

# The Rewards of Purity

Recently, a 47-year-old single friend called to get together for lunch; she wanted advice about her roommate who, though claiming to be a Christian, is sleeping with her boyfriend. The roommate explained, “I’ve been abstinent too long; I’m sure the Lord understands.” Sadly, that couple is not rare. Too many evangelicals profess Christianity while compromising the basic tenets of the faith.

Today, over 60 percent of couples getting married have lived together prior to marriage. Unfortunately, attitudes about sexual purity have grown increasingly lax today even among unmarried Christians, though they are, perhaps, less blatant about it than the rest of society.

Yet, Scripture reminds us that, “Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” (I Samuel 16:7) In the Beatitudes, Jesus teaches us that those who are pure in heart are blessed. Purity and blessedness are out of fashion these days. Often, purity is viewed as just an ideal, something with only sentimental value. This is a monumental misjudgment. Purity is not some gossamer thing, it is as substantial as a rock; protect and embrace it, and it guards you like a tank. Purity is as vital to our emotional well-being as good hygiene is to our physical health. And it



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***Wearing adulthood before you’ve grown into it can lead to “dreams unfulfilled and potential joys never realized.”***

is a precious, priceless gift to yourself, to those you love, and to the God who gives you life and salvation.

While moving years ago, we encountered the sad remains of a red, lace-trimmed party dress that had been passed along by an older cousin to our daughter when she was about four. She loved that dress, and since it was several sizes too big for her, she wore it around the house

pretending she was going to a party. But the dress lost its “newness” before she ever grew into it; she never wore that dress to a party. Seeing that tired, limp dress hanging on a rack was the embodiment of glittering dreams unfulfilled and potential joys never realized.

Purity protects the possibility of priceless memories. “First time” experiences happen just once and those memories are a part of you for the rest of your life. God has a plan for making these experiences priceless. That is the real point of moral teaching. The wedding gown, the marriage bed — these deserve to be done right.

Scriptures teach us that none of us is without sin. The point of calling for purity is not to condemn where there is failure, but to commend the blessings that come with purity and the searing pain it avoids. God calls us to purity for the same reason that we teach our children to wash their hands before meals and brush their teeth afterwards.

All of us need to join David’s prayer, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” (Psalm 51:10) We need accountability and we need to recognize that God will give wisdom to those who ask. “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.” (James 1:5) If we come before God to ask for wisdom, our own unworthiness comes to light. As C.S. Lewis once

wrote, “To know God is to know that our obedience is due Him.”

All human beings live according to some set of ideas or principles. The ultimate irony is that those who create their own truth experience the greatest bondage: enslavement to their own urges and the chaos that are the wages of sin and disobedience. Those who choose their own way ignore the fact that His Word reveals the blueprint by which He designed us. We disregard that at our peril. Scripture is there to teach us: “Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?” (Proverbs 6:27)

In our priorities and our decision making, we must seek the mind of Christ where “it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.” (Galatians 2:20) If we strive to be obedient, the Spirit will conform us more and more purely into the image of Jesus Christ.

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### **PRAY**

For our young people to see through the lies of today’s culture, turn their hearts toward the Lord and live lives of purity.

### **PRAISE**

That we don’t have to pursue purity in our own strength. It is God who creates the clean heart, and not through anything we can do.

### **ACTION**

Do not remain silent. Speak the Truth in love regarding purity.

# CWA *at* WORK

A special report to friends and supporters of Concerned Women for America

★★★★★ Important News from Across the Country ★★★★★

## CWA Communications Coordinator Honored

Gayle Christie, Communications Coordinator for Concerned Women for America (CWA) of Texas, was recently honored with the Freedom Hero award during a National Underground Railroad and PepsiCo Freedom Heroes Celebration luncheon hosted by The Alliance for Multicultural Community Services. Gayle is being honored for her work as Co-Director of Houston's Rescue and Restore Coalition. The Rescue and Restore Coalition seeks to "help identify and assist victims of human trafficking in the United States." According to the Alliance, a Freedom Hero is "an individual or group that takes action to protect or extend freedom." CWA congratulates Gayle Christie on her admirable efforts to help put an end to the evil that is human trafficking. ■

## CWA of Iowa Honors America's Veterans

CWA of Iowa State Director Tamara Scott and other CWA of Iowa leaders were involved in creating and directing a Veteran's Day program honoring those who have served and are continuing to serve in America's armed forces. Tamara says the Veteran's Day event was an opportunity to "bless soldiers and their families, to honor Veterans who have served before and to pay our respects to those who've paid the ultimate price." The event was attended by over 400 people, and God provided wonderful weather for the night of the event. Those who attended the event were reminded that our veterans, our fallen soldiers and soldiers fighting today will have fought in vain if we do not fulfill our obligation to fight the good fight here at home and in our communities. ■

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Here is the great good news: faithfulness to Christ brings us the happiness and fulfillment for which we long, *plus* a wonderful freedom in our lives — the freedom that comes naturally from purity of heart. Here is the truth: purity is both the pathway to joy and the image of Christ in our lives. The Apostle Paul puts it this

way, "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13-14) ■

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