

How To Live Biblically in an Immoral World

Ephesians 5:1-14

Introduction:

- We are in the midst of a moral revolution in America today, and not in a good way! To think how far we have drifted from God is sad!
- If you've been following the news, in the last few months there has been an uproar and an uprising over sexual abuse. Some of these cases deal with rape, and pedophiles, but many are cases of adultery, and fornication. All of it is sin!
- I suppose it began with Harvey Weinstein recently and it has been an unending tidal wave of new allegations everyday!
- New Jersey's Operation Safety Net arrested 79 men who were child predators online. The investigation, called "Operation Safety Net," resulted in the apprehension of suspects ranging in age from 14 to 75 years old and included a police officer, Airforce captain, swimming coach and youth minister, The Inquirer reported. The suspects were arrested for different sex offenses, including possession of child pornography, sending inappropriate photos to children and sexual assault.
- Matt Lauer from the Today Show is the latest bombshell in the entertainment industry. There are many who are rightfully concerned with the fact that many of these allegations involve abuse of power, harassment, and rape. This morning I want us to consider how to live biblically in the midst of all of the filth and smut of this world! How to live biblically in an immoral world.
- Philippians 2:15- That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.
- Sadly, there are accounts of these wicked sins happening even in Christian circles. And so, we must expose it, decry it, and also learn to live going forward from it. Far too many people have been affected by immorality, and so we must understand how to live biblically going forward!

- There should be no fear in revealing, or rebuking these vile sins (rape, abuse, harassment)- v. 13
- Someone said, “To know the problems, spend time with men; to know the answers, spend time with God.”
- So, God’s word must always be our light and guide

I. LOVE NOT LUST- V. 1-2

a. Christ is our example

i. Be imitators of God- make God our example and model- Holiness see I Peter 1:15-16

ii. As dear children: Children are natural imitators. They often do just what they see their parents or other adults do. When we act according to our nature as children of God, we will imitate Him.

1. By the way how did many of these perverts become like this?

Learned behavior! TV, wrong influences in the home, etc.

2. We must instruct young people how to interact with the opposite gender!

iii. Christ is our example of walking in love, not lust!

b. Love is sacrificial- I Cor. 13:5-6- Giving, serving

c. Lust is selfish- what can I get out of this?

i. Lust is an emotional feeling, desire in our body- Judges 14:1-3, 16:1-4

ii. Samson was physically strong, but morally weak when it came to lust!

iii. Therefore, we must be careful not to cultivate lustful appetites that cannot be biblically fulfilled- i.e. most of what Hollywood puts out (ironically)

iv. How did we get here? We are living in an oversexualized culture today! (Hugh Hefner was praised after he died)

v. Don’t play with fire!

II. BEHAVIOR UNFIT FOR THE CHRISTIAN- V. 3-5

- a. Immorality defined- Paul used a comprehensive list of sexual sins:
 - i. Fornication (porneia), a broad word describing all sexual sin.
 - ii. Uncleanness, another broad word for “dirty” moral behavior, especially in a sexual sense. Uncleanness would include not just immoral acts, but immoral materials- rom-novels, magazines, internet pornography, etc.
 - iii. Filthiness, which has much the same idea as uncleanness. Shows God’s disdain for these sins
 - iv. Coarse jesting, foolish talking- which has the idea of inappropriate, impure sexual humor. Fools make a mock of sin!
 - v. Covetousness is idolatry because it puts a person’s own will over God’s will
 - vi. Paul also included covetousness in this list because of its close association with sexual sin. The desire to have something that doesn’t belong to us has led many people into sexual sin- I Thess 4:3-6 defraud- go beyond, take what isn’t yours to take
- b. So we can conclude that if these principles were followed, we would have no sexual harassment scandals!
- c. The desire to remove purity has truly backfired!
- d. Let it not even be named among you: Paul groups together these ideas of sexual sin and indecency, indicating that none of these are fitting for saints and should not even be named among God’s people.
- e. True conversion, regeneration- v. 5-8
 - i. We must notice the main idea- It isn’t “avoid these things so that you can be a saint.” Rather, it is “you are a saint; now live in a manner fitting for a saint.”
 - ii. The people mentioned in Ephesians 5:3 (the fornicator, the unclean person and the covetous man) have no inheritance in God’s kingdom. If the Holy Spirit lives in them, a transformation has occurred so that they

cannot rest in the habitual practice of these things. These are behaviors that are not marked in true believers

- iii. We were marked and identified by evil, now we are identified by righteousness in Christ!
- iv. We have emerged from this darkness, why go back?

III. BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES TO LIVE BY

- a. Find God's will, and obey it!- v. 10
 - i. Moral purity always happens on purpose, not by accident!
 - ii. There must be boundaries drawn, associations made clear, and sin rebuked- v. 7-11, 13
 - iii. Don't follow the world (shacking up, messing around, etc.)
- b. Guard your associations!- v. 7, 11
 - i. It is wise to set boundaries and protect (yourself or your kids parents!)
 - ii. Some are unwise and expose themselves to sin (college dorms, parties, etc.)
 - iii. Illustr- Mike Pence- Those who criticized Mike Pence- "In Mike Pence's life, every woman wins. His wife wins, his daughters win," the Family Policy Institute president said (Joseph Backholm).
 - iv. Women as mothers and sisters- family
- c. Rebuke and expose- end of v. 11, 13
 - i. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light: Even the things done in secret will be exposed. They will be made manifest by the light of God's searching judgment.
 - ii. Don't be afraid to say no! And learn to punch while you're at it!
 - iii. Don't be afraid to report sin to the proper authorities- there is nothing spiritual about covering up sin- illustr abused wives/children, etc.
- d. Christ gives light- v. 14
 - i. There is grace to move forward (bitterness, shame, etc.)
 - ii. There is forgiveness and mercy- I Cor. 6:9-11

- iii. The world's attitude is that sex offenders are sick and need psychiatric treatment. Immorality is not a sickness, God calls it sin! Illustr-
Weinstein's callous email already planning his return
- iv. The only pill that can help this sickness is the Gos-pill!

Conclusion:

- God's attitude towards immorality- Numb 25:1-9 24k Israelites were slain because they sinned with the women of Moab, Sodom and Gomorrah, etc. See Romans 1:27, Hebrews 13:4
- We need to weep and pray for our nation to repent, and get right with God
- May we be strengthened in our resolve to be morally pure before God and before man.