

THE COST OF PURITY

Introduction:

Psalm 24 - Is this the generation of those who will seek the face of God?

Before we can look at “the cost of purity”, we must have a right definition of “purity. So, what is purity? According to Webster’s 1828 Dictionary, “purity” has 6 definitions.

1. Freedom from foreign admixture or heterogeneous matter; as the purity of water, of wine, of spirit; the purity of drugs; the purity of metals.
2. Cleanness; freedom from foulness or dirt; as the purity of a garment.
The purity of a linen vesture.
3. Freedom from guilt or the defilement of sin; innocence; as purity of heart or life.
4. Chastity; freedom from contamination by illicit sexual connection.
5. Freedom from any sinister or improper views; as the purity of motives or designs.
6. Freedom from foreign idioms, from barbarous or improper words or phrases; as purity of style or language.

(All 6 definitions contain the word “freedom”!)

My definition: Purity is the freedom from sin and the freedom for holiness. It is the freedom that comes through God’s holiness. It is not something we can give ourselves, but it only comes through relationship with Jesus, because both freedom and holiness come from Him.

- We need to get rid of the idea that “purity” is all about restrictions. We are free from something to be free for Someone.
- Both aspects of purity, “freedom” and “holiness”, are outside of our human nature. They are impossible to achieve without God, yet we are required to live in both.
- You cannot “make” yourself pure. Sure we can identify actions that we would say are the fruit of purity (purity of relationships, purity of speech...the things listed above in Webster’s), but the only way to have those actions become more than just rules and regulations that we just live by because we go to a church school or because our parent’s are just more strict than other parents...the ONLY way is through relationship Jesus.

So what is “the cost of purity”?

The ultimate “Cost of Purity” was the life of Jesus Christ, paid in blood so that we could be pure (holy) just as HE is pure (holy).

- **1 Peter 1:13-16 -> 13 Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance, 15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; 16 because it is written, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.”**
- Jesus paid the cost of purity with His life, and our response to that cost is to lay down our lives in surrender to Him (...we do this every moment by walking in RIGHT relationship with Him.)
- Purity is not an option. According to the verse above, we are CALLED to be pure (holy). We are designed to be pure.

What is the cost of not “being pure”? OR What is the cost of not constantly bringing our hearts, which are put on display by our actions, back into line with the Word of God and into right relationship with God?

- Blindness
 - **Matthew 5:8 -> “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.”** If the pure in heart see God, then those who do not walk in purity of heart are blind to God.
 - **Matthew 23:16-28 -> v.26 - “You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also.”** If we stop tending the garden of our heart and allow sin to entangle us, then we become blind to the filthiness that begins to grow on the inside of us. It is God, who out of His kindness and mercy, reveals to us the sin in our hearts in order to lead us to repentance. (Romans 2:4)
- Defiled mind and consciences
 - **Titus 1:15 -> “To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience is defiled.”** Unbelief in God, which comes directly from putting our belief (our worship) on something or someone else...or comes through creating God in our own image...defiles our minds and consciences.
- Unable to walk in right relationships (friendships) with those around us
 - **Romans 8:5-9 -> “ 5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, 7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*, 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”** When our minds and consciences are

defiled, we throw off the mind of Christ and take on the foolishness of the world. Our standard for what our relationships (friendships) should like look becomes twisted. Hollywood, rather than the Bible and the Kingdom of God, becomes our “ideal”, our reality.

- **1 Timothy 5:1-2 -> “Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but *rather* appeal to *him* as a father, to the younger men as brothers, 2 the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity.”** Impurity does not just affect our friendships with our peers; it corrupts the way we view authority and causes us to distance ourselves from mothers and fathers.
- Ultimately, the cost of impurity is Death - death comes out of our mouths, death comes out of our thought-life, and death leads us to an eternity in hell.
 - **Ephesians 5:1-17 -> “1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. 3 But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; 4 and *there must be no* filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them; 8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light 9 (for the fruit of the Light *consists* in all goodness and righteousness and truth),10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; 12 for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. 13 But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. 14 For this reason it says,**
 - “Awake, sleeper,
 - And arise from the dead,
 - And Christ will shine on you.”
 - 15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil. 17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. “**

God’s design and purpose for us is to walk in freedom, in holiness, and in purity.

Illustration -

Preface: (**Hebrews 12:1** - “...lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us...”) Jeremy preached a word at Life Church about building altars and the obstacles that try to keep us from those altars. Sin entangles us and keeps us from those altars, but how we walk in this life, the every-moment choices that we make, can position us to be entangled by sin.

Picture: Tim Mills shared a picture with the LifeGroup leaders out of Jeremy’s message.. In the picture, he saw people chained to trees. The trees were different sins.

So often, we cry out to God, “O God, cut down these trees of sin that are in my life! Give me freedom!” However, the Lord doesn’t cut down the tree. Instead, the Lord comes and cuts the chains. He loosens us from the trees of sin and gives us the grace and ability by His blood to walk away.

However, with the choice to walk away, also comes the choice to stay. On the trees are fruit, temptations. Once free, we can choose to walk away in the freedom! We can now run unhindered with and after our King! But, if we turn and being enticed, eat the fruit, we become again entangled and chained by the sin of the trees.

Point: Through Jesus, God is offering us freedom from sin, through the dying of our flesh. Romans 6 lays out for us that if we have died with Christ (crucified the flesh with its passions and desires = surrendered our lives to God), we are freed from sin, unchained from the trees. Through Christ, we are now holy, just as He is holy!

Nevertheless, we struggle all the time with the temptation of the fruit of the tree. We get free just to be bound up again by the same sins or by more sins.