

Precious Purity

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of purity and holiness in relationships, urging believers to seek God and maintain integrity in their engagements.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 11:2, Revelation 1:17

Topics: "Purity"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of living a pure and holy life before God. He uses the analogy of burning bronze that cannot be contained by sand to illustrate that God's judgment and righteousness cannot be hidden or avoided. The preacher warns against treating sin lightly and urges listeners to repent and turn away from sinful behavior. He also shares a story of a bridegroom who discovered that his wife was not a virgin and demanded his dowry back, highlighting the significance of purity in relationships. The sermon concludes with a prayer for God's word to be written in the hearts and minds of the congregation, and for engaged couples to live in purity and holiness as a testimony to the world.

Transcript

Our text is found in 2 Corinthians chapter 11 from verse 2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy, for I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. Paul says that he was jealous for the Corinthian Christians. He has a fiery jealousy for them.

Why? Because he wants to present them to Christ. For true preachers of the gospel are not seeking people to come to them, but to come to Jesus Christ. This is an engagement here.

It's not the usual type of engagement that you'd find in the world. In the Zulu tradition, they just simply get together. There are certain older traditions, some of which are followed by certain groupings within the Zulu nation.

In this case, the girls bring handkerchiefs to the place of the husband to be. Sometimes white or red handkerchiefs. Sometimes just white.

The girls, colleagues of the bride to be, bring these red handkerchiefs or white handkerchiefs and then in the bride's home, bridegroom's home, they put these up as flags. Like the Hindus also put up flags. And then they have a type of a tradition where they go to the highest point and shout and spread the news that

this person beat their drums, that they are engaged.

Then they brew beer and they have a lot of liquor to drink with all the girls and boys and they have a party. In the white tradition, the usual white tradition is that they have a party and lots of alcohol flows. But we have said we are parting from the world, whether it is Zulu tradition or white tradition, it doesn't matter, we want to follow the way of holiness.

That both the girl and the boy are pure, are virgins right till the day of their public marriage where she dresses in white. There is no visiting among them during that engaged period, there is no contact or sexual contact. When she wears that bridal gown, she wants it to be pure as a spotless garment.

The wearing of the veil symbolises the fact that she is untouched. I am not going into detail, when I say they don't visit each other, that means a lot. When we talk about this, we don't go into detail, but you who have got brains in your head, you know what I am speaking and talking about.

And the girl keeps herself spotlessly pure before the Lord. There is no secret meetings, no round the corner covert meetings together. When they stand before the altar, that is the very first time they touch each other, that is how I got married.

Paul says, I want to present you to Christ as a chaste virgin. For the one who has lived in sin, if they come to Christ, he changes a scrap into something that is a new creation. Paul says, I want to present you to Christ being absolutely pure.

In the world, getting together and having affairs is driven by lust and carnality. But the Christian young man would rather pray and say, Lord I seek you, I seek you Lord and your face to give me the girl that you have chosen for me. Aiming not at beauty, I read in the Bible earlier this morning, but not at beauty, but the girl who fears God.

That is the one. Woe if you choose a pretty peach but she has a worm inside. One young man had deliberately said to himself, I am not going to worry about the so called seeking of the Lord, I am going to choose for myself my pretty peach.

And he did, she was very beautiful. When they got married, she complained to her husband of stomach pains, of a bloated feeling. She said, I must get to a doctor.

And the family also said, she is very ill, she needs to get to a doctor urgently. She said, I am not going to get to a doctor, I am going to go to school. She went to the doctor and she came back with deceptive news, she said, I have been diagnosed with a very large tumour, an actual fact she was expecting.

God brought her to light, for God says that there is nothing hidden that will not be exposed. God is wonderful at that, you can be a liar, but God will bring your sin to light. Jesus said, there is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed, nothing.

And as true as there is a God in heaven, all your things will be revealed one day before heaven and earth. Well, this tumour grew at a terrific rate. It was a big tumour, it was a big tumour.

The next time... The next time she was due to go to the doctor, her family said, but we are going to accompany you, you are not going to go alone, we want to find out what type of tumour. Is this a benign tumour or is it malignant? She insisted she had to go alone, they said, nonsense, we are going with you.

And then the cattle were let out of the bag, she was pregnant.

And she got pregnant from somebody else out there in the mountains like wild animals. Then the husband came to see me, sat down at the office and said, Pastor, my wife is pregnant and it doesn't seem it's from you. He went around, he got the nicest speech, but my, she had a big womb.

Some other man had made her pregnant. And he came to me and said, we sat on two chairs. He says, my wife is pregnant.

Now a black person doesn't blush. We whites, we blush and I have a red head like a turkey. But a black person doesn't blush.

But this man turned like a sheet, as white as a sheet. I wanted to get up to hold him, I thought he'd fall from his chair. Because his lovely peach had a big worm.

You young men who look for a beautiful girl, you'll get your worm, whether you like it or not. It's only a girl that fears the Lord, whom you can trust. Bible says that a young man can get himself a bride from his parents, an arranged thing, but one who obtains a true wife, that is a gift from God.

The Bible says a father can give his son an inheritance, but a good wife you only get from God. Your father can't give you a good wife, it's only God. That's why seek God's face, don't look at beauty.

Look to God, let Him show you the right one. And even if she's not beautiful, but if she fears the Lord, she's beautiful and she'll bring children into the world that are worthwhile living. In the olden days in the Zulu nation it was considered to be of great value that a girl should be a virgin, but that tradition, that value, that ethos is gone.

You find that now they're no longer a girl, they're not a wife, they're something in between, like a bat that is rejected both by birds and rats. Even Old Testament times when the girls went to fetch water, the girl who wasn't pure, they separated from her. The virgins would go early in the morning, late afternoon, but like the Samaritan woman, when it was hot, having had five boyfriends, and living with the one who didn't belong to her, because girls can even fall in love with married men, what a disgrace, what a shame.

The time of Sodom and Gomorrah, she had to come and brought daylight when the sun was hot, the Samaritan woman. The other girls said, no, we don't go together with them. Amongst the Zulus it was the same.

It was the same in Piper's time. The Zulu women, when they went to fetch water, they would go early in the morning, late afternoon, but like the Samaritan woman, when it was hot, they separated from her. Some are willing to deny Christ and their faith, just in their desperation to get married.

Well, the circle will turn, it will get to you. In this generation, sexual looseness and immorality is blessed. Paul said, I betrothed you to one husband, not two, not Jesus and the devil.

When I was young, there at Kingscliff there happened to be this case of a woman who had affairs with two men, one was married. She would come to the shop there which we had and buy goods and the children would come and show that that one has got two husbands. In Dundee, a similar case happened, that the man was working in a glass factory and one of his colleagues said, if you go home right now, unexpectedly your wife is busy with another man.

There were rumors that she isn't faithful. She had something to do with another man. Dear friends, do you understand that language? You say you're a Christian engaged to Jesus Christ and you've got to do something with the devil.

There's bitterness, there's hatred, there are the sins, immorality, you like that woman with two husbands. Paul said, I want to bring you to Christ as a chaste, as a pure virgin. You get engaged to one man, one man, not Jesus and yourself, not Jesus and the world, not Jesus and sin and Satan, Jesus alone.

If you compromise in your spiritual life and you're not perfect in Christ, then know that you're the same as a woman with two men. And you husband, you may flirt around with another woman, that's okay you say. But if your wife, if you get home and you find her with another man in bed, what will you do? Maybe you'll do what somebody did, he took his spear and he threw it through that man and through that wife.

That's what a real man does. But if you're something not worthwhile, if you're schizophrenic, in the morning you say yes, in the evening you say no, then your wife can get away with such things. And you women as well.

But if you're married to a man who's a real man, but there are very few and far between, there are no men in this world anymore. That is why that man who was working in that glass factory, there in Dundee, was told go right now and you'll find that she's busy with some other man. And he left right there and then.

He got home, knocked, she had locked the door. Open up, and Mrs. Stone said open up. From within, oh I'm so tired and so weary, I'm coming, just hold on.

The wife and the lover hatched a plan whereby she would cover him with a blanket and escape just as the husband appeared. Although he did successfully escape, she finally, she's dead now. And if I'm not wrong, she's in hell and will burn forever.

I wonder how your bridegroom, the Lord Jesus, will find you. The Samaritan woman he found having had five husbands and the one that was with her wasn't hers either. He will find you and in exactly your true condition.

Dear woman, God knows how many boyfriends and men have played a part, a role in your life. And you, men as well. And you'll have to face it.

You can't accept Jesus Christ and make peace with God unless you face it. When that woman said, give me the living water. He says, before I give you the living water, this thing has got to be settled in your life.

Call your husband. I've got no husband. He said, yes, you're right, you've got no husband.

Five you've had. And this man, this one with whom you live, he's got another wife. He doesn't belong to you.

We'll have to meet with Jesus, up with Jesus Christ. And you better make right. You can fool your minister.

You can fool the other Christians. But not the one who's got blazing eyes like fire. For God said, I am the Lord thy God.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me. But if you compromise and have other gods. Your iniquities will be visited upon even to the third and fourth generation.

Oh, how God hates wickedness. You'll still get gray hairs on your head. Because God will take your sin and visit upon your children, your boys and your girls.

And when they sin, then you'll say, oh God, it's because of me. Unless you repent in dust and ashes. And you separate and break with sin.

Otherwise there's no future for you. So, to this young man and the young lady who have got engaged today, remember we are busy with God. He who is called thrice holy.

If you haven't repented of something, make sure you repent of it today. You can't treat sin lightly. Saying, I've made a decision for Christ.

I've accepted Christ. And then now and again you like to play with sin and allow sin. You're a man, you're a woman before God with two men.

Maybe you've got more than two. Woe to you the day when you'll have to meet with that God. And if you live that type of life, know exactly where your children, where your offspring will, what will happen to them.

Jesus, whose face shines brighter than the sun, whose eyes are as the flames of fire, who wears the garment of a judge. John, as the younger disciple, would rest his head on Jesus' bosom. But when he saw him as an old man, face to face, he fell down as dead.

And when he writes of himself, he says, the disciple whom Jesus loved in a special way, but when he met with him, he fell down like dead. That's the Jesus who walks amongst the churches. And when you meet St. John, that famous and true and faithful servant, fell down like dead at that sight, I don't know what will happen to you.

His feet glowing like bronze from the furnace. You can take burning bronze and try and cover it with sand, but it will not be held back. It will spew forth because of the greatness of its heat.

Our Lord will be like that one day. May this young man and the young lady who have got engaged today take this very seriously. Remember, nothing is hidden before God.

It is, even though it might be locked and under key, but it will be exposed. For I am envious for you with a godly jealousy, for God is a jealous God. His word is sharper than any spear.

And woe to you if you do not allow that word to deal with you now. Hell will be yours forever. You young man, be a pure, holy young man.

You young lady, be pure and chaste before the Lord. Woe to you for sons. We love him.

We live in a crooked and perverse generation where children, teenagers go and get family planning, pills to stop pregnancy. What are they busy with family planning for when they are not even married? We live in a perverted time. God will judge, and this government.

I too will stand before God, but woe to those who make such laws. We might compromise and bring down the standard, but that does not compromise God. He does not change.

Even though we try and say that He is like we are, He does not change. I end. Not far from here, a certain young man got married.

When he went with his new wife back home, there was suddenly a terrible noise from their home. The bridegroom came out angry. He was angry and upset.

He was livid because his wife was not a virgin. He said, I have paid the full dowry of eleven cattle, as was the tradition, to buy the bride, but she is not pure. I paid for a virgin, he said, and he sent her home.

The family tried to intervene with the suggestion that the preacher should be called to come and make peace. He said, preacher or no preacher, I want my dowry back, all eleven cattle, for I paid the full price. And this man said, no pastor, I have paid the full price, and she is not a chaste virgin.

I want my cattle back. She is not pure. When you meet with Jesus Christ, will you say you are pure, spotless, without wrinkle? Pure.

A wrinkle is this. If I do not eye my property, a wrinkle. And Christ wants a church without spot and wrinkle.

And that is the man we are going to meet soon. Our brother Kenichi said, Jesus is coming back soon. If he comes back, will you be without wrinkle, without spot, pure and clean? You want to stand, be the bride of Christ, stand next to him? He is the perfect one, the thrice holy one, and your garment has got red spots, spots of blood, black spots, different spots, and finds that there is no veil on your head.

Dear friend, before heaven and earth, what a day that will be when you will have to stand before Christ, unless you adhere to what he says. He says, be perfect, as my Father in heaven is perfect. No half measures, no compromise.

If not, get converted now. Do not say, I am a Christian. I am baptized and what not.

That is just, Louis Armstrong said, if you are baptized and you are not living for the Lord, that baptism will bring you into a double hell. Test how you are. Let's stand to our feet.

Before we continue with prayer, you have seen the young man take his ring and said, I should put it on her and how I put it on her. He says, he promises himself to her, she in receiving the ring. If we repent, coming back from the pigsty, our Father in heaven puts a ring upon us.

Woe to the man, to the woman, young and old, who is wearing the ring of heaven. And Jesus is not all in all to him, the first and the last, at work, at home, wherever you are. Woe to you.

I would be a liar if I said grace with you. No grace. But God's anger and judgment upon you.

Unless you repent, only then the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ will be with you. Let us pray. Lord, write your word into the heart and mind of each and everyone here.

Let's not leave here forgetting what you have said. And that we would not be those who just listen to your word, but who do your word. Help this engaged couple to live in purity and such holiness that all the world can see what Christians engaged couple should live like.

That your name would be hallowed and made holy and uplifted. That all the nations would see it and tremble. Let your church be truly noble.

Let it not be one that is compromised. Amen.

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