

Student Message Notes: Purity

- Main Scripture: James 4:8 (NLT), Matthew 5:8 (NLT), 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NLT), 1 Corinthians 10:13 (NLT), 2 Timothy 2:22 (NIV)
- Bottom Line: Purity provides freedom
- Sometimes when we look at a topic too closely it can create a skewed understanding of that topic. But when we take time to step back and see the big picture it adds context that completely changes our understanding! That is how it can be when we talk about purity and boundaries.
- When we only focus in on the "do's and don'ts" of boundaries it can start to feel like fences in our life. But when we step back and understand purity as a whole, we can start to see that it really is a way to experience freedom!

Tension Question: What is purity?

- Purity is about wholeness and devotion. It is about every part of our lives, not just boundaries.
- Scripture: James 4:8 (NLT). We cannot live a divided life between God and the world
- Seeking purity means seeking God whole-heartedly
- Scripture: Matthew 5:8 (NLT). When we seek God whole-heartedly, we get to experience everything that He is. When we experience God, he fulfills what our hearts are looking for. We are set free from the world and get to live in His freedom!
- Not only do we get to experience God and His freedom, it is a calling on believers!
- Scripture: 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NLT). As a believer, we become a temple for the Holy Spirit to dwell within. God literally dwells in us! And as his temples we are called to live pure lives. If being a temple for the Holy Spirit is a new concept to you or you want to learn more about what that means, we have resources for you as part of this week's reading plan.
- This means that in everything that we do we need to seek to glorify God and use His word, the Bible, for how to do that.
- We live in a world that is showing us content and messages that can make it hard for us to navigate what is right and wrong, but God has given us a clear way to live our lives. It is going to go against what the world is telling us.
- Honestly, the world makes it hard for us to seek purity. There is temptation around every corner and messages that are telling us that is "doesn't matter" and normalizing sin.
- We are called to be pure in our actions, thoughts, and words. This requires us to be active and not passive. It requires us to whole-heartedly be devoted to God.
- Scripture: 1 Corinthians 10:13 (NLT). Our God is bigger than temptation. On our own, temptation can be too great, but when we truly lean into God's strength it will always be greater than any temptation! But it requires action and commitment on our part.

How can we take action?

- Scripture: 2 Timothy 2:22 (NIV). We are not called to just avoid sin; we are called to flee temptation! Temptation is not the sin, but we know it leads up to sin and so we are called to flee from it! This is how we are called to be active and not passive!
- We can read a great example of someone not just avoiding sin, but fleeing temptation, in Genesis 39! (quickly summarize Joseph and Potiphar's wife). He completely removed himself from a tempting situation!
- What does that look like for us today? Boundaries. A lot of time we can feel like putting a boundary around a sin is enough but the boundary needs to go beyond the sin and instead be fully around what is tempting to you!

Examples:

- If you are in a relationship just having your physical boundary be that you won't have sex is not enough. You have to ask, "When do we feel the most tempted?" and have that become your boundary. (HS)
 - Just saying that you're not going to watch inappropriate things on the Internet is not enough. Your boundary needs to be around the thing that makes you tempted to watching those things.
 - When are you tempted to talk in an inappropriate way? Is it when you're with a certain group of people?
 - Do certain shows, music, or social media cause you think about people in inappropriate ways?
 - You have to be ready to reassess your boundaries and areas that tempt you. They can change and need to be refocused.
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- Boundaries are going to require sacrifice - Joseph left something that was a great thing in his life in order to flee from temptation.
 - This is where focusing on just the boundaries can start to feel like it is only fences being put up in your life, but when we take a step back and look at the big picture, we get to see that there is freedom!
 - The reality is that God created sex to be a part of marriage. Anything outside of sex in marriage is not what God created it for which includes your actions, thoughts and words. (shared appropriately based on MS/HS Audience)
 - But it is not about someday being married. It is about today! Today you have the opportunity to live how God created you to! He didn't give us these boundaries just so we would struggle, he gave us them because He loves us! He wants us to experience living in His true love that cannot be found anywhere else in life.
 - Psalm 19 talks about God's commandments and laws are not just his harsh power, but it is how he brings joy and light into our lives!
 - It is not even about what we get out of it. Our response should be out of obedience to our God who sent his son to die on the cross so that we can have salvation and a relationship with Him. It is a way of glorifying our Creator with our lives.
 - One of the ways that we can experience freedom is through forgiveness. The truly beautiful thing about our God is that He is a forgiving and redeeming God. If the sin that we have talked about tonight is in your past or something you currently struggle with. God will forgive. You are not past a point of forgiveness. The story that is written throughout the Bible is a story of redemption which means that you are not defined by your past.

Ending Questions:

- Is there something in your life that you need to confess and surrender to God?
- Where is there temptation in your life that you need to put a boundary around?
- Are you willing to sacrifice what that could mean for you in the world so that you can be whole-heartedly seeking purity?
- Do not do this alone. Share with someone you trust. When we bring a struggle out of the darkness and into the light it becomes lighter.