

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XXV

July 12, 2015

No. 28

More and More - Sexual Purity

(Jerry Fite)

Can a Christian walk acceptably before God, and yet do more? Sure, because there is a growth component in our walk before God. The standard for how we should walk is Jesus (*I John 2:6, Ephesians 4:13*), whose perfection leaves us with a lot of room for improvement. Also, our walk before God is neither a one day event, nor a onetime pass or fail test. It is a life time of days, characterized by many challenges. Focusing daily on the high bar set before us, hopefully, we live our days maturing into the glorious image of our Lord. Meeting each spiritual challenge, we can be stronger today than what we were yesterday. Our ability to mature and draw closer to Jesus' high standard leaves us room to do more, when we are already doing right.

In Paul's first letter to the saints in Thessalonica, he emphasizes this fact of the Christian's life. He exhorts the Christians, "...as ye received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God even as ye walk, - that ye abound more and more" (*I Thessalonians 4:1*). Some translations read "excel still more". The newly planted Christians in Thessalonica were living lives pleasing to God

but are exhorted to abound or excel still more.

There is a particular area in the lives of the Christians in Thessalonica that Paul immediately emphasizes: their sexual purity. "*For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye abstain from fornication; that each one of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles who know not God...*" (*I Thessalonians 4:3-5*).

Looking at the sin of fornication as a specific act, we either are abstaining from fornication or committing it. We know, even as the Thessalonians knew, that such an act is a sin. One cannot please God in their walk and commit fornication (*Galatians 5:19, I Corinthians 6:9-11*).

Are there not areas in the life of the one not committing fornication where one can still abound more and more in sanctification and sexual purity? I believe there are.

Men, have you ever made a definite covenant or promise with yourself that you will not lust after a woman? We are not

speaking about those men who gaze at pornography, for such are sinning, and are defiantly not pleasing God with sexual impurity in their heart (*Matthew 5:27-28*). But we are talking about godly men like Job. "*I made a covenant with mine eyes; how then should I look upon a virgin?*" (*Job 31:1*).

You are strengthening your possession over the body when you talk to yourself and promise yourself that the eyes will not so gaze upon a woman as to open the window of lust for the heart. One is abstaining from sexual impurity, but doing more by making a definite covenant with the eyes.

Like the Gentile world in Paul's day, many today do not know God. Living in the passion of lust is normal. It is apparent that women today are not too concerned with men gazing at them, for their immodest dress welcomes the look. So, the next time you are jogging, and see an immodestly dressed woman approaching or passing you, look pass them. Do not even give them the satisfaction of catching your eye. You have already made the covenant with our eyes. You are abounding more and more in sanctification.