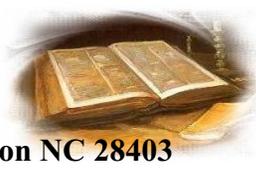


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Maintaining Sexual Purity - by Kevin Maxey - Concluded Neglecting Our Responsibilities

We often overlook the negligent behavior that may lead up to the sin of sexual immorality. What was David doing, or not doing we should say, before committing adultery with Bathsheba? "Now it came to pass in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem" (v. 1). It was "the time when kings go out to battle" and "David remained in Jerusalem." The text does not say why David remained, but we do know that if David was fulfilling his work as king the temptation with Bathsheba that night would not have occurred.

David teaches us the danger of neglecting our responsibilities. If we are busy about our "Father's business" we will avoid a great deal of temptation (Lk. 2:49). If we make God the center of our lives at school, at work, with our friends and especially in our dating relationships, we will always lessen

the opportunities for being tempted. The couple who fills their time with godly activities and submits to God will be able to "resist the devil" (Jas. 4:7). Attending gospel meetings and Bible studies, and enjoying uplifting forms of entertainment with other Christians will aid in removing sexual temptations. Paul assures us that God "will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make a way of escape, that you may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13). We can find that "way of escape" through filling our time with spiritual activities. When we neglect the righteous work God has for us to do, we, like David, open the doors for the sins of sexual immorality.

Compromising Situations

After examining what we are not doing, we next must look at what we are doing and investigate whether it leads to sexual immorality. What do we find David and Bathsheba each doing before they commit adultery? "Then it

happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold" (v. 2). David was walking on the roof of his house. In and of itself, walking on one's own roof is not a sin. But if David knew he could see such thing;; from his roof then he should have avoided that activity.

Bathsheba, the text says, was bathing. In and of itself, bathing is certainly not sinful. However, if Bathsheba knew others could see her, then she should have avoided bathing in such a visible place.

What is the lesson for us? There are many activities that in and of themselves are not wrong to participate in. However, if we know those activities may lead to temptation, we then should avoid them. Instead, we often get as close as we can to the world and subject our hearts to compromising situations that lead to sin. For example, wearing stylish clothing certainly is not a sin, but when we dress immodestly, we are inviting immorality (1 Pet. 3:3-4). This very situation with David and Bathsheba clearly proves that the lack of sufficient clothing leads to sexual sin. Swimming is another example. In and of itself swimming is a healthy activity, but swimming in mixed company in immodest clothing leads to impure thoughts.

Going to a party with friends is not a sin, but attending a party where alcohol is being served or where dancing is present promotes lasciviousness and "those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:16-21). A second way to maintain sexual purity is through avoiding compromising situations.

Dwelling On Fleshly Lusts

Being faced with a temptation is not a sin, but what we do with that temptation is crucial. What did David do upon seeing beautiful Bathsheba? "So David sent and inquired about this woman" (v.3). David allowed sinful thoughts to enter his heart, and they affected his behavior. David "inquired" about Bathsheba. The things we expose our mind to will certainly influence our actions. "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7).

Paul recognized the danger of sexual pressure and warned young Timothy to "flee also youthful lusts" (2 Tim. 2:22). Peter likewise emotionally begs us to "abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (1 Pet. 2:11). Notice the power of the words used in these two verses. We are to "flee" and "abstain" from evil desires. This does not mean to try to get as close as we can to sin but instead it demands we run away from such lusts as Joseph ran from Potiphar's wife (Gen. 39:12). Fleeing and abstaining re-quire us

to have nothing to do with, to avoid at all costs, to reject and to refuse lascivious thoughts. The fall of David powerfully informs us that we must avoid sexual immorality by diligently guarding our hearts against the filth of the world (**Prov. 4:23**).

Hardening Our Hearts

Finally, the story of David and Bathsheba teaches us the incredible power sin has to harden our hearts and turn us away from God. Once we let our guard down by neglecting our responsibilities, putting ourselves in compromising situations, and dwelling on fleshly lusts, we become easy prey for the devil who "walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour" (**1 Pet. 5:8**). David's heart had become so corrupt that he boldly disregarded God's law and gave in to the temptation of adultery. "Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her" (**v. 4**). After David received word of Bathsheba's pregnancy, he deceptively tried to cover his sin by shamefully murdering her honorable husband, Uriah (**v. 15**).

Who could have imagined that David would have committed adultery and then even participated in murder? We occasionally hear shocking stories about Christians who partake in similar sins. David is not the only one who tried to cover his sin of fornication by

murder. Currently, mothers violently abort over 1.5 million babies each year. Why? Because sin hardens the heart.

Though the moral integrity of the world is crumbling around us, we can victoriously maintain our sexual purity by building our lives on God's word. The sexual relationship between a man and a woman is a beautiful gift from God when reserved for the honorable state of marriage. "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (**Heb. 13:4**). May we all learn from the tragic story of David and Bathsheba to endeavor to maintain sexual purity. --- **via Guardian of Truth XXXIX: 6 p. 11-12 March 16, 1995**

EDITORS NOTE:

Our society today has come to accept the "shack up" life style - where two people live together as husband and wife without the marriage vows. It is not uncommon to hear of baby announcements before marriage anymore - from Nascar super drivers, to Hollywood movies stars, to political figures and then to the average man in the street --- first comes baby then comes talk about getting married - if and I say if that subject even comes up. In reality this gets very little attention these days and the norm has been to accept every disgraceful and sinful act as something good and pleasant.

Is it any wonder that the Lord has stayed His hand in bringing to an end all things? The stench of sin must be to God's nostrils as the stench of a treatment plant or landfill is to an outsider - nauseating and revolting. But, if you look around at the workers at such a plant you will notice that they don't even miss a beat. They will tell you that they have gotten used to the smells and that they don't smell it anymore. It does not mean that it is not there it just means that their senses have grown dull. How about the stench of the sin of fornication - it is not love, it is not ok, it is not acceptable! God's nose has not grown dull to the stench - He has not forgotten what He did to save us from such sin. The concept of try before you buy is just another way that Satan has sold the sin of immorality as a normal way of life - but young ladies and young men to be morally pure and to abstain from the lust of the flesh and to keep oneself pure for marriage is not a stench in the nostrils of God (as the world sees virginity), in fact such an Aroma comes to God as a sweet smelling aroma. Do not let the sins of the world become dull in your senses. Do not let the norm of a corrupt and immoral society become the acceptance of our daily lives - be repulsed by the stench and vomit at the very smell there of. A child born out of wedlock is still seen by God as "illegitimate" and so it should be for us also. For truly our Father who gave us in purity and love must so do at the lukewarm Christian, who has allowed the sins of this world to dull our senses of right and wrong.

