

HOW TO ENSURE SEXUAL PURITY IN THE MINISTRY!

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This brief essay serves to ask heart-probing questions so as to gauge my heart and my love for Christ. May I rehearse these questions frequently so as to ensure sexual purity in the ministry for God's glory and for the good of my soul.

1. Do I love Christ passionately?

I will always pursue what I love most. Do I love Christ or do I love sex? Do I love temporal, immediate, sexual pleasure more than I enjoy the lasting, eternal, full pleasures of Christ? If I am loving Christ passionately, fully, diligently, daily and savoringly then I will not live a life pursuing sexual immorality in any of its forms.

2. Do I really meet with God in prayer daily?

Not do I 'say my prayers'; but, do I really meet with, commune with, fellowship with and enjoy intimacy with the Living God? Meeting with God and speaking to Him (*prayer*) and hearing from Him (*Scripture*) can safeguard us from the wily and seductive lures of immorality.

3. Do I spend too much time online simply 'browsing' blogs/sites?

With all the bad that exists online, there are tremendous and abundant resources for biblical study, theological dialogue and counseling tools. But even though I may not be looking for porn, it may come looking for me while I'm harmlessly browsing a blog or a site when a pop-up appears. Get online, study, then get off. Don't browse aimlessly.

4. Do I enjoy marital intimacy frequently with my beautiful bride?

One of the God-given safeguards for immorality (physical or cyber) is the full, intoxicating lovemaking between a husband and his wife. Do I enjoy my wife? Do I serve her? Do I please her? Often? Regularly? Diligently? Passionately? If not, I'm *already* heading down a dangerous path. Begin now to invest all my efforts and passions toward my wife!

5. Do I have any relationships, occasions, or appointments where I may be alone with a woman other than my wife?

As I look at my calendar, my phone, my texting conversations, my Facebook messages, the pictures I peek at, is there anything where I may be alone with a woman who is not my wife and I'm hiding it? If so, cut it off immediately! Flee and forsake it!

6. Do I have anything in my heart/life/mind/ministry that I'm unwilling to disclose to my wife?

A shepherd deals with sin constantly. Of course, his own sin first and then the sins of the flock that he shepherds. But is there any issue, relationship, conversation, woman that I'm afraid to disclose to my wife? Am I honest with her?

7. Do I welcome other godly men specifically asking me about my own sexual purity?

Not the simple question: "Are you pure?" Everyone could subjectively answer affirmatively to that. But are there men who really love me and men that I ask (and beg!) to probe into my heart, my desires, my internet searches, my internet usage, my relationship with my wife? Men, probe into my life! Men, ask me anything! Dig and dig and help me!

8. Do I hate it when I do sin sexually & do I repent of it seeking to mortify that hellish dragon?

What is my attitude when I do lust after a woman? How do I respond *after* I've fallen? Do I hate it? Do I despise it? Or am I 'that guy' with a 'beloved/cherished/pet sin' that I'm unwilling to slay with the death blow? To repent is to hate, forsake, confess and replace it zealously!

9. Do I earnestly pursue & diligently pray for aggressive holiness?

The greatest weapon is the Word and prayer! Hear from God (*Scripture*) and then speak to Him (*prayer*). Do I passionately, urgently, frequently, intentionally pray and beg God to make me pure, holy, above-reproach *entirely*? Do I pray this *before* I give in to lust? Pray before you begin the day for God to grant abundant purity in heart, mind and body.

10. Do I rehearse in my mind the devastating effects that falling sexually would have on my marriage, family, and ministry?

Countless consequences would crush me if I *were* to fall sexually! Rehearse them frequently! Remember them often! Fear lest you give into sin! Remember that I would dishonor Christ, I would lose the pastoral ministry, I would be disqualified, I would use the trust of my wife and my children. I would disappoint those whom I've discipled, led to Christ. People would see me as a hypocrite and as man unwilling to mortify sin. Satan would gleefully rejoice and the world would have yet another bit of ammo to shoot at the hypocrisy of 'Christians'. O flee! Flee hard! Flee fast! And fear Christ and His discipline enough to passionately pursue holiness!