


Avoiding Sexual Sin

Pastor Heiple

Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. —1 Corinthians 6:18

Today we complete our examination of Question 139 of the *Larger Catechism*, which asks, “What are the sins forbidden in the Seventh Commandment?” The final part of the answer states, “The sins forbidden in the Seventh Commandment, besides the neglect of the duties required, are... idleness, gluttony, drunkenness, unchaste company, lascivious songs, books, pictures, dancings, stage plays; and all other provocations to, or acts of uncleanness, either in ourselves or others.” Last time we looked at biblical marriage and divorce. Today we consider how we are to avoid all temptations to sexual sin.

The verse at the head of this article commands Christians to flee from sexual immorality. In another passage of Scripture we are commanded to abstain from it (1 The. 4:3). Sexual immorality is the phrase usually used to translate the Greek word porneia, which is a broad term, covering all forms of sexual sin. As with all sin, the duty of the Christian regarding sexual immorality is to repent of it and avoid all temptations to it. We know that real Christians are never perfect and continue to sin in all areas of life, but the important thing is that we continue to fight against sin, never condoning or excusing it, never giving ourselves over to it. According to Jude 1:7, it was when the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah had “given themselves over to sexual immorality” that they “went after” the sin of homosexuality bringing God’s judgment upon them.

Temptation can be subtle, especially sexual temptation. Therefore, in order to fight against sinful sexual temptation we need to keep our wits about us. We need to guard against “occasions of sin.” Occasions of sin refer to any and all circumstances that allow temptation to come to us in a more powerful way. Some occasions of sin are personal or subjective. That is to say, one person’s occasion of sin may not be another’s. So, for example, that second white cream-filled donut might not tempt you to break your diet, but I would rather not want to find myself in a room alone with it! White cream-filled donuts are my weakness. Perhaps yours is chocolate sprinkled, or Oreo cookies. Likewise, the Steelers are particularly weak on offense this year. The Chiefs are not. The point is we all have our weaknesses, with respect to food, football, and with respect to sin. Personal weaknesses to sin are addressed in the *Catechism*’s injunction against “all other provocations to, or acts of uncleanness, either in ourselves or in others.” In our relationships, love demands I look out for your weaknesses as you look out for mine.

However, because we are all human beings with the same ways of thinking and feeling, we need to especially be on guard against those objective occasions of sin, which time and experience have revealed to be dangerous. The *Catechism* lists idleness first. Surely, our nation will go down in history as a nation ruined in a large part by idleness. When our government pays people not to work, who are able to, it contributes to the destruction of their souls. Idle thoughts truly are the devil’s playground. America is living (dying) proof of it. Listed next are gluttony and drunkenness. Once again, we only have to look at the history of nations to see that whenever people begin to sinfully indulge in one kind of physical pleasure, others become easier as well. So also, intoxication, whether from alcohol or drugs, lowers one’s inhibitions to the point where we are open to doing things we would not do if we were in our right minds. Finally unchaste company refers to the infectious nature of sin. The morals of a group almost always descend to the lowest common denominator. As Paul warned in 1 Cor. 15:33: “Do not be deceived, evil company corrupts good morals.” You have been deceived if you think you are the exception.

Finally, the remaining items: “lascivious songs, books, pictures, dancings, stage plays” all refer to what our culture has excelled in like no other: pornography. We mass produce pornography of every kind: perverse or suggestive words, pictures, videos, live shows, etc. These all stoke the fires of sexual sin, break the law of God, and lead to greater acts of wickedness. They are dragging our country into ruin. May God deliver us from these and all occasions of sexual sin!



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JUDGMENT DAY

Sunday Morning · January 14, 2024

The Celebration of Worship



Prelude & Welcome

Reflection & Preparation

Psalm 98; 1-7
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Call to Worship

Psalm 107

| | |
|--------|---|
| Leader | Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy. |
| All | He turns rivers into a desert, springs of water into thirsty ground, a fruitful land into a salty waste, because of the evil of its inhabitants. |
| Leader | He pours contempt on nobles and makes them wander in trackless wastes; but he raises up the needy out of affliction and makes their families like flocks.. |
| All | Whoever is wise, let him observe these things; let them consider the steadfast love of the LORD. |

Invocation

Hymn

All You That Fear Jehovah's Name · Trinity 9

Scripture Reading

Luke 17:20-37

Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, `See here!' or `See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you." Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. And they will say to you, `Look here!' or `Look there!' Do not go after them or follow them. For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.

And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. In that day, he

who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. Remember Lot's wife.

Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left." And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

Song

Song of Revelation · Insert

Worship in Giving

Offertory

Sing Praises! · Larry Shackley
Words from Psalm 47. ©2013 Lorenz Publishing Co.

Hymn

O Lord, Thou Judge of All the Earth · Trinity 49

Pastoral Prayer

Children ages 5-8 may be dismissed for Kids’ Bible College

Sermon

Remember Sodom and Gomorrah · Dr. Ray E. Heiple, Jr.

Genesis 19:15-38 NKJV

- 15
- When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, "Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city."
- 16
- And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city.
- 17
- So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed."
- 18
- Then Lot said to them, "Please, no, my lords!
- 19
- Indeed now, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have increased your mercy which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest some evil overtake me and I die.
- 20
- See now, this city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one; please let me escape there (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live."
- 21
- And he said to him, "See, I have favored you concerning this thing also, in that I will not overthrow this city for which you have spoken.
- 22
- Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there."
- 23
- Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.
- The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar.

- 24
- Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens.
- 25
- So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.
- 26
- But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.
- 27
- And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the LORD.
- 28
- Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace.
- 29
- And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot had dwelt.
- 30
- Then Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters were with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. And he and his two daughters dwelt in a cave...

Notes

Hymn

Great God, What Do I See and Hear! · Trinity 321

Benediction & Postlude

Following the service, the elders will be available to pray with you at the front of the sanctuary.