship cannot be lasting. Thus they fall deeper and deeper into the pit of their doomed relationship, which makes the dissolution all the more devastating and painful. God is not against sex. He created and blessed it. When used exclusively within marriage, as the Lord intends, sex is beautiful, satisfying, and stabilizing. 'Let your fountain be blessed,' Scripture says, 'and rejoice in the wife of your youth. . . . Be exhilarated always with her love' (Prov. 5:18-19), (www.erictyoung.com/the-destructiveness-of-sexual-immorality-john-mac: Accessed 18/1/2022).

Fourth, all you would experience is emptiness in yourself. Countless people hope to find happiness in sexual sin, but instead of being fulfilled, they only wind up empty. Why is that? The main reason is because pleasure in itself is temporary. Pleasure requires your continual attention, devotion, and effort in order to sustain it. True joy on the other hand comes from God and therefore allows us to receive it eternally and without any of our effort. Fifth, you would destroy yourself; 1 Corinthians 6:18 says, "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body." Sexual sin may seem like a good idea at first, but it will tear you down from the inside out. It's pretty clear in the Bible that sexual sin is the only sin in the Bible that results in us sinning against our own body. You probably by now understand the countless ways we do this but check out my last point to understand what the most severe consequence of sexual sin is. Sixth, there would be separation

from God. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." God has instructed us to stay away from sexual sin, and when we disobey him, we reject him. Perhaps the saddest consequence of sexual sin is that it pulls us further and further away from our loving Father. We need to realize just how dangerous sexual sin is and take precautions to do everything we can to avoid it, (healingfromgod.com/dangers-sexual-sin: Accessed 18/1/2022).

5. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SEXUAL IMMORALITY

- 1.) Extra-marital sex on the part of the partner in the marriage covenant breeds Unforgiveness and bitterness. The next available option especially when unfaithfulness continues is divorce as the forgiveness window is gradually closed, (Agwai 2010:30). Here are additional consequences of sexual immorality on God's minister;
- 2.) Consequences which concern my relationship with God
 - a. Grieving of the Lord who redeemed me
 - b. Displeasure of the One whose opinion most matters to me
 - c. Discrediting the name of Yahweh - dragging his name into the mud.
 - d. Loss of reward and commendation from God
 - e. One day having to look at Jesus face to face and explain why I did it
 - f. Forcing God to discipline me in various ways
- 3.) My relationship with my spouse and my family
 - Untold hurt to _____ (fill in spouse's name)
 - Loss of _____'s respect
 - Loss of _____'s trust
 - If my blindness should continue or if _____ is unable to forgive me, I could lose him/her
 - Loss of my children's respect
 - Loss of my children's trust
 - If my blindness should continue or my children are unable to forgive me, I could lose them
 - Loss of example and credibility, nullifying my influence on my family who need to build on their relationships with Christ
 - Because of my present failure, future generations of my family may have difficulty in this area
 - Shame to my family would result

* The probability that my mother and father would know about my unfaithfulness, and how it would hurt them (possibly even blaming themselves)
- 4.) Disciplines brought upon self
 - a. Shame and life-long embarrassment to myself
 - b. Discrediting my own name
 - c. Loss of self-respect
 - d. Terrible feelings of guilt are hard to shake; even though God would forgive me, would I forgive myself?
 - e. Plaguing memories and flashbacks that could taint future intimacy with my spouse
 - f. Failure in the area of sexual temptation may affect my ability to know "right from wrong" in other important moral areas, having defiled my conscience

5.) My friends and ministry

- a. Shame and hurt to my friends and especially those I have taught about Christ and disciple toward spiritual maturity
- b. Shame to my church family
- c. Shame and hurt to those I work with at ____ (fill name of church)
- d. Weakened faith of those I have ministered to
- e. Irretrievable loss of years of witnessing to my unsaved friends and family
- f. Possibly keeping some from accepting Christ, being lost for eternity
- g. Years of training and/or experience in my ministry wasted for at least a long period of time, maybe for good
- h. Pain to innocent people around me who would get hit by my shrapnel (i.e. the sins of Achan, David, and others)

6.) Other ramifications

- a. Bringing great pleasure to Satan, the enemy of God and all that is good
- b. Laughter, rejoicing and blasphemous smugness by those who disrespect God and the church (2 Sam. 12:14)
- c. Heaping judgment and endless problems on the person I committed adultery with
- d. Possible physical consequences (pregnancy from adultery, STD's, AIDS, etc.)

7.) Keep your mind on the things of God...especially upon His Word. Here are a few scripture verses upon which to meditate:

- a.) Hold onto instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life (Proverbs 4:13)
 - b.) I have made a covenant with my eyes, how then could I gaze at a virgin? (Job 31:1)
 - c.) Do not set foot on the path of the wicked, or walk in the way of evil men. Avoid it, do not travel on it, turn from it and go on your way, (Proverbs 4:14-15)
 - d.) Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life, (Proverbs 4:23)
 - e.) And do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God, (Romans 6:13)
 - f.) Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord; and the Lord is for the body... Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? May it never be! ... Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body... For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, (I Corinthians 6:13-20)
 - g.) Do not be deceived; God is not mocked. A man reaps what he sows, (Galatians 6:7).
 - h.) An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one woman (a one woman kind of man), (I Timothy 3:2)
 - i.) Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers, the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity, (I Timothy 5:1,2), (www.cnrstiananswers.net/q-eden/eden-f007.html); Accessed 13/2/2022).
- 8.) A man who commits adultery lacks judgment; whoever does so destroy Himself-Proverbs 6:32
- * Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God-Mt. 5:8
- 9.) Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the Kingdom of God-1 Cor. 6:9-10

- 10.) “. . . if you commit sexual immorality, you will die”, 1 Cor. 10:8
- 11.) “. . . you have no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God”, Eph. 5:5
- 12.) God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral, Hebrews 13:4
- 13.) You will remain an enemy of God, James 4:4
- 14.) God will cast her on a bed of suffering, and God will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, Rev. 2:22
- 15.) The cowardly, unbelieving, vile, murderers, sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars, their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur, Rev. 21:8
- 16.) Advice to the church
 - * Do not associate with sexually immoral person-1 Cor. 5:9, 11
 - * Do not even eat or fellowship with sexually immoral person-1 Cor. 5: 11
- 17.) As God's minister, you will be dismissed from services, (*ECWA Reviewed Conditions of Service*, 2008:17).
- 18.) Read 1Corinthians 10:6-10.

6. HOW TO OVERCOME SEXUAL IMMORALITY

- 1.) Keep your love affair with Jesus passionate. Falling into an affair, or into pornography, is only a symptom of falling out of love with your wife. And losing your passion for her is only a symptom of having lost your passion for the Lord Jesus
- 2.) Give a new commitment to early Morning Prayer. An hour or more in the Word and on your knees in prayer is the key to it all. Pray and ask the Lord to help you(Psalms 17: 5; 56:13; Matthew 6:13a; 26:41; 18:19,20)
- 3.) Resist the devil and he will flee (Eph. 4:27). Do not give place to the devil (James 4:7), Lee (2007:134).
- 4.) Bisagno (2011:108-109) advises, “Never be alone with another woman. Do not get in the car with her. Do not be in your office with her alone, with the door shut. Counsel with the door open.
- 5.) Be accountable. Get a friend to share your challenges or experiences with him so that both of you can pray
- 6.) Learn to talk to your wife. We are the only creatures on earth with the gift of intelligible verbal communication. Take time to talk.
- 7.) Keep a picture of you and your wife on your wedding day, along with a picture of your kids, on your desk.”
- 8.) Go to bed at the same time. People who have a problem with pornography acknowledge that late-night television and the Internet are often the avenues through which it developed. After work in the day time, when it is time to go to bed, go to bed-together.

The Bible's advice for avoiding sexual involvement outside marriage is simple: stay as far away as possible from the persons and places likely to get you in trouble.' Keep your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house' (Prov. 5:8). When repeatedly enticed by Potiphar's wife, Joseph refused not only 'to lie beside her' but even to 'be with her' (Gen. 39:10). When she tried to force him into adultery and grabbed his coat, 'he left his garment in her hand and fled, and went outside' (v. 12). It was not the time for argument or explanation but for flight. When we unavoidably get caught in such a situation, the only sensible thing to do is to get away from it as quickly as we can. Passion is not rational or sensible, and sexually dangerous situations should be avoided or fled, not debated, (www.erictyoung.com/the-destructiveness-of-sexual-immorality-john-mac,: Accessed 14/2/2022).

Rather God's word must be hidden in our hearts, built into the fabric of our characters and engaged with in order to be well-equipped for the certain onslaught of evil. We are assured that wisdom and understanding if truly built into one's life will keep us from yielding to the appeal of sexual temptation (v.6-23). Here is a question before us; a.) How quickly do you and I turn off the television

set when a questionable image appears? b.) What accountability do you have in place for your internet usage? c.) How do you guard your heart from dwelling on the billboard image? The married woman who is ready and willing to involve this young man in evil is dressed inappropriately, conducts herself defiantly and feigns preferred interest (even using religious language) in her seductive appeal.

7. CONCLUSION

O'Donovan (1996:284-285) stress, "Some cultures do not condemn certain sexual sins, such as sexual immorality. If a Christian comes from such a culture, he or she must understand that it is God who has condemned sexual immorality and other such sins. The Christian is responsible to God, not to the culture. God's laws are absolute. He will not change them to fit culture." Ward (2002:242) agree with O'Donovan, that, as with any other sin, God has dealt with immorality through the cross. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thought; let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7). This is important to know that sexual sin is never right: our bodies were not made for that, but for the Lord, and the Lord wants to fill our bodies with Himself" (1 Corinthians 6:13). As a fellow worker in the vine-yard of the Lord, these are my advice (s) for you if you want to finish well and strong in this ministry.

- 1.) Fear the Lord
- 2.) Be faithful to your wife, Proverbs 5:15
- 3.) Be faithful to your calling and to your duties as a Pastor/Missionary
- 4.) Repent and renounce sexual immorality if you want to please God, 1 Corinthians 6: 9-11
- 5.) Put to death sexual immorality, Colossians 3:5
- 6.) Flee from sexual immorality, 1 Corinthians 6:18
- 7.) Avoid sexual immorality, 1 Corinthians 6:18. Sex is immoral when sexuality is used irresponsibly or not in order: promiscuously, or thoughtlessly. When sex is an expression of mutual love between two people, then it is a moral good.

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