

February 5, 2006

Input output—Purity Matters

INTRODUCTION

Last weekend walking through the Sandusky Mall, I pasted the Victoria Secret Store. In the front window was a manikin with a evening dress on cut so low in front and so short in length that I turned to my wife and said, "Look hon, Victoria's got no secrets."

- We are not the first generation to live in a sexually charged society.

Corinth is about fifty miles west of Athens, and, when Paul visited it, was the capital of the Roman province of Greece, which they called Achaia. It was a center of commerce and trade.

It was also the center of the worship of Aphrodite, the goddess of sex. There was a great temple of Aphrodite on the Acrocorinth, the hill in back of the city, from which every evening a thousand priestesses of the temple would come down into the city streets to ply their trade, indulging in the worship of sex. Thus Corinth had gained a reputation throughout the whole Roman world as the center of sensuality. Whenever a citizen of Corinth was portrayed in a drama, it was as rather loose, morally, and usually as a drunk.

- We are not the first church age that has had to challenge it people about purity, morality and avoid sexual sins.

In the early second century, the Roman governor Pliny questioned some ex-Christians, who reported that Christians met before dawn for a secret ritual that included an oath to refrain from moral no-nos, including sexual sins. The ritual so described is generally considered to have been baptism, which, as Justin Martyr described a few years later, did require the new Christian to make this kind of moral promise.

T.S. Like many before us,

IF WE ARE GOING TO HONOR GOD WITH OUR BODIES WE MUST STRIVE FOR PURITY IN THE AGE OF PORNEIA

1 Corinthians 6:15-20

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! 16 Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." 17 But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.

18 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. 19 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

I. The Struggle of Porneia (πορνεία)

A. *We live in the age of porneia.*

- Originally, it meant "to act the harlot" and then "to indulge in unlawful lust"
- Was used frequently in Judeo-Christian literature to refer to premarital or extramarital

intercourse, prostitution, incest, and any other type of sexual impropriety.

- porneia includes the entirety of this class of sins

B. We Cannot Avoid the Issue of Porneia

We do not have to look far to find examples of sexual immorality.

- College students collect beads marking sexual exploits during spring break.
- Daily we hear about pastors becoming involved in affairs.
- Reports of molestation are widespread.
- Coaches are jailed over sexual misconduct.
- Many men and not a few women are fighting a daily battle with pornography.
- Men and women now carry on emotional affairs in chat rooms and through e-mails.
- The body is on display throughout our culture, from advertising to casual wear.
- Dial-a-porn is but a finger-tip away.
- The workplace is saturated with sexual conversations about co-workers.
- Words with double meanings proliferate in the media.
- Television programs are often built on dialogue with sexual overtones--and the worst offenders often win the most awards.

II. The Danger of Porneia

A. The sins of πορνεία hurt us

18 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.

B. The sins of πορνεία damage our relationships

16 Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh."

C. The sins of πορνεία defile our unity with God

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never!

D. The sins of πορνεία will consume us.

Jude 7 In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

E. The sins of πορνεία will ultimately destroy us

2 Cor 12:21 I am afraid that when I come again my God will humble me before you, and I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual sin and debauchery in which they have indulged.

Gal 5:19-21

19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; . . . I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

III. The Battle Against Porneia

18 Flee from sexual immorality.

Present imperative.

Have the habit of fleeing without delay or parley.

A. Be serious

Commanded – present imperative

B. Be wise

Avoid it

C. Be practical

Literally run

D. Be relentless

Keep on fleeing Present imperative

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SUMMARY

Means recognizing the

- ✓ The Struggle of Porneia
- ✓ The Danger of Porneia
- ✓ The Battle Against Porneia

CHALLENGE

The Battle against Porneia is often one in which we are uncomfortable admitting. But the truth is the Battle against porneia is a battle that most men and women have to fight on a regular basis. So I close with two challenges.

1. Perhaps what you need to do today is recommit yourself to the battle. You need to say, God make me serious, make me wise, make me practical make me relentless in the battle against porneia. As we close if that is you prayer, I that is something you would like to pray about either by yourself or with someone else, the altar is open.

2. The Battle against porneia is also a battle for something else. It is a battle for God's plan of intimacy. It is battle for God's plan of fulfillment for our sex life. It is a battle for God's plan of fulfillment for singleness. As we close this message on the Battle against Porneia, we will begin a new series addressing God's plan for intimacy and sexual fulfillment whether we are married or single. From the

battle of proneia we return to Eden and seek God's plan for intimacy and sexual fulfillment. So my second challenge to take heart, we only touched on negative side of the battle, best is yet to come. If you need to pray come.