

Destination Purity

by Jim Van Gelderen

God's will for believers is to reach the point of purity, both before and during marriage, and to stay pure in their marriage.

Duration: 1:02:50

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 1 Thessalonians 4:6-8

Topics: "Moral Purity", "Spiritual Guidance"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the challenges of living in a world filled with temptation and inappropriate content. He emphasizes the importance of guiding young people in navigating this difficult environment. The speaker highlights the prevalence of explicit material in various forms of media and the need to find a way to stay on the right path. He suggests that following the roadmap, which is the word of God, is the only way to overcome these challenges and maintain a righteous lifestyle.

Transcript

It's a delight to be here. I know some of you were in the first service. I'll get to meet some of you as well in the second service.

But as a result of the material here, we'll just dive right into it for time's sake here. 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, and we're going to be looking at verses 3 through 8. And for those of you that were at the advance, let me just tell you that the message never comes out quite the same. So there'll be mostly similarities, but there may be some differences because, you know, it's a different crowd.

And the Lord can lead us to some other applications. We'll just trust Him to do that. 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, and we're going to look at verses 3 and following.

1 Thessalonians chapter 4. We'll read the text of Scripture, have a word of prayer, and then we'll begin to examine this material. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor, not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God. That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any manner, because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we have also forewarned you and testified.

For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us His Holy Spirit. Lord, would you be with us this morning, and we do pray even for those that are hearing for a second time, that you'd allow some other truths, some other nuance of application to stir their hearts.

But we do pray for your Spirit to take the Word of God into our hearts, Lord. We ask that you would illumine our hearts so that we would see clearly through our culture and see what is unbiblical about our culture and what is right about your Word. And stir us, Lord, we pray for the Spirit of God to illumine our hearts.

Lord, we need you in these moments. We recognize, Lord, without you we can do nothing. We're wasting our time.

Would you meet with us, illumine your Word, we believe you will. We expect you to do it based on truth. We stand on your Word, ask you to speak to us in our midst.

We'll thank you for what you'll do, in Jesus' name. Amen. A few years ago, I received this letter.

I will leave out the places and dates to not identify anything, but I do want to read it to start our message. It says, basically, this girl had come to a camp I had been at, and also I came to her local church, and somewhere in that time period she wrote this letter. You see, just a month before my youth group came, and she names the camp, I made a mistake in my life.

I graduated from high school in June of, and she names the year, and wanted to celebrate my boyfriend of two years, and I went off, and well, you know. I felt so guilty and would not deal with it because I knew I had messed up. It was not until a month later, and she names the camp again, that I finally asked God for forgiveness.

In 1988, Josh McDowell conducted a survey of 18-year-olds in evangelical churches. That's a broad category of churches, but it's churches that do believe the gospel, at least in some measure. And he found of those 18-year-olds that 43% admitted that they had already surrendered their virginity and stepped into moral impurity.

I think we all recognize that in the day in which we live, that God's Word and the truth of purity confronts culture. In fact, today, I believe as we look at this text of Scripture, we are going to be brought to a crisis or confrontation with our culture. And as I said to the young people the other day, we're brought to a choice.

Are we going to believe Hollywood, or are we going to believe the Holy Word? And that really comes down to what we're dealing with this morning. And I think even those of us who are very careful about our media choices and very careful about worldly influences, I think we all perhaps do not recognize the subtle desensitizing of our culture that is around us. So let's take a candid look at the Word of God and where it confronts us.

May we, by the grace of God, put off wrong thinking and embrace biblical thinking in this matter of purity. In fact, the letter that I read at the very beginning when I went to this young lady's church, she seemed to be the most spiritual girl in the entire youth group. And yet, obviously, this sin had come to be a problem in her life and a great scar.

So let's, if we could please, go right into the text. And what I want us to see this morning is as we go through this text of Scripture, I think we're all going to recognize that there is a destination that God wants us to get to. I think all of us would recognize as we go throughout this text that God wants us to reach the point of purity.

For those that are unmarried, God wants you to one day, I told the young people this, and as you come to your wedding day, that's the destination. Of course, once you get to that destination, God wants you to stay there. So we get to the destination and we stay there.

But what's God's will for those in this room that are unmarried? It's for you, young men, one day to be standing at the front of the church and the most beautiful girl in all the world, dressed in white, coming down that aisle, knowing that you're standing there with all aspects of purity still intact. As you're about to pledge your heart, life, and love to this one that God has brought into your life in the will of God, it's God's will, young men, for you to be standing there with all aspects of purity still intact. And we're going to deal with that.

What's God's will for you, young ladies? It's God's will for you one day to walk down that aisle. For most of you, it's God's will for you to walk down that aisle if you get married, and it's going to be God's will for you to be in that white dress that means something, with all aspects of purity still intact as you come to the front to pledge your life, love, to that young man that God's brought into your life. Now, we all recognize that.

We know that's where we should be, and we know that's the destination we should get there. And we all know, for those of us that are married, that that's the destination that we should stay at. And we're going to deal with that because there's a few more adults in here.

We're actually going to make some application to married folks a little bit more here this morning because I'm convinced that it's a huge issue. And I'm convinced if we don't deal with sin compromises in our youth, they will haunt us in our adulthood. And so I'm going to make some applications that I didn't make, and I told the young people this, and I may refer back to this, but while I was at the advance, something happened to me.

I've never had it happen. My cell phone rang just moments before the service. I picked it up.

It was a pastor friend of mine in tears, and this is probably why I'm speaking. His resignation is being read because he has committed adultery. I want to tell you, folks, it's a big issue.

None of us are immune. Wherefore, let him that thinketh, he standeth. Take heed, lest he fall.

I don't know about you, but that sent chills up and down my spine, and fear gripped my heart. Friends, we need to be sober and vigilant because there is a roaring lion who wants to devour us. He wants to destroy your marriage, destroy your family, destroy your kids.

And for you young people, he wants to destroy your marriage before you ever say, I do. So we get the idea that the whole thing begins at I do. No, it begins right now, young people.

We're going to deal with this this morning. It's so important, and I'm going to encourage you adults this morning. God, I'm convinced, is going to confront some of you with compromises in your youth that you have never dealt with.

You've just kind of pushed them aside. It's no big deal. We didn't do that much.

It wasn't that wrong. And you push it aside. The only problem with that is that if you regard iniquity in your heart, the Lord won't hear you.

It will be a hindrance to your Christian walk. And what I encourage you to do this morning, adults, is you recognize God dealing with you about some past failures or compromises or rationalizations in your teenage or young adulthood years. Let me encourage you to take 1 John 1, 9 to heart.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And as we told the teens a couple of days ago, the word confess simply means to agree with God. It's just simply say, God, you are right.

I was wrong. It was sin. It was compromise.

And you know what? God will forgive you. He will cleanse you of all unrighteousness. And you can clear up your conscience.

The blood of Christ is powerful to do so. So allow this message I trust to be such that would help you get to 1 John 1, 9 and get back on victory ground. Now, we've looked at what the destination is.

But we've got to ask ourselves the question, how are you going to get there? How are you going to get to destination purity? And if you're already married, how are you going to stay there? I'm an evangelist, so many times I travel. I travel with my family most of the time. And, in fact, I'm just about to begin a tour to get with my family.

We live in a little tin box, 31-foot trailer, no slide outs because we've got too much payload in the van. I can't handle weight. So we have a great time.

The one good thing about being in a trailer is your wife goes by and you can hug her. And so you get a little bit more of that. But we travel in a trailer.

And when I get up on a Saturday morning, one of the times I pick up Rand McNally. And Rand and I have become very good friends over the years. And I'll find out where I'm going and find the best way to get there.

Now, we've seen where we're going. And I want to ask you a question. How are we going to get there, young people? Moms and dads, how are you going to help your young people get there? How are you going to help them get there in a country where with a couple of clicks of the mouse, you can access the most vile filth a human mind can imagine? How are you going to get there in a world like that? How are you going to get there in a world where you cannot check out groceries? I think this is tragic.

You can't check out groceries without being tempted to look at provocative, inappropriate material on magazine covers. I think that's tragic. But how are you going to get there in a world like that? How are you going to get there in a world during the summertime, you can't go to a public arena without being confronted with provocative, inappropriate dress? How are you going to get there in a world like that? How are you going to get there in a world where almost all media choices, whether it's magazines, Internet, media choices on television, are filled with inappropriate, dirty images? How are you going to get there in a world like that? And I submit to you that the answer is the only way you're going to get there is follow the

road map.

And what we're going to do this morning is we're going to look at the road map, and we're going to stick right with the Scriptures we're going to go through, and at one point we'll park and make some very important application. And so let's begin by looking at number one, the road to purity. Now, I warned the young people, I will warn you, that most of the message is Roman numeral number one.

Okay? Because I want you to say, when I say Roman numeral number two, I don't want you to think, he's never going to make it. Okay? So you won't panic at that point. But Roman numeral number one is the road to purity.

Look at verse three. It says, For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication. Now note the very first phrase.

This is the will of God, even your sanctification. I want to make a grammatical point here that's critical. It is followed in the original by five Greek infinitives.

These five Greek infinitives make up three infinitive phrases. So what this is saying is, this is the will of God, and it gives us five verbal actions that are the will of God. Number one, it's the will of God to abstain from fornication.

Number two, it's the will of God to know how to possess your vessel. Number three, it's the will of God to not go beyond and to not defraud. Those are the three infinitive phrases.

Now let's look at them a little more closely. First of all, let's look at biblical constraint. This is the will of God, even your sanctification.

Number one, to abstain, or that ye may abstain from fornication. Keep away from, stay away from, separate yourself from fornication. Now the word fornication comes from the word porneia.

We get the word pornography from it. In fact, pornography comes from two Greek words. The second word is graphe.

We get graphics from. The word porneia means all kinds of moral failure, sexual sin, all kinds of moral perversion. But primarily in the Bible, it seems to set apart and accentuate mostly the premarital aspects of sexual infidelity.

Okay, so God says, I want you to know it's the will of God to stay away from, to separate yourself from, all kinds of moral sin, moral perversion, premarital failure in the moral arena. That's what it's dealing with. Now the world will have you believe that if you're not messing around in this particular arena of sin, you're missing out.

Nothing could be further from the truth. See, it is a lie from Satan. And it's important for us to see this.

Now the amazing thing to me is that the world is now coming around and admitting that God's right. Now they're not saying that, but in so many words that's what they're saying. Let me just read a couple of things.

This is U.S. News and World Report. Okay, last I checked, this is not a Bible-believing publication, okay? Now, here's what it says. Cohabitation may seem a good trial run for a solid marriage, but in practice,

cohabitating couples who marry, many of whom already have children, are about 33% more likely to divorce than couples who don't live together before their nuptials.

Virgin brides, on the other hand, are less likely to divorce than women who lost their virginity prior to marriage. Cohabitation is associated with other risks for young couples. Live-in boyfriends are far more likely to beat their partners than are spouses.

And young adults who move in together without being engaged to be married are more likely to use cocaine and cigarettes after they start cohabitating than beforehand. All in all, Harvard sociologist Christopher Jencks, adult premarital sex, quote, may ultimately prove to be a little like smoking dope in the 60s. In retrospect, maybe it isn't such a good idea after all.

Now that's an amazing statement from a Harvard psychologist. You know what they're basically saying? Now they're not saying this out loud, but what they're saying is, you know, God was right after all. Now, one other thing that I think helps us, and again, the reason I mention this is because I want you to see that in reality, those in the scientific community who do research come to biblical conclusions when they're honest.

This is a survey of sexuality which was called by U.S. News & World Report the most authoritative ever. It was conducted jointly by the University of Chicago and the State University of New York. And this survey found of all sexually active people, quote, the people who reported being most physically pleased and emotionally satisfied, hang on, were the married couples.

When it came to physical pleasure and emotional satisfaction, this act that God has made for marriage, the ones that found it the best were married couples. Now the researchers not only found out that, they also found it's best if you've had one sexual partner in a lifetime. Quote, Physical and emotional satisfaction started to decline when people had more than one sexual partner, end of quote, the researchers said.

Did you hear what those folks just said? They said if you want the very best in this act that God has made for marriage, in physical pleasure and emotional satisfaction, here's what you do. You keep yourself pure, marry, be faithful to your marriage spouse, and that's the best it gets. It gets no better than that.

You know, God's been saying that for thousands of years. And now the University of Chicago says God was right? Well, hallelujah. You know, I want to tell you something, young people.

If you will keep yourself pure, marry and be faithful to your marriage partner, you won't get burned, you'll get blessed. No good thing will he, God, withhold from them that walk uprightly. And young people, if you will believe God, and parents, if you will believe God, you will help your young people have the best.

God's not out to burn you, He wants to bless you. The world, the flesh, and the devil certainly want to steal from you the very best, and they are doing a good job of it. In fact, some of you out here who either didn't get saved or didn't get taught early in life, you bear the scars, and you know what I'm talking about.

Let me just simply say, as I go through this message, certainly I recognize some out here have had some things in their past that you regret. Now, obviously, yesterday's failure is no excuse for tomorrow's sin. So what you need to do is get right with God, call it what God calls it, get right with God.

Now, I have found this, that adults who get right with God about this matter, you know, you can rebuild a foundation, you can have a solid marriage, the grace of God can help you, but there will always be regret and there will always be scars. Now, God can rebuild it. God's grace is always sufficient.

But you know, young people, you mark this, you mess around in it, but you always regret it. There will always be scars. And there are adults in this room who could probably very eloquently tell you that is certainly true.

And again, it's not diminishing the fact that God can't put things together. He can, but you always wish it never happened. Okay, so let's dive into this.

First of all, biblical constraint. God says, stay away from moral failure, all aspects of it. Flee fornication.

Every sin that a man doeth is without the body, but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. There is something about the moral arena where the sin is against your own body. And we're going to see that as time goes on here.

That's 1 Corinthians 6.18. Now, that brings us to the second infinitive phrase. The first was biblical constraint. The second is biblical courtship.

He says, this is the will of God, even your sanctification, verse 4, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor. Now, the word possess, there is an interpretational battleground over what the word means. There's two groups of scholars.

I'm talking about orthodox evangelical scholars. And one group would say the word possess means possess in the sense of acquire. So what the verse would mean is, every one of you needs to know how to acquire a vessel or a spouse.

Now, I personally, as I read the grammatical arguments, I favored that interpretation. But on the other side, no, some of them said, no, no, that's not what possess means. What possess means here is that you need to know how to possess your own vessel, your own body in the moral arena in sanctification and honor.

Now, please hear me. Whether or not it means to acquire a wife or a spouse, or it means to keep your own body in self-control in the moral arena is really not the issue because the application is real similar. So let's focus on the application.

Following this infinitive phrase, you will see some prepositional phrases. And these, of course, teach us how to do this. So number two, it's biblical courtship.

Number one was biblical constraint. Number two is biblical courtship, how to find the right one, keeping your own body in self-control. How do you do that? Number one, biblical courtship is number one, holy.

It's holy. Look, if you would, please, the first prepositional phrase says that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification. Now, the word sanctification here, this is key, is not talking about the state of being holy.

It is talking about the process by which we come holy. In other words, it's progressive sanctification. Okay, that's the idea here.

Okay, so what it's saying is this. If you find the right one done the right way at the right time, it will aid your spiritual growth, not hurt it. Now, this is a huge sign.

If young people and parents could get this one roadside in their soul, it would save some heartache and shipwreck. It's simply this. It's the right one, the right time, the right way.

It's going to help you grow spiritually, it won't hurt. So that means this. If you're in a relationship, a guy-girl relationship, and you're going downhill spiritually ever since you've been in that relationship, it's not the will of God.

Get out of it. Now, friends, I want you to understand this is not subjective. This is objective.

It's a huge roadside. I don't know about you. Aren't you thankful that God gives us some pretty clear roadsides? I mean, this is clear.

Now, young person, get that in your soul. When God's in it, you're going to grow. When he's not, you're not going to grow.

So get out, bail out. It makes all the sense in the world to me. So number one, biblical courtship is always holy.

It helps both parties grow spiritually. Number two, it's honorable. Look what it says.

That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor. Now, there's many aspects of honor. We could talk about honoring God, honoring each other.

But the one I want to focus on is honoring your parents. Now, this amazes me. It really does.

But we are living in a time, and even Christianity. I have heard of young people at Christian colleges where Christian college professors have counseled them to get married over the objections of their parents if they thought it was the will of God. Now, please hear me.

That makes no sense to me. Because you never have to break the fifth commandment to find the will of God. You will never have to break any commandment to find the will of God.

It makes no sense to me. In fact, I counseled a young man who was engaged to a girl, and her parents were dead set against it. And he came to me for counsel and said, You know, these professors are telling me that if we believe it's the will of God, it doesn't matter what our parents said.

And I said, Well, wait a second. It's not going to work because you can't disobey God to find the will of God. You'll be in trouble.

Fortunately, he went to a pastor who counseled him right. A pastor who said, You know, the same thing happened to me. He said, I received some counsel, and that man told me, the man who counseled him, He said, If you marry that girl over her father's objections, you will regret it.

You will lose her respect. And he went down the line. And so this pastor, when he was telling the story, called up this girl's father and said, I'm done.

I'm breaking it off. And I'm not going to do anything without your permission and guidance. I'm going to make a long story short.

God brought them back together in his time, the right way, and he's had a blessed ministry. And he shared that with that young man. And so that young man called that girl's father, and he broke up.

A year later, they ended up getting married with the father's blessing. You know, God's a great God. You do not have to break God's commandments to find the will of God.

God's bigger than that. Listen, you will never miss God's will by honoring your parents. Never.

You know, the Bible says in the book of Proverbs, the Lord, talking about the heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, and he turneth it with us to every will. If God can turn the heart of the former president Bill Clinton, he can turn the heart of an unsaved parent, can't he? Absolutely he can. And so biblical courtship.

And by the way, young man, young lady, if you're in some guy-girl relationship, and either set of parents is not for it, break up. You're out of the will of God. Every single time.

It's either not the right one, it's not the right time, or it's not the right way. So when it's the right one, right way, right time, both parents will be honored. That's just the way it is.

Because biblical courtship, God says, listen, I want you to know how to find the right one, know how to keep your body in self-control. First of all, in a way that's holy, age your spiritual growth. Secondly, in a way that is honorable.

Okay, that brings us to the third. The third one is the negative one. It's found in verse number five.

The three ways here of biblical courtship. It says, Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God. So biblical courtship's holy, it's honorable.

Number three, it's harnessed. Now we've got to do a couple quick word studies. The word lust here has the idea of passive passion.

Let me give you the commentary. An over-mastering feeling in which the man is borne along by evil as though it's passive in cement. So the idea of lust is someone who's on a raging river of passion and they do things they never thought they'd do.

That's the idea. Now, the word concupiscence in this context is concerned, as one commentator said, with the active side of lust. So what this is saying is, not in the passive lust or passion which comes from active lust.

You say, what's the difference? Active lust is when someone makes a choice to pursue a cheap thrill or a turn-on. That's the idea. It would be clicking on the Internet knowing full well the filth that's going to fill your mind.

That's the idea. It would be in a guy-girl relationship beginning kindling one another's passions knowing full well that God is not for that before marriage. And that's the idea.

Making a choice. It would be turning on the television knowing you're going to watch something that's provocative and inappropriate. That's the idea.

It's making a choice to pursue it. And what God is saying is, when you make a choice to pursue lust, you're going to put yourself on this raging river of passion and you're going to do things you never thought you'd do. That's what it's saying.

And what God is saying is, that's, look at what it says here, even as the Gentiles which know not God. Now, please hear me. Lost people may find their spouses that way, but God's people shouldn't.

Listen, listen, folks. I want you to see this. God's people ought find their spouses far different than lost people do.

That's what it's saying. Listen, lost people may do this, but God's people shouldn't. But God's people, unfortunately, far too many do.

But God says, no, not in the passive lust which comes from active lust, even as the Gentiles which know not God. And I remember back a few years ago in watching young people get together, and you're thinking, man, what in the world? This isn't going to work. And they began evidently, began those first stages of kindling one another's passions.

And you know what they began? The glue that God only intended for marriage. And you know what you'd see? They'd break up. And it was like a rubber band.

They'd come right back together. And they'd break up, go a little farther out, rubber band, right back together. Why? Because they weren't harnessed.

Not in the lust of concubines, even as the Gentiles, which know not God. And let me use an illustration here. No analogy is perfect, but this is just kind of a side illustration to illustrate, I think, help us understand the importance of this.

There's a guy named Larry, Larry Waters, who a few years ago had a passion to fly, so he joined the Air Force. Only one problem, his eyesight was no good, so he basically hardly ever left the ground. So when he got out of the Air Force, he contented himself to sit in his Los Angeles suburban home and watch Navy jets fly over the backyard.

One day, the passion to fly became too great. He went down to the Army-Navy surplus store in his neighborhood, and he bought himself 45 weather balloons, when inflated, measured about 4 feet in diameter, and he bought himself a tank of helium. Larry's plan was, one Saturday morning, he was going to get up, and this is what he did, one Saturday morning, and he began to inflate the balloons.

I don't know how many he inflated, but he tied them to a lawn chair. Then he tied the lawn chair to the bumper of his Jeep. Now, Larry's idea was this.

He was going to get in the lawn chair. He was going to cut the rope. He figured he'd fly up about 30 yards, 30 feet.

He'd kind of wave at people all around the neighborhood, and then he'd bring a BB gun and shoot the balloons and slowly descend. So Larry got all the balloons on there, and he got himself a six-pack of Coca-Cola. He must have been from Atlanta.

I don't know. Got a six-pack of Coca-Cola, and he packed himself a lunch, and then Larry made a decision, an active choice. He reached down with his pocketknife, and he cut the rope that held the lawn

chair to the bumper of the Jeep.

Now, Larry did not lazily float up about 15 feet. Larry does not lazily float up about 100 feet. Larry shot like a cannon into the Los Angeles sky.

He did not level off until he was at 11,000 feet. Now, Larry was so scared, he was afraid to shoot the balloons because he figured if he shot the wrong ones, 11,000 feet was a long way to fall. So Larry stayed up there for 14 hours.

Larry inadvertently drifted in Los Angeles Airport International Airspace. The first one to see Larry was the United Airlines pilot. I'd like to have been that pilot.

Can you imagine him radioing down to the tower? Hey, we got a guy up here, six-pack of Coca-Cola, and a BB gun. How would you have liked to have been on the flight, you know? Larry's handing you Coca-Cola out the outside window. But anyway, down there in the tower in Los Angeles, they looked at the radar, and sure enough, there was Larry.

They dispatched a helicopter. If you've ever flown into Los Angeles, you can picture this. By this time, Larry was out over the Pacific Ocean.

And they took that helicopter, and the only problem was when they got close to Larry, the wind of the blades pushed him away. But a dramatic rescue, they rescued Larry, and when they got him on the ground, they arrested him for violating international airspace. Now, I realize, no analogy is perfect, but you know, friends, there is some truth we can learn.

Larry was completely in control, no problem, until he made an active choice to cut that rope. And when he cut that rope, you please hear me, he was no longer in control. He was at the mercy of the helium, and he went much farther than he ever intended to go.

And I am afraid many young people are playing with fire. Can a man take fire under his bosom and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals and his feet not be burned? Solomon warns us about the moral impurity arena. Friends, I want to tell you, it's dangerous to pick up one dirty picture.

It's dangerous to watch a TV program you know has dirty innuendos or provocative images. It is dangerous to open the door at all. It is a Pandora's box of Pandora's boxes.

That's what it's saying here. And God is saying, you are going to get in trouble if you make an active choice to pursue it. Illicit passion and lust.

So it's harnessed. Now that brings us to the third. We saw, first of all, biblical constraint.

Our second infinitive phrase was biblical courtship. Our third infinitive phrase is what we're going to call biblical conduct. Look to verse number six now.

This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter. Because that, the Lord is the avenger of all such as we have also forewarned you and testified. Now there's two infinitives here.

The first one is to not go beyond. And the second one is to not defraud. Now to not go beyond is real simple.

It simply means don't step over the line. Don't transgress the boundary. Don't go beyond where God wants you to go.

Now to defraud simply means to have more. So God's saying, don't step over my boundary, my limit, and have more than I intended you to have. It also has the nuance and the innuendo.

We know the word defraud as thievery or stealing. Someone is defrauded. They've been stolen from.

They've been thieved. Okay, so God says, don't step over the line and have more than God intended you to take. Now that's the idea.

Now we're going to get a little more concrete, a little more specific here because I believe the Bible allows us to do it. Okay, the question we'd have to ask ourselves and teenagers will ask, okay, what's the line? I think it's tragic that we have to think that way but many people do. You know, what's the line? Well, folks, the line's real obvious.

The line is purity. No one would debate that. Nobody in this room would say that that can't be the line.

Obviously, it's the line. Purity, on this side, you're pure. On this side of the line, you're impure.

Okay, so God says, don't step over the line. Okay, you say, I can buy that but let's get a little more concrete. What does that mean? Well, the best way to describe or define a biblical term is to see it used in biblical context.

Now, those of you that are prayer advanced, I don't want you to help with this, okay? You took you two times at the prayer advance. Let's see if this crowd can be a little bit quicker on it, okay? So we're going to do a little test here for a moment. James chapter 4. Don't turn for time.

It says, Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that friendship with the world is enmity with God. By the way, he is coming right at me saying, listen to this. Don't you know that flirting with the world, being friends with the world inappropriately is spiritual adultery.

It's unfaithfulness to Christ who you're engaged or betrothed to. Okay, that's the idea of what he's dealing with there. So he's dealing with the fact that these people had become two, they were two-timing it.

They were flirting with the world while they were supposed to be the bride of Christ. Okay, you see that. Okay, so he's dealing with a spiritual unfaithfulness, a spiritual two-timing, and he comes down and he gives us ten imperatives in a row.

And he's telling them how to get right with God, how to have revival, really. And in the middle of that he says this, Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, don't miss this, and purify, there's the word, your hearts, ye double-minded. Okay, let's think about that for a moment.

These people were double-minded. They were flirting with the world yet they were the bride of Christ. They were waiting for the Lord to come back.

And God says, listen, you're in spiritual unfaithfulness, you're in spiritual adultery. What you need to do is purify your heart, ye double-minded. Okay, let's say they did that.

They got under conviction they got right with God. If you purified your heart, you would no longer be double-minded, you'd be what? Well, you did just about like they did at the prayer advance. Let's try that again.

Okay? They're in spiritual adultery, they're unfaithful. And God says, listen, don't you know this? You've got to purify your heart. So they do, they purify their heart.

They'd no longer be double-minded, they'd be what? Single-minded. Okay, we're getting there. You're a little slower than the kids at the advance, but after all you're older.

Okay? So three times kids at the advance got it the second time. Let's try it again. Okay? If they were spiritually unfaithful and God said, purify your hearts, ye double-minded, they'd no longer be double-minded if they purified their heart, they'd be what? Single-minded.

Okay, about three-quarters of the crowd's got it, but that's all right. Single-minded. Okay, that's the idea.

In other words, don't miss this. The essence of purity then is, don't miss this, single-mindedness. Now that gets things down to real concrete.

So what God is saying is, don't go over the line of purity, which is the line of single-mindedness. Okay? Don't miss this. Single-mindedness then is keeping everything for one.

See, the question is not, you know, I have teenagers come to me and say, hey, you know, how far can I go? No, no, that's not the question. In fact, that question betrays the fact that you are Bible dumb. Now I know that's the truth though.

Because the question is not, how far can I go? The question is, how much can I keep for one? How pure can I be? So single-mindedness is keeping everything for one. I've had young people who respond to an invitation, come forward and say, I'm going to make a decision to be pure until marriage. Well, I know what they mean by that.

But the truth is, if you keep yourself pure and you marry and then you're faithful to your marriage partner, you're still pure. See, purity is keeping everything for one. Now let's stay with three aspects of purity.

Let's break it up to make sure we don't miss anything. Number one, physical purity or singleness of body. Okay, so what God is saying is, I want you to keep all aspects of kindling one another's passion.

I want you to keep it all for one. That is, your spouse and the bonds of marriage. Okay, so here's the point.

If you ever, if you've stepped over the line and you've gotten involved with someone and you've kindled one another's lusts and passions, what God is saying is, you're a thief. Listen, when you have a make-out session or whatever, what you've done is, you've stolen from that girl, sir, you've stolen from her future husband, you've stolen from yourself and your future wife. Listen, there are men out here, women perhaps, in this room who as teenagers got involved physically with someone who was not your spouse.

Now what you need to recognize this morning, you've never done this, is get on your knees and say, oh God, I was a thief, forgive me. He will. But it starts with an acknowledgement and an agreement, God, you're right, I was wrong.

It's not going to compromise it. I'm not going to push it under the rug. It's sin.

It's thievery and to God that's not a small matter. In fact, if you look back at the text, it says, look at this, I think it's important to see this. It says that no man go beyond the fraughtest brother in any matter because that the Lord is the avenger of all such as we have also forewarned you and testified.

And you say, well, Preacher, what does it mean that God's the avenger? I'm going to be dead honest with you. I don't know, but if I were you, I wouldn't want to find out. Paul says, I warned you, I testified.

So here's the point. Don't step over the line. Listen, young people, you make a determination in your heart right now that you're not going to step over the line and begin to kindle one another's passions in any way with someone who is not your spouse.

It's thievery. It's all for marriage. Purity is singleness of body.

Very first time I ever kissed a girl on the lips was when the preacher said, you may kiss the bride. Now that's to no credit of my own. I had a wonderful mother.

And by the way, moms, you're real important in this equation with your boys. I thank the Lord for my mother. And very chaste, very pure.

But I want to tell you something. She warned me of strange women and warned me of the evils of our day in a very chaste manner. So, but the first time I ever kissed a girl, of course kissed my wife, I mean my mom on the cheek, but first time I ever kissed a girl on the lips in our family, now maybe in your family it's different.

In our family, we showed affection and kissed, you know, a little peck on the cheek, hug. Our family, we didn't get into this mouth-to-mouth resuscitation business. Now, if you and your family want to slobber all over each other, you know, that's fine.

I'm not dealing with that. But in our family, we didn't get into that. You know, I don't, I'll be honest with you, I don't get into this, you know, aunt kisses nephew and I just don't get into that on the lips.

But anyway, in our family, we just didn't do that. So, first time I ever kissed a girl on the lips was at my wedding when the preacher said, you may kiss the bride. Now, we made a terrible mistake.

We really did. We videotaped the wedding. And I've been able to go back and look at the kiss.

And I will be honest with you, it is one of the sourier kisses I've ever seen. I did find this out. I did find this out about kissing.

It really doesn't take you long to learn. I mean, by the time we were in the reception, man, we had it down. We had it down.

We really did. And so, so don't worry about it. I've, you know, I've learned something else about kissing.

I have. Kissing's like potato chips. You can't have just one.

But anyway, you know, the night before my wedding, I wasn't nervous about the vows, wasn't nervous about the ceremony. I was nervous about the kiss. I said, what if I miss? And not really.

I thought maybe I should practice on the mirror. I didn't do that. but you know, the whole point is, folks, is, you know, you know, my wife has never come to me, never come to me in the 19 years we've married.

She's never come to me one time and said, you know, Jim, I'm really bummed out. I wish you'd kiss some other girl before you kiss me. She's never done that.

And every girl in this room knows she never will. You see, deep in our hearts, put there by our Creator, there's something inside of us that says, that's right. That's right.

See, so God's simply saying to His young people, don't believe the lie and step over the line and take something that's not yours to take. In fact, I got a letter. In fact, it's right here.

A copy of a letter given to me by a youth pastor. And this youth pastor, this young lady, had gotten pregnant and was not married. She wrote a wonderful letter getting right with a youth pastor.

But at the very end, I want to quote something here. Here's what she said to the youth pastor. Don't ever stop preaching about even holding hands because that's where it all starts.

Now, isn't that amazing? Now, that's mocked and made fun of today, but here's a girl with the scars to prove it. And I want to tell you, it began when she thought it was not that big a deal. Do you know what she did? She stepped over the line.

And she began to take something God didn't intend for her to take. Why do kids hold hands? Well, there's something in it, isn't there? It's the start. And so, what God's saying is, you better be careful.

Don't even just step over a little bit. God's saying, don't step over and take something that's not yours to take. Listen, we live in a culture where things can go from little to big to life destroying pretty quick.

And what God is saying just a moment ago about being harnessed, friends, is God created us and He knows that once you flip that switch, you're in trouble. And what He's warning us to do here is to be very careful not to get involved in anything until we're married. So, singleness of body or physical purity is singleness of body, keeping everything for just one.

Everything for one. Okay, I think we've spent enough time there. Let's move on to mental purity or singleness of mind.

And what that simply means is when a young man allows his brain to go into the gutter, what he's doing is he's stepping over the line and he's taking something that God never intended. Listen, young man, when you are defeated in your brain with wicked thoughts, you're stealing from your future wife. And you're stealing from yourself.

Now, I recognize in the day in which we live, it is a battle. But there's two kinds of men and ladies for that matter in this room today. You didn't have to dress the ladies, but in the culture in which we have, I found that it's now becoming a problem there too, especially with young ladies who have been not careful what they've looked at.

Okay, but here's the point. You've got two kinds. Number one, people who are fighting the battle to keep their minds pure.

And it is a battle. And secondly, it's people. There's no battle.

Dirt comes in your mind, you think it. You're the ones that God's dealing with here. See, mental purity is keeping your mind, young man, for just one.

Listen, faithfulness does not begin when you say, I do. Faithfulness begins when you're a teenager. Really, before that.

And every one of us in this room is either nurturing faithfulness for a future or present marriage, or we are nurturing unfaithfulness. There's no in between. And you know you're nurturing faithfulness when you fight to keep your mind only for your spouse.

Now, we are living in a day when we are constantly bombarded with filth. And you know, it's interesting to me, the Word of God deals with the connection between not being careful with your eyes and having defeated mind. You know what the Bible says about David? It says he looked on a woman.

2 Peter 2, verse 14 talks about eyes full of adultery. Job said in 31, verse 1 of Job, he said, I've made a covenant with mine eyes. Why then should I think upon a maid? You see the connection? Jesus said, Whosoever looketh on a woman and lusts after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Solomon, remember him? Father David, Bathsheba, he said, Lust not after beauty, eyes in thine heart. God makes a connection between the eye gate and the heart. And the tragedy is this.

If you don't have victory in your heart, left unchecked, you will do them. What you think about left unchecked, you will do. Proverbs 23, 7 As he thinketh in his heart, so is he.

Proverbs 4, verse 23 Keep your heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life. Mark chapter 7 Jesus said for all within. Out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts.

Adultery, fornication, murders, and he gives a long list. Greek scholars tell us that the Greek construction sets off evil thoughts as the source of every one of those sins. You listen.

Nobody commits fornication without thinking about it. Nobody commits adultery without thinking about it. Mark it.

Behind every wicked action is a process of wicked thinking. And listen. There are dear people in this room, undoubtedly in a room this size, who have, you may not have committed adultery, and you may not have ruined or scarred your life yet, but you are on a process of wicked thinking.

And what God is simply saying is purity is in the mind. Faithfulness begins in the heart with a battle to keep your mind pure. And by the way, what that means is we've got to be careful what we look at.

You know what I found? I'm just going to warn you adults. I found counseling young people. I had to counsel a kid just recently.

Got involved in some things. His parents were broken hearted. Great home.

I mean a great home. First three boys are absolutely on fire for God. Fourth boy, you know where he got off? Don't miss this.

He delivered newspapers and he started looking at ads in newspapers and polluted his mind. I want to tell you friends, we're living in a day when vigilance is the order of the day. And here's the home problem.

I don't think they have a TV in their home. But there's so much filth and junk out there. So God's saying we've got to be careful.

And you know it's amazing to me. Back when I was a kid, if you were a member of a Bible preaching church, you didn't go to the movie theater. But now, if you don't go to the movie theater, you're thought you're odd.

But isn't that wonderful since Hollywood's cleaned up its act and all the movies are wonderful and it's pristine clean. Now we can go to the movie theater. Isn't that wonderful? You know, back in the 60s and 70s was kindergarten compared to the filth today.

And yet God's people go down to the movie theater and watch junk that pollutes their minds. I think of a young man right now who traveled on my team who's in full-time Christian work right now. He told me when he was a teenager his parents had a rule.

No movie theater. He said one night his friends tempted him. He snuck out of the house and went down to the movie theater.

Here's what he said. He said, that night he said, I lost my innocency. He said, I have problems in my brain today that I never would have had if I hadn't seen, hang on, that one movie.

Did you see that? Vigilance is the order of the day. And we could go down thing after thing. I'm thinking of a pastor who came to me in 1992 and he told me, he's a preacher, he said, before I got saved, he said, I read dirty novels which is pornography in print.

And by the way, there's some Christian romance novels that aren't healthy either. Get the whole wrong concept of romance and marriage. He said, I read dirty novels and he said, he's a preacher, he said, it has hurt my marriage.

Listen young people, God's not out to burn you, He wants to bless you. He's saying, stay away from mental impurity. By the way, young ladies, you've got to stay away from some of these junk teen magazines like YM, Seventeen, Cosmo Girl, Jane.

They are absolute filth. They are sewer that is polluting the minds of a generation of teenage girls. It's killing us.

See, mental purity is keeping your mind just for your future spouse. Keeping the battle. So when you step over the line and you take something in your mind and God never intended to take it, it's thievery.

And by the way, I mean this. If you're out here and you're defeated in your brain and you're filling your mind with filth, God pity, young man, the girl that marries you. God pity her.

It's really the truth. And so it's important for us to recognize the importance of mental purity. Now hang on.

Boy, you think, boy, that's been rough. It's getting rougher. First there was physical purity, singleness of body.

Number two is mental purity, singleness of mind. Number three, hang on, emotional purity, singleness of heart. Solomon said, my son, give thee mine heart.

Why? For a whore is a deep ditch. That's what it says. When did Solomon get in trouble? When he loved many strange women.

Now, the best picture in the Bible of a young man and a young lady coming together is Christ and the church. How many loves does Christ have? One. How many loves does he expect the church to have? One.

And that's why he keeps dealing with the church. You know, we all know, we know how stupid this is. You know, I drive around the country, sometimes you'll drive under an overpass and spray it on the overpass and say, I love Sally forever.

You come back three weeks later and poor Sally is spray painted out and now you've got Sue Ann, you know. I love Sue Ann forever. Come back three weeks later, you know, we all know how absolutely foolish that is.

That's not love. See, emotional purity is keeping your heart for your future spouse. I recognize mistakes are made, but just because mistakes are made does not mean every young person in this room ought to shoot for the fact that you're only going to give your heart to your future spouse.

That'll be your goal. And I am running into something that has really disturbed me, probably in the last year. I run into three cases, actually one was earlier than the last year, but the last year I ran into three cases of two were pastors, one was a youth pastor, who fell in love with another woman and expressed it, but they never committed adultery and never had inappropriate touching.

I want to ask you a question. Is that a problem? It is an absolute problem. It's emotionally impurity.

It's not singleness of heart. See, is it a problem? Here's a pastor who writes a note to the secretary, a love note to the secretary. Is that a problem? Absolutely it's a problem.

And where does that begin? It begins with teenagers who are not careful with their heart and they get an appetite for many loves. Here's a youth pastor calling a girl at a Christian college who he buys the cell phone for and she's overheard as the youth pastor romantically tells her his love for her. Is that a problem? It's an absolute problem.

But it began with a youth pastor who wasn't careful with his heart and I can guarantee you there were other loves in his life before his wife came into his life and he never dealt with it. I challenge the young people, and I challenge you moms and dads with this, for you young people, never do or say anything to a girl that you wouldn't want your wife to see a videotape of. Young ladies, same thing, don't do or say anything that you wouldn't want your husband to see a videotape of.

Wait for God's way, God's timing, the right one, the right way, the right time and that's where the blessing is. So, emotional purity is keeping your heart just for your future spouse. Not stepping over the line.

And by the way, that's why flirting is so dangerous. You know, flirting is seeing how many people you can get to kind of fall for you. I don't think it's innocent at all.

I think a girl who flirts is nurturing the characteristics of a strange woman. She's not in Proverbs 31, she's in Proverbs 7. I think guys who have the same problem, you know, I'm going to ask you a question. What would you think if an adult who was married to somebody else was flirting with someone else's spouse? Would that be a problem? It's an absolute problem.

And the problem with people who do that is they did it as teenagers. And they never dealt with it. So, emotional purity is singleness of heart.

It is keeping your heart for your spouse and your spouse alone. And if there are some failures in the past, simply call it what God calls it. Say, God, I was wrong.

It was thievery. God will forgive. But you'll never see your conscience restored until you agree with God and mourn over your sin.

So, emotional purity. Okay, now we're going to have to move on. Roman numeral number two.

Okay. I'm having a good time, aren't you? Oh, that's pretty good. Okay.

Usually I'm, about this time, ready to go through the back door as soon as I'll have somebody else close in prayer and then I dodge out. But believe me, this can be quite interesting at times. But let's go to Roman numeral number two real quickly.

Let's look at the reason for purity. Look at the reason for purity. Look at verse number seven.

It says, For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. This is the divine call. Do you know why young people ought to be pure? Do you know why moms and dads ought to work on keeping their marriage faithful and pure? It's because God's called us to do it.

Today, there's a lot of emphasis in evangelical circles about, wait, do you get married and just say no and all this kind of stuff. And I'm grateful for any abstinence message. But some of them stay away from getting God in the mix.

Oh, hey, teenagers, you need to be careful because if you don't, you might get a disease. And that's true. I think Proverbs 5:11 addresses that.

Mourn at the last when the flesh and body are consumed. Hey, you better watch out because if you don't, you might hurt your self-esteem, whatever that means. You know the reason God gives, why we ought to keep ourselves pure? Remember what happened when Joseph was seduced? He said, How can I sin and do this great wickedness against God? See, that'll last.

So you've got the divine call. Young people, get it in your heart. It's the will of God.

This is the will of God. You don't have to wonder about it. It's the will of God to keep your heart, mind, soul, body for your future spouse.

And you won't regret it. So, number one, the divine call. Now, secondly, at the despised call, look at verse number eight.

It says, He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man but God. Have you ever thought about why did God put this verse here? It's not in any other part of the Bible, but right here. Why do you think God say, right after this, listen folks, if you despise this, you don't have a problem with the preacher, you've got a problem with God.

Why do you think God would say that? Because people would despise the preacher who gives it. That's why. See, what he's saying here is this.

He's saying, if you're sitting here and saying, hey preacher, you're a little overboard, man, yeah, I'm going to keep watching the programs. Yeah, I know they've got a few dirty scenes in them. We just look the other way.

Yeah, I think you're just a little too straight on the matter. I just don't think it's that big deal. I'm going to keep watching what I want to watch.

Okay, here's what God is saying. Have at it, but your problem's not with the preacher, it's with me. You might be out here, a young man, a young lady, and say, you know, hey, I'm just going to go out with my boyfriend, girlfriend, I'm going to do what I want to do.

It's no big deal. I don't care what the Bible says, what you say. Okay, fine.

The problem's not with me, but it is with God. Listen, your problem's not with the preacher, it's not with this church. Your problem is with God.

Listen, if you despise this, then God is saying, you have got a problem with me. And the truth, I'm convinced that God puts this in here, is because we have a tendency, when somebody deals with this, to despise the messenger, and God says, it's not His message, it's mine. It's real truth.

And the truth is, friend, you can go out in the movie theater and fill your mind with filth, and you can go on the internet sites that you had no business going on, and you can do that, but your problem is with God. You're despising God. That's what He's saying.

And He's saying it won't work. It will not work. It absolutely will not work.

And listen, sir, if you find yourself addicted to this, I beg you, I plead with you, get to some of your spiritual leadership in this church, and get accountable. You've got to get victory. And by the way, God's big enough to give you victory.

Don't believe the lie of the Satan that you're going to be absolutely hooked for the rest of your life. There's power in the blood and power in the cross to deliver. So you get to someone who can spiritually help you out of the mess, but let me encourage you, sir, a teenage boy, you get to your father, and sir, if you're struggling, get to someone of spiritual leadership, your pastor.

Get this thing taken care of. If you find yourself defeated on the internet, if you find yourself defeated in media choices, be there for the despised call, be there for the despised of the despised of not man, but God. So secondly, we saw the reason for purity, and last of all, I've got to close with the good news, and that's the reality of purity.

Look, if you would please, at the last part of the verse, He therefore, the despised of the despised of not man, but God, who hath also given unto us His Holy Spirit. You know, the wonderful thing about this is living inside of us is the answer. His name is God, and it's God the Holy Spirit.

And I love this. His first name is Holy, and that means He can enable us to be holy. You see, what I'm talking about here, purity, I recognize we live in a terrible world, and we've got to fight for this to happen, but aren't you thankful we're not alone? Living inside of each one of us is the pure one, the Holy Spirit of God, pure, undefiled, separate from sinners, Christ in you.

And He can enable us to be pure. My mother was orphaned when she was 14 years old. She grew up in a house that was no adult lived in the house.

Her older brother and herself raised themselves. They had a maid that was hired that cooked meals and washed clothes, but they raised themselves. She lived in a town.

She graduated from high school about 41, 42. She lived in a town that was extremely wicked. I think that's one of the reasons she warned us kids so much about moral impurity because she saw it.

She warned us about alcohol, how it's tied to moral infidelity, moral failure. But nonetheless, she lived in a very wicked town. Her father died when she was a freshman, basically raised herself.

No adult supervision. She could do anything she wanted to do. The amazing thing, when she graduated from high school, she was the only one, or her and one other, I cannot remember, she was either the only one alone or her and one other that were the only virgins left in the senior class.

But God, who hath given unto us His Holy Spirit. She had in dwelling her the Spirit of God and He enabled her to keep herself pure in a very, very wicked town. You know, God's big enough to do that.

We'll just believe Him, trust Him. Well, I'm sure it was not every night. I'm sure there were exceptions, but most of the nights I remember my mother tucking me into bed.

She would pray for me and my future wife and she'd pray that God would keep her pure. Now, I didn't understand all that. At the time, I knew whatever it was, it was special because my mom prayed for it all the time.

When I got married and my wife and I began to compare notes, she had very good parents but they, for whatever reason, had just been in weary, weak churches and didn't know a lot about that. Finally, got into a good church here in Atlanta, back many years ago and began to grow spiritually. But for years, sure, teenage years, they weren't on a good church, very weak churches, always the strictest people in the churches they were in and didn't know a whole lot and so they let her do things they never have later on.

So, she had different guys that were interested in her and one time, a guy that was no good started to show interest and her dad got transferred. Another time, a guy that was no good showed some interest in her and for some reason stood her up. Just one time after another, God protected her.

But God, who hath given unto us this Holy Spirit, God answered my mother's prayers. God protected her. You know, friends, I don't know what your circumstances of life are but God, who hath given unto us this Holy Spirit, He can enable you in that break room to take a stand when the dirty jokes are told.

He can do it. He can help you, young man, to turn your face when they put that dirty picture in your face. He can enable you.

He's right with you. Listen, friend, if you've had some scars in the past, if you get on your knees and ask God to forgive you, He will cleanse you from all unrighteousness and God's Holy Spirit can enable you to see victory and growth in your life if you just deal with your sin and trust Him for victory. There is a reality in purity and it comes from the pure one who lives within.

And that's the only way we can reach destination purity. Let's pray. Lord, we thank You for Your Word.

We thank You for its clarity. And we thank You, Lord, for Your helping us in a very, very unclear day. Thank You for God's people.

And I pray for the one who's struggling. Lord, I don't know who they are, where they are, but I'm sure in a room this size there's some struggling. I pray they see very clearly You love them, You want the best for them.

Help them to see that Your truth is trying to protect them from this world scarring, admiring their life and so God help God's people, I pray, to embrace truth and to love truth. We thank You for Your time. We'll thank You in Jesus' name.

The heads are bowed and eyes are closed. I'm going to ask Your pastor just to come. I'm going to ask one question.

We'll not have an invitation, but I am going to ask one question. I'm going to ask Your pastor to come and stand and open his eyes. I say that so You know that he is looking and I want to ask one question.

Just one question. I ask it at the advance, I'll ask it here. How many would say this morning, don't raise your hand just yet, but how many would say this morning, God did not deal with me? Now there's two reasons God would not deal with you.

Number one, He doesn't need to. Not that you're perfect. You obviously, as everyone has, have failures in your life.

It just means that the sin is confessed. You're right with God. You're seeing a measure of victory in your life and the sin has been dealt with in your life and there is a measure of victory right now you're seeing.

Not that you're perfect, but there's a measure of victory. God didn't need to convict you of unconfessed sin. So that would be the first reason God would not deal with you.

He may have encouraged you, challenged you, but He didn't need to convict you. The second reason is a mystery to me. The wind blows where it lists and there may be all kinds of need in your life about this matter and God just left you alone.

Maybe you didn't listen or you pushed it off or you hardened your heart or you've been hard in your heart, I don't know. But in either case, how many would say this morning, preacher this morning, God did not deal with me? Would you raise your hand? He didn't convict me. Thank you very much and put your hands down.

Now dear folks, we're running out of time but those that God has dealt with, I appreciate your honesty. Let me urge you to deal with it as God wants you to. Young people, if you're a young man, get to your father.

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