

## Glorifying God by purifying ourselves

### 2 Corinthians 7:1

Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God. NIV

#### Perfecting Holiness –

This is the great pursuit of the Christian life, to be found holy in the sight of God. To take on the very nature of Christ is our highest goal and longing of every true Christian. We therefore seek to perfect holiness in our lives by putting off the flesh and putting on the new man. We are to make every effort to be found spotless and blameless.

**2 Peter 3:14-15** - 14 So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, **make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.** NIV

Therefore we make it our aim to purify ourselves more and more by having our hearts and minds cleansed by the Word of God. Adam Clark comments on perfecting holiness;

**Perfecting holiness** - Getting the whole mind of Christ brought into the soul. This is the grand object of a genuine Christian's pursuit. The means of accomplishing this are, 1. Resisting and avoiding sin, in all its inviting and seducing forms. 2. Setting the fear of God before our eyes, **that we may dread his displeasure, and abhor whatever might excite it,** and whatever might provoke him to withhold his manna from our mouth.

#### Cultivating a pure heart

##### 3 ways to cultivate a pure heart

1. **Meditate on the Word of God** – Spend quality time in quiet with an open bible reading very slowly and stopping to ponder its meaning – **Psalm 119, Col 3:16**
2. **Pray fervently** for God to cleanse your heart and mind of evil and frivolous thoughts. Ask God to fill your mind and heart with affections for holy things. Ask God to reveal to you His holiness and what true purity is. **Psalm 139:23, Col 3:1-2**
3. **Fellowship with people who love God.** Talk and ponder God and His wisdom with such as these. Every true Christian loves God and His people. **Col 1:28**

#### Discernment and influence

The type of influence that a Christian allows in their life is very important. If it is God's will for you to be holy and sanctified, will you pollute God's Holy temple, your body, by fellowship with the world? *Would you arise early to quiet time with God in scripture, only to sit for hours in the evening amused by some vile movie filled with fornication, murder and sensuality?* Shall we fill God's temple with idols? Don't you know that bad company corrupts good character, or that friendship with the world is to be at war with God? It is imperative that Christians set themselves apart as holy unto God. We are to make judgments and use discernment about the things we indulge in, whether or not they are pleasing to God. With the powerful media (Books, Magazines, Television, Movies, Internet) of today's culture it is important for the Christian to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. Let us therefore exercise discernment about what we allow to influence our thinking!

**James 1:27** - 27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and **to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.** NIV  
**2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1** - 14 **Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.** For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15 What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? **What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?** 16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are

the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." 17 "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you." 18 "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." 7:1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God. NIV

1 Cor 15:33 - 33 Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character." NIV

Ezek 44:23 - 23 And they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the unholy, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. NKJV

James 4:4 - 4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. NIV

## Putting away evil influence

It is vital for the Christian to be discerning about the things we allow to influence our lives. If we are to put to death whatever belongs to our earthly nature, than we are to flee from the very appearance of evil.

We are to *mortify, kill, put to death, and count ourselves as dead to sin!*

Colossians 3:5-11 - 5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. 7 You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. 8 But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. 9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator

Adam Clark comments on putting to death;

To gratify any sensual appetite is to give it the very food and nourishment by which it lives, thrives, and is active. However the body may suffer by excessive sensual indulgences, the appetite increases with the indulgence.

Clark comments on cleansing ourselves

Filthiness of the flesh - The apostle undoubtedly means, drunkenness, fornication, adultery, and all such sins as are done immediately against the body; and by filthiness of the spirit, all impure desires, unholy thoughts, and polluting imaginations. If we avoid and abhor evil inclinations, and turn away our eyes from beholding vanity, incentives to evil being thus lessened, (for the eye affects the heart,) there will be the less danger of our falling into outward sin.

## Ezekiel 44:23

They are to teach my people the difference between the holy and the common and show them how to distinguish between the unclean and the clean. NIV

## Keys to exercising discernment

1. Does it edify you, or help to perfect holiness in your life?
2. Would Jesus do it?
3. Is it true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, praiseworthy? Phil 4:8
4. That which is not forbidden in God's Word is permissible, unless otherwise by principle denounced.
5. That which is not permitted in God's Word is forbidden.
6. What does the Word of God say about it either directly or by principle?
7. Could your time be better spent?

8. You should never be entertained by or attracted to or enamored by that which God abhors and detests!
- **Ungodly relationships** – any relationship which influences the Christian toward involvement in ungodly speech, actions, or thoughts or any temptation to sin
  - **Movies, television, etc...** which glorify sin or present it in an attractive manner
  - **Books, magazines, etc...** which portray secular or worldly thought contrary to God's wisdom – **2 Cor 7:1, 10:5, Col 2:8,**
    - Redbook, Hot Rod, etc... Many of today's magazines are pornography without the photos
    - Romance Novels – which present ungodly ideas about true biblical love and sexuality
    - Science fiction – Only if they do not present immoral principles or ideologies, or glorify sinful actions
    - Could your time be better spent?
  - **Music and Music Videos** – Which expresses ideas contrary to God's truth, love and purity
    - Which present sensual thoughts and ideas about true biblical love and sexuality
    - which portray secular or worldly thought contrary to God's wisdom

#### **Worldly influence at work –**

1. Make sure they know you are a Christian
2. Always speak God's truth to them and explain why
3. Love them with a pure and devoted love
4. Do not indulge with them in anything that is sinful – ie. Ungodly speech (gossip, slander, malice) or actions

#### **Modest dress –**

1. A godly woman should never seek to draw attention to herself but rather that people would glorify God when seeing her.
2. Men are visually stimulated, improper dress causes them to sin
3. What motivates a woman's heart when she wants men to look at her with lustful, sinful thoughts? This is sin for a man every time!

#### Should be –

Decent – proper – chaste – modest – discreet – prudent, etc...

#### Should not be –

Sensual, revealing, sexy, forward, inviting, etc...