

Living With Your Passion

by Erwin Lutzer

To live with your passion, you must make a commitment to purity in marriage and thought life, and develop a strategy to fight the devil in case he comes to you.

Duration: 46:43

Scripture: Exodus 20:14, Matthew 5:8, Matthew 5:27-29

Topics: "Marriage"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being thorough and complete in our commitment to God. He urges the audience to get rid of any associations or contacts that lead them into sensuality. The speaker expresses concern about the proliferation of the videotape industry and the availability of movies that can be watched in the privacy of our own homes, leading people astray. He warns against the lies and deception of the forces of evil, urging listeners to stay true to God's word and not be swayed by false promises and desires that will never satisfy.

Transcript

Thank you, Pete, and you can imagine the great joy it is for us to have him as a member of the Moody Church, for him and his wife to fellowship with us and to sing. My brother Harold weaseled his way out of that remark about Canadians fairly nicely, didn't he? He said that that was true of Western Canadians. Of course, as you know, I was brought up there too, in a place in Saskatchewan, the area there is so flat you can stand on a shoe polish box and look halfway into next week.

But it is true that we Canadians are rather shy and bashful. I was about 21 years old and I went down to Dallas, Texas and met this beautiful girl and coming from Canada I was very formal, somewhat shy. I always called her Miss Westerland.

One day the perspiration came to the palms of my hands and I said, Miss Westerland, do you mind if I call you by your first name? She looked at me and said, why no, she said, as a matter of fact, I wouldn't mind if you called me by your last name. Ever since that time I learned it only takes two to get married, an eligible daughter and an anxious mother. Strange things happen up in Western Canada.

A man's wife was intensely interested in going deer hunting and the man was somewhat reluctant but he thought, well, all that she talks about is she wants to go deer hunting, okay, so he buys her a rifle. They're walking through the forest on their first venture and they get separated by a few hundred yards. Suddenly

he hears three shots ring out, bang, bang, bang.

He thinks, my word, did she see a deer? Did she get a deer? And as he runs in her direction, he overhears her arguing with a man and he can't figure it out. He says, what's going on? And as he gets closer, he hears the man say, okay, okay, lady, go ahead and keep your deer, but let me take the saddle off of him first. This evening on a more serious note, I'd like to speak to you on the topic, living with your passions, living with your passions.

As you well know, we're living in a day and age when our nation today is literally drowning in a sea of sensuality. I'd like to give you three things, three things that threaten the standards of morality in our country and in our churches. The first, of course, is the mass media, the mass media.

Someone has said that sex is the cornerstone of mass persuasion and the symbol par excellence of a life of leisure and consumption, and the media plays that for all that it's worth. As a matter of fact, a writer of television scripts said, and I quote, the goal is to get people to laugh at adultery, homosexuality, or incest, because laughing breaks their resistance to it. So first of all, there is the mass media.

Secondly, there is pornography. As you well know, explicit magazines are available in almost every drugstore, and one of the things that happens when there are those who are caught in its vice is, first of all, they have an unhappy marriage because they become dissatisfied with their normal sexual relationships, and suddenly you discover that because of what they see, they desire all sorts of abnormal and perverted sexual experiences. I remember counseling a woman who, at the advice of her non-Christian psychiatrist, went to a triple X rated movie.

It was so bad that she vomited on the floor of the theater, but she said that until she had gone, she had never had perverse lesbian desires, but she says, after seeing that movie, I became as perverted as what I saw on the screen. So we have, first of all, the mass media. Secondly, we have pornography.

And then third, though it's very closely related and wouldn't really have to be a separate point, I am absolutely deeply concerned for our nation because of the proliferation of the videotape industry. Today, we have in our homes, of course, these videotape players, and you can go into shops and they are springing up in the United States like mushrooms. You can go to shops and you can rent all kinds of movies, and you can now see them in the privacy of your own home.

And Christians who would never be caught dead going to a theater where they might be seen, now can watch these in the privacy of their own homes, and they are. And then, of course, I'm not sure what's happening in Canada, but here in the United States, we have the advent of cable television. And cable television pipes into the homes of our nation, movies that lead people astray into every bizarre form of sexuality available.

And people today are absolutely hooked on sensuality. Now, you know, because we are living in a day like this, you may say, why is it that Satan is so strongly attacking us in this area? First of all, it's because sex, sexuality, I think, represents the greatest of human temptations. You know, those of us who have been spared a life of living on drugs, we've never gotten into that, or alcoholism.

We can identify with these people, I think, simply because every one of us has experienced the incredible power of sexual temptation. And what Satan would like to do is to smash our homes in smithereens, because they are the means by which God perpetuates his truth. It's to be passed on from father to son,

from mother to daughter, to children, who in turn raise up godly generations.

And if he can cause problems in the area of sensuality, if he can divide marriages, he knows that he's not only got the mom and the dad, but he most probably also will have the children. Now, you know, when it comes to sexual temptation, you know, Mark Twain was bitter at God for giving us these strong passions and then limiting their relationships to simply one partner. And he railed out against God because of it.

There are many people today who are mad at God that he has given them desires that he has come along and said should not be fulfilled. And you know that when it comes to the area of sexual temptation, with all of these promises that the temptation brings with it, these temptations promise like a god, but they end up paying like the devil. Today I want you to turn with me to the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus Christ made some startling statements.

And what we'd like to do is to give you three commitments. That's Matthew chapter 5. Three commitments that Jesus Christ asks us to make. I want to be very clear.

I don't want to be like that politician who when he left a political rally said, I hope that in the excitement I didn't happen to make myself clear about anything. What I want to do is to give you these three commitments and then the third has three sub points. Is that clear enough? What is it that Jesus Christ is talking about when we speak of commitments? First of all, verse 27 and verse 28 of Matthew 5. You have heard that it was said you shall not commit adultery.

But I say to you that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. Let me read the next verses too. And if your right eye makes you to stumble, tear it out and throw it from you, for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you, for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish than for your whole body to go into hell. The first commitment that Jesus is asking us to make is the commitment of purity in marriage. Purity in marriage.

Verse 27. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not commit adultery.

Now why is it that God made this statement in the Old Testament? Why is the seventh commandment there, thou shalt not commit adultery? God gave this to us first of all for the stability of the family. Because you see, God implanted in every little baby that grows up in the home the need for a mother and a father who love each other and who have no other competitions for their love. And you see, God knew that if children were to grow up and love him and serve him, there would have to be within the home the model of love between two people and it would have to stay there for the benefit of the children first of all.

Do you know that every little child whose parents go through a divorce entertains within his mind the secret fantasy that mom and dad are going to get back together? Do you know that God is inflicting upon this nation a greater judgment? I was eating lunch with Bill Gothard some time ago and I said, you know Bill, with all of the demoralization of this country sinning against such great light, I said, isn't it funny that God has not devastated us? And he said, God is devastating us with something that is far worse than famines and earthquakes. It is the breakup of the family because in Deuteronomy 28, God says, I'm going to take your children from you and you won't be able to see them and you're going to have homes that are going to be split apart. He wasn't talking about divorce there, but in our generation, it is being fulfilled.

First of all, for the benefit of the children, God says, thou shalt not commit adultery, but also for the stability of our own emotional and spiritual well-being. You know that there is something within us that when we fail in this area, there is a defilement that takes place. I think of someone who said to me that when I was living in immorality, I was dying by the inch in the side.

And so God says, thou shalt not commit adultery. Now I know people just like you do who end up in adulterous relationships and they say these are the most beautiful experiences that they have ever had. I remember speaking to a woman who said, you know, it is only because I have this affair on the side that I'm sane today.

She said, I'm married to an alcoholic husband. And if you knew what that was like, and it's because of this, this relationship, finally, I met a man who cares with whom I can communicate what can be wrong with a relationship that is that beautiful and caring. Now, let me say to you today that I think that there are adulterous relationships that are caring and loving and beautiful.

But you know what the problem is? The problem is that you have to break five and usually six of the 10 commandments in order to have that relationship. Did you know an adulterer breaks five and usually six of the 10 commandments? First of all, he breaks the commandments that says thou shalt not commit adultery. That's obvious.

But the Bible also says thou shalt not bear false witness. You know, I don't know of any situation that I've ever been involved in as a pastor where adultery has been committed, where there has not been lying. A man will lie as to where he was, or a woman will make up excuses as to why she's out of the home and she'll lie to her parents and almost always lying accompanies adultery.

The next commandment is thou shalt not steal. That is not necessarily the order of commandments, but that's another one that is broken. Do you remember when David took Bathsheba's wife? What did Nathan say? He says, you have stolen another man's wife.

He gave the illustration of the little lamb that was stolen by the rich man. He says, you have stolen. This person belongs to someone else.

So you're also guilty of stealing. Furthermore, the scripture says thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife. There is another commandment, the last commandment, and God explicitly expressly says thou shalt not commit, covet thy neighbor's wife.

And that's of course where it all begins. Another commandment says thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother. Almost always the adulterer dishonors his family, but finally he breaks the first and the greatest commandment.

Because the first and the greatest commandment is thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, and with all thy soul. That's the first commandment. And an adulterer says I have found something that is more precious to me than God.

I found there's no use arguing with an adulterer about whether or not his relationship is beautiful. A problem with the relationship is that he has to shake his fist in God's face in order to have it. And so the Lord says thou shalt not commit adultery, purity in marriage relationships.

There's a second commitment that Jesus asks us to make, and that is purity in our thoughts. He says in verse 28, but I say to you that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. A number of years ago I was on the Phil Donahue show, and the topic was lust.

Donahue says, you know, Jesus, all that he does is add to our guilt, because here he is. He's telling us thou shalt not look at a woman to lust. You've committed adultery.

He says all of us lust. Lust is universal. And in one sense, of course, he's right.

All of us have lusted. But you know, it's interesting that Jesus here is saying a profound statement. Incidentally, if you're wondering, the answer to Donahue is that Jesus does increase the guilt, but then he also offers the remedy of cleansing and forgiveness and deliverance.

But here we have a statement that is so high that it seems as if no one is able really to live up to it. To look at a woman to lust is to commit adultery in the heart. But Jesus is saying that we should be committed to purity in our thought life.

Now, my friends, I wish I could preach on this in this rally, but we only have so many times to speak. But you know that the battle is really won or lost in your mind. Your mind is a phenomenal, phenomenal entity.

As someone who studied philosophy and has been interested in the mind, I can tell you this. It is absolutely unbelievable because it is a spiritual substance. It is not a physical substance.

Would be wrong for someone to say, you know, I had a thought the other night that was nearly a half inch long and weighed a third of a gram. When I was a little boy out in Canada, where we read things like this in the papers, young man would like to meet a young lady that drives a tractor. The object is matrimony.

In writing, please enclose a picture of the tractor. When I was a little boy growing up in Canada, I used to think to myself that God didn't know my thoughts because I thought that he could just observe my action. He was looking down from heaven.

You know that imagery? He looks down from heaven. Well, what does he see? He sees me run and play, but surely God doesn't know what I'm thinking. Now, if I may speak imprecisely for just a moment, I could say that he actually knew my thoughts better than he knew the actions of my body.

You know why? Because your mind is spirit and God is spirit. They exist in the same realm. And that's why when you get into wrong things in the mind that is not controlled by the word, inevitably you run into demons because they exist in the realm of spirit too.

Ananias and Sapphira. There they are. They're having breakfast one morning and they say, you know, it would be really be nice to look good in the presence of the church.

Maybe she was head of the women's auxiliary meeting and he wanted to be known as very generous. So they said, you know what let's do? Let's sell the land and give part of it. And let's make it look as if we're giving the whole thing.

And they talked it out and it seemed reasonable. They agreed, but when they died, just before they died, you remember what Peter says? Why has Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy ghost? Sometime in one of these rallies, I'd like to bring a series just on Satan, but let me say this. Isn't it interesting that Satan has the ability to put suggestions into the human mind, pass them off onto us as if they are our own.

And actually they originated with him. That's why when you begin to battle lust, you will find almost inevitably that the battle will become so strong in the mind that you are going to have to tear down the strongholds of the imagination. It says in second Corinthians chapter 10, well, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.

Some of you have been to Israel and you've been to Masada, which is known in the old Testament as the stronghold of Ein Gedi. It says that the weapons of our warfare are able to tear down strongholds and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and to bring into captivity, every thought to the obedience of Christ. Let me just simply say this, my Christian friend.

And I say this to myself, that what we have to do as Christian men and women is to learn to take authority over our thought life and Satan will hassle you. He will defeat you. This is his strategy.

You know, I'm told by someone probably from Western Canada growing out on the farm, that if you have two animals, such as two bulls that are fighting, or perhaps two moose out in the forest, the fight, they have a tremendous battle. But once one of them has won for the rest of the summer, the entire herd simply bows and scrapes and the authority of the victor is never questioned again. That's what Satan wants to do.

He wants to win a few key battles in your life. He wants you to win. He wants to win those battles in your war against lust, because then he says to himself, now that I've got you and I've got you and I've got you, you've got to obey me and you can't get out.

There is no way. Just submit. You've tried it.

You're defeated. Don't ever try again. Do you remember John Bunyan's book, Man's Soul? As the forces of evil were discussing in that book how they should capture the soul of man, do you remember what they came up with? Diabolus said these words.

He says, our strategy will be this. He says, we will make promises that we will not fulfill. He says, we will pervert desires that will never satisfy.

But he says, our strategy will always be the same. Lies, lies, lies, lies, lies. And you know what the problem is? Today in our churches we have hundreds of believers who are slaves to sensuality because they are believing a lie.

I want you to know tonight that when Jesus Christ was exalted above every principality and every power and every name that is named, both in this world and in the world to come, he won a victory over Satan. The scripture says that he disarmed principalities and powers, making a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. And he offers to us tonight to receive in faith a victory that is thorough so that we need not to be slaves to sensuality.

Satan comes to us and he gives us sin that is sugar-coated. And we must, in the name of Jesus, say no to it. It's the battle of the mind.

I want to say, because this would be a whole sermon but quickly, you should begin every day with God and spend at least a half an hour, minimum 20 minutes with him, before nine every single morning, giving him your mind, meditating on scripture, that God might be able to win that battle in your life. So Jesus says, first of all, there should be a commitment of purity in marriage. Thou shalt not commit adultery, but

purity also in thoughts.

I should pass this on for the young people that are here, but for everyone really. You know, do you have a strategy, any of you, by which you fight the devil in case he comes to you? You know, there's so many people who don't. It's amazing to me that if you had a city and every time the enemy came over the same wall, wouldn't you eventually say to yourself, you know, we ought to really strengthen that place and be ready for him.

And yet, you know, there are people who are defeated time and time again in the same area. They have absolutely no strategy. Spoke to a young man who had the habit of taking pornographic magazines down from drugstores and just looking at the pictures.

And so I said, all right, I said, I want to work out a strategy for you so that when Satan comes and tempts you, you know exactly what you're going to do, because if you don't know what you're going to do, you're certainly not going to figure it out at that time. So I said, I want you to memorize these verses of Scripture. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.

And then I gave him a number of other verses. And I said, now, what I want you to do is to quote these verses of assurance from Romans six and elsewhere at least three times each calmly and directly before you do what you think you'd like to do. And one day he was at home and because of a mistake in the mail, one of these magazines came to him and he could have very easily opened it with absolutely no one around.

And he said, pastor, you know what I did? He says, I took the thing and I threw it in the garbage outside. We have to be ready when these suggestions come. So first of all, Jesus is saying there should be purity in our marriage.

Secondly, purity in our thoughts. And then third purity in our associations, in our associations. What do I mean by that? Well, look at what he says in verse 29.

He says, and if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you, for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand makes you stumble, and then he says essentially the same thing. You know, the Greek word to stumble there means to lay a trap.

It would be like going along and here's a ditch, but it's covered with straw. So you're walking along and suddenly you fall down and you don't know that it's there, but there's a trap that's been laid for you. So Jesus says, if your right eye or your right hand causes you to stumble, he chooses the eye and the hand because they are the two parts of the body that are usually used in sexual arousal.

For the man, it is the eye. And I really think that no matter how much we say it, I don't really think that women fully understand the extent to which a man is affected by sight. For the woman, sexual arousal is generally sweet words coupled with very gentle caresses, the hand.

And so Jesus said, look, he says, if your eye is causing you to stumble, if your hand is causing you to be tripped up in sexual thoughts and relationships, he says, tear them out. People will say, well, pastor, I mean, aren't you glad that at least he doesn't mean this literally? Yeah, it's true. He doesn't because after all, if you plucked your right eye out, you could still lust with your left.

That's true. Jesus is not talking literally that we should do this, but follow carefully. What he does say is literally true, isn't it? Wouldn't it be much better to be in heaven with one eye than to be in hell with two? Wouldn't it be much better to be in heaven with one arm? If that were possible in the day of judgment, God will overhaul us, and if we have one arm on earth, we'll have two in heaven.

But wouldn't that be better than to have two arms and be in hell? So what he says is literally true, even though he does not mean that we should literally pluck out our eye or cut off our hand. But as I was thinking about this, I'd like to now give you three descriptions of what it would be like to go through the process that Jesus is describing. What is it like if you were to amputate your hand or to have your eye cut out? Here are some observations.

He'd go there occasionally and look at them, and when he was convicted and he finally took them and he cleared the place out, he says, you don't know. You don't know the agony of just throwing this away. Because he says, somehow, when I was depressed and down and I felt I owed myself a little bit of pleasure, he said, I thought that I owed myself some pleasure.

Well, you take that and you magnify that now. You talk about a sexual relationship between two people, an adulterous relationship. I think of a pastor in the Chicago area who fell into that sin and left the ministry, came to me, spent two hours in the study, pouring out his heart about the fact that he had a bad marriage, which perhaps he did, and his love for this other woman.

And I said to him, you know, you're going to have to go through a death that is just as painful, an experience that is just as painful as if someone were to lose a lover, and it hurts. It's painful. You know, some of you young people, you know that it's not easy to be pure in this generation.

I have young people say to me, you know, I don't want to be a prude. Well, I guess I don't either, but I want to challenge you today, prude or not, for God's sake and your own, be pure. Be pure.

When sexual temptation comes to us, we should react like we would if a mugger were to come into our house at two o'clock in the morning. No time for negotiations, no time to compromise and work out some kind of an agreement. But you know, we're not very good at the suffering of temptation, are we? I think of the words of Scripture, ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

And I think of young women who would like to be married, and the temptation to date an unsaved fellow is there because of the great desire that God has planted within them for companionship. And it's hard, and Jesus knew it would be hard, and Jesus said it's like having your eye plucked out or your arm cut off. It's painful.

There's a second characteristic, and that is that it is thorough. It's thorough. I mean, once your eye is out and it's been lying in the refrigerator.

You know, in Canada, there was a man who was staying in the home of a doctor. The doctor left and said, look, if you need anything, just look into the fridge and have whatever's there. And the man opened up the refrigerator in there and a plastic bag with a human hand.

And you know, the guy just wasn't hungry after that. You know, once your eye is out and your hand is in the fridge, it's too late to say, you know, should we have done it or should we have not? And what Jesus is simply trying to say to us is this, be absolutely thorough in cutting off any single relationship that is causing you to sin. Be thorough.

I remember counseling a man who said, you know, I'm falling in love with this woman at work. He was a married man. I said, well, I suggest that maybe what you should do is resign from your job.

Change jobs. He said, change jobs. He said, I have bills to pay.

I need to earn money. What do you mean change jobs? And I said to him, well, what would you rather have? Would you rather change jobs or would you rather lose one eye? Oh, he said, I would much rather change jobs than lose one eye. I said, well, you know, you're pretty lucky because Jesus said that we should be willing to lose an eye and an arm if that's what's necessary.

And so what Jesus is saying is we should be thorough. Be complete. Get rid of your videotapes for God's sake and your family's sake.

Don't subscribe to cable television. Get rid of all of that stuff. I preached on this at Moody Church some time ago, a different message, but same emphasis.

And we had some young people who had boxes put on TV so that they could pick up the scrambled cable television signal. And I thank God that after the message they went home and they smashed those boxes. You see, what Jesus is saying is just get rid of it all.

Get rid of it all. Get rid of all associations, all contacts that are leading you into sensuality. Somewhere I read that if you're going to jump across a chasm, it's much better to do it in one long jump than two short ones.

So if you're gonna do it, do it right. Tozer says that part of us that we rescue from the cross, that is the part of us that is the seat of our difficulties. And I want to say to you as a fellow struggler for purity in a world that is awash with sensuality, I want to say to you that I have discovered that if I allow sensuality to grow in my life like weeds in a garden that wants to take over, there's no use compromising.

There's no use trying to say just a little bit because no matter how little it is, it'll take over. There's a man who sold a house one time and he said to the guy, he says, I want to give you the whole house. I just want to tell you though that I'm pounding a nail beside the door.

Would you let me keep the nail as mine? The man said, sure. So I gave him the house. The man came and he took some meat and he hung it on that nail.

And the owner couldn't remove it because he had agreed that the nail would belong to the man. And eventually because of all the things that were hung on that nail, the owner had to vacate the premises. One single small nail.

One television program. One pornographic magazine. One relationship that we rescue from the cross becomes the seat of a whole host of troubles.

Finally, third observation regarding amputation is it's worthwhile. It's worthwhile. Here's a person who has cancer.

They go to the doctor. The doctor comes back and says, guess what? We got it all. We got it all.

Was it worth it? Absolutely. Worth it to get that cancerous growth out of there. Is it worth it to finally be rid of all the sensuality that you may be involved in in the hidden part of your life? The answer is yes, it is

worth it.

Worth it. Jesus said that it's worth it even if you lose an eye or a hand. Now folks, I want you to think about this because this is the bottom line.

This is where it all comes together. Let's visualize today that we have a cripple up here, a man at least who's crippled to the extent that his arm has been cut off and his eye has been taken out. Let's suppose he's a young person.

Here he is. He had great ambitions for his life. He was going to be a baseball player.

Perhaps he was going to be a businessman, an athlete of some sort. And now suddenly because he's lost an arm and an eye, all of the dreams come shattering down to the ground. It's all lost because he's a cripple.

Just think about that person Jesus is talking about without his eye or without his hand. Here's the bottom line now. What Jesus is saying is it is better to have all the shattered dreams in the world upon your shoulders and be within the will of God than to fulfill your desires outside of the will of God.

It is much better to live with unfulfilled desires and listen whether you're married or unmarried. You live with unfulfilled desires to a certain extent. There may be some young woman here tonight who has just absolutely struggled with God over the business of a husband.

She may have to live the rest of her life with unfulfilled desires, but it is better to live with those unfulfilled desires and have the smile and the blessing of God upon your life than it is to fulfill those desires while you're shaking your fist in his face outside of his will. Better to live with shattered dreams than incur the disfavor of God. Because the Bible says that the marriage bed is honorable and all and undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God personally will judge.

How much better it is to be his friend with unfulfilled desires than to incur his judgment while you're fulfilling them. You say, well Pastor Lutzer, that's fine for you to say, but where do we begin? Very quickly you begin first of all with cleansing, because cleansing means agreement. There are some of you here tonight who even while I speak have in the back of your minds the remembrance of relationships that are even controlling you today because of the guilt that Satan has incurred and laid upon your shoulders.

You know in Canada we used to play fox and goose. That was a game in the snow. We'd make a huge wagon wheel in the snow.

As long as we stayed within the lines, within the trails, we watched very carefully. But when we messed up that area, we'd mess it up good and proper. We'd walk through and we'd pick up dirt and grime and we would just make it as messy as we could and then we'd go off somewhere and begin again.

That's the way Satan does it. He has two lies that he passes off onto people. The first lie is do it once.

It doesn't matter. Just once. After you've done it once, after you've been defeated, he says now that you've done it, there's no use standing up.

You might just as well mess up your life good and proper. What difference does it make? Both are lies. One sin does matter, but I say to you today on the authority of God's Word that no matter how enmeshed you have become in whatever form of sin, it's always worthwhile standing up.

And God enables you to stand up because his blood cleanses us. Does that mean does he go back and put all those little snowflakes back? No. Some of the consequences remain.

But what he does is he sends a brand new blanket of snow that covers the ugly mess. Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

The first thing is cleansing. The second thing is to exercise your authority. Authority.

You know, in revival we stress the fact that when Jesus died it was more than simply dying for our sins, it was also dying that we might be free, that there was a tremendous battle that took place there on the cross. And today because of our identification with him in his death, we can say with authority to Satan, be gone in Jesus' name. We can say with authority that we need not follow the flesh.

Now mind you, Satan will lie. He'll say that's not true, that's not true, that's not true. You must, must, must, but remember his strategy is lies, lies, lies, lies.

We can say in the name of Jesus Christ, we can begin each day with him. We can identify ourselves with Jesus Christ and we can begin to walk in freedom. Back in 1971 in the revival, one man said, one person said, you know, my mind was just like a drawer full of junk, just drawer, just junk, trash.

And he said it was like taking the drawer and just turning it upside down, getting all the trash out. God can cleanse your mind through the renewing of his spirit and then you give him that mind. Don't just ask him to clean it up, but you give it to him every morning and every night.

And then of course the Bible says, as Tom was pointing out today, walk in the spirit. You'll not fulfill the desires of the flesh. To receive in faith the fullness of the spirit.

There is no one great fantastic experience that will ever set you free. In fact, Satan may even hassle you more after you have become serious about it. But in the midst of a sinful and perverse generation that is literally being overrun by sensuality, God is calling his church to purity in marriage, in thought, and in association.

And today, whatever God may be saying to you, maybe it's not even in this area at all, but a related area of the flesh. God is saying to us today, come clean. Come clean.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Let's pray together. Our Father, today we do not minimize the battle, for we have all been participants.

But we pray today for the men of this congregation. We pray that once for all they shall be cleansed and choose in faith to walk in victory. We pray for the women.

We pray for the young people. Oh God, oh God, you know the temptations that they face. We ask that these few words will be taken and applied by your Spirit as you see fit.

And I ask for only one thing, and that is that you shall give us the grace to do whatever, whatever you're speaking to us about. We ask in Jesus' name, Amen.

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