

STAYING PURE IN A WORLD GONE WILD

A PLEA FOR MORALITY

1 CORINTHIANS 6:15–20; 2 CORINTHIANS 12:20–21; 1 THESSALONIANS 4:1–7



The Heart of the Matter

Sexual promiscuity is neither new nor novel. It is as old as humanity, always promising more than it can deliver. More palatable words have replaced the obsolete and ugly ones. *Adultery* is now an *affair*. *Cheating* and *wife-swapping* are now merely *playing around*. Inviting terms cause the ugliness of illicit sex to be veiled in mystery, fascination, and excitement. What was once spoken of in closely guarded terms is now a bestseller, a torrid scene on the film screen, a television soap opera, table talk among teens, and late-night talk show jokes. Sex sells. Sex gets ratings. Sex is big business. Our culture is approaching total saturation. To speak of sexual purity in a society like ours may seem futile, but it is essential. Listen closely. This could mean your survival.



Discovering the Way

1. An Ancient Scene with a Relevant Ring

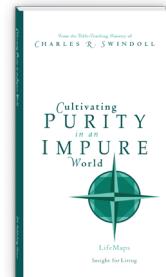
The allure for the forbidden has been a part of humanity since the fall, and even godly men like King David can succumb to it in an instant. It happened to him back then, and it can happen to you today.



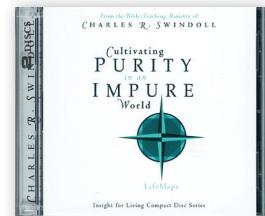
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Starting Your Journey

To protect yourself from the harmful damage of immorality, you might apply the ABCD solution. Acknowledge any impurity in your life. Break all connections to that impurity. Communicate your need to trusted friends of the same sex. Determine to abstain from immorality.



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HOW TO SAY "NO" WHEN LUST SAYS "YES"

GENESIS 39:1-23



The Heart of the Matter

James 1:13–18 teaches us that in order for lust to “conceive,” there must be the joining together of inner desires with outer “bait.” If there is no joining of these two forces, sin is not present. The best illustration of this truth is when Jesus refused to yield to temptation’s enticing invitation (Matthew 4:1–11). It’s not the bait that constitutes sin; it’s the bite! Joseph understood this and refused to let his desire run wild when Potiphar’s wife enticed him to sin. We want to understand why and how Joseph said no when lust’s offer was pleading for him to answer yes.



Discovering the Way

1. The Historical Situation (Genesis 39:1–6)

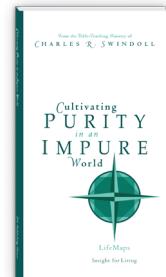
Joseph was an attractive young man and a successful slave in the home of a powerful Egyptian official named Potiphar.



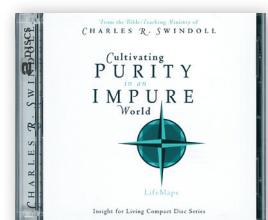
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Starting Your Journey

If you plan to say no when lust says yes, you must not be weakened by your situation, be deceived in the persuasion, or be gentle with your emotions.



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CREATING A LEGACY OF MORAL PURITY

2 SAMUEL 11:1-5



The Heart of the Matter

"How the mighty have fallen" (2 Samuel 1:25)! This was David's eulogy for the slain Saul and Jonathan. But David could have just as well used it as the eulogy for the death of his own moral character. At a time when David should have been satisfied with his life, he wanted more. At a time when David should have been performing his duty as king, he kicked back. At a time when David should have visited one of his many wives or concubines, he took another man's wife. Moral foundations almost always collapse through slow erosion. But once they collapse, not even the mighty can stand.



Discovering the Way

1. The Slow Erosion of a Moral Foundation (Selected Scriptures)

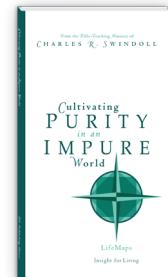
David's moral collapse was slow in the making. Polygamy weakened him (Deuteronomy 17:17). Success weakened him (2 Samuel 3:36). And indulgence weakened him (2 Samuel 11:1-2).



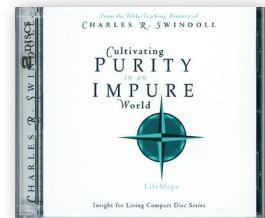
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Starting Your Journey

To keep from thinking you're safe from a moral collapse, you should acknowledge your weakness and guard your times of leisure. To keep from falling into sin, you should remain accountable and rehearse the consequences of a moral collapse.

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WHO SAYS THE HONEYMOON MUST END?

GENESIS 1:27–28, 31; PROVERBS 5:1–4, 15–19; 1 CORINTHIANS 7:1–5



The Heart of the Matter

Mention the word *honeymoon* and what immediately comes to your mind? For most people, it is that period of intimate romance and unrestrained affection between newlyweds. We think of it as the *beginning* of the marriage—that initial burst of physical love—that period of passionate ecstasy between the wedding ceremony and the return to the normal responsibilities of everyday life. Nothing is wrong with thinking about the honeymoon in this way. But it does imply that the honeymoon is only for newlyweds and is only temporary. Like a flash of lightning, it is exciting and brief. But that's not God's view for married couples. He intends the honeymoon to last throughout our marriages. His plan is that we enjoy for a lifetime the delights of physical intimacy without shame or reluctance.



Discovering the Way

1. A Review of Some Major Principles of Marriage (Genesis 2:24–25)

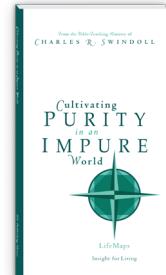
The four major principles of marriage are severance, permanence, acceptance, and intimacy.



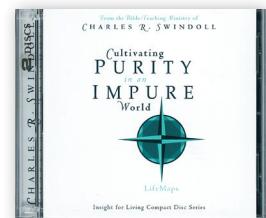
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Starting Your Journey

Any number of reasons might cut the honeymoon short. Some are serious and might require professional help: physical illness or mental disorder, painful and tragic events in one partner's life before marriage, or personal conflict. Other reasons, however, are not as serious and simply require communication and creativity: boredom, being stuck in a rut, or ignorance of how to keep things exciting. Whatever the reason, if the honeymoon has ended, do what must be done to reignite the spark of intimacy.



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