

# Why the man of God in the ministry of the Word must be sexually pure

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## **1. To represent Jesus Christ—the Chief Shepherd—faithfully.**

A minister of the Word recognizes that he serves first of all as a sheep in need of the Great Shepherd and is, by God's sovereign directive, an undershepherd to serve God's flock faithfully. To serve the flock of God as a shepherd is to minister in a way that faithfully pictures the shepherd leadership of Christ. Christ purely leads His flock. To represent Christ faithfully is to serve as a man of God, with full integrity, demonstrating the utmost purity, zealous for holiness and Christlikeness in all things. This is the man of God who represents Christ faithfully. Indeed, Jesus Christ faithfully loves His own bride, the Church. He *never* lusts after another or longs for another or flirts with another! No! Jesus Christ faithfully loves, cherishes, and passionately has affection for His bride, the Church, and her alone.

## **2. To obey Scripture's clear commands.**

Scripture contains many such commands to be sexually pure. All believers must flee sexual immorality. The epistles speak of those who live in immorality as those who will be excluded from the kingdom of God. Thus, for a man of God serving in the capacity of preaching & teaching the Word of God, he must be pure so as to be obedient himself to the truth that he proclaims to others.

## **3. To fulfill his God-given blessing & duty to be a One Woman Man with his wife.**

The first qualification that the Scriptures provide for an overseer — one who handles the Word and leads in the local church — after being above reproach is that he must be a one-woman-man. This construction simply refers to a man who leads in the church who is fully, totally, and entirely devoted to the one woman that God has given him. He has no wandering eye for other women. He has no secret relationship with anyone else besides his wife. The wife is the one who captivates his heart, his mind, his eyes, his body, and his affections. He longs for her and her alone.

## **4. To live in an exemplary way so that all can see and examine him and see him a one who is above reproach.**

To be a pastor is to be an example. To be a shepherd leader is to be one who emulates Christ and lives a life worthy of emulation. The man who handles God's Word must be sexually pure so that the flock can see his life — and his purity — and the example that he sets so as to affirm that he is above reproach and qualified for the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **5. To ferociously fight against succumbing to the first instance of lust so that no sexual sin will follow.**

A man's attitude toward the initial temptations of sexual lust speaks volumes as to his overall commitment to piety. A man who minimizes small, hidden sexual temptations is one who will fall

prey to the larger, public sexual scandals later on down the road. A man must fight to be sexually pure at the first instance of lust so as to ensure that no sexual sins — and most certainly no ongoing patterns of sexual sin — transpire. This necessitates a ferocious fight.

**6. To enjoy and retain a completely clean conscience.**

When God calls a man to the ministry of the Word of God, his duty is to pray and study, to meditate and herald. For him to live a life of sexual sin (in any of its various forms) is to drown himself with a guilty conscience. His conscience will deafen him if he entertains, permits, and toys with sexual sin. A man of God must be sexually pure so as to be entirely free in his conscience. After all, God tests the heart, the mind, and the life. God is the one who examines all people. Living sexually free clears and appeases the conscience.

**7. To instruct his children on sexual purity from the Word of God while living by those same principles himself in the home.**

A man who allows ongoing bits of sexual sin in his life cannot instruct his children in the path of sexual purity with integrity. He is a hypocrite. Only a life of purity is the way of life that can faithfully instruct children to flee sexual temptations. To instruct children to be sexually pure while a minister himself lives in sexual sin is the height of hypocrisy and deception. To truly teach the children to live purely to God's glory necessitates the man of God practice what he preaches even in the private recesses of his home.

**8. To preach and teach on the issues of sexual purity without any hypocrisy.**

The minister must always apply to his own heart that which he will command his hearers to apply. He must speak to his own heart that which he will speak to the hearts of his hearers. A minister of the Word who preaches through the Word of God will regularly come to Scriptures on sexual temptation, sexual sin, and sexual lust. A man must endeavor to live in such a Godly way, and in such a way that is blameless and above reproach, that he manifests full integrity. In other words, he must preach to his own heart to be sexually pure that which he proclaims to others.

**9. To protect from him being disqualified from the ministry of The Lord Jesus Christ.**

When a man stumbles into sexual sin — especially public, ongoing, habitual — he disqualifies himself from the service of the Lord's church. The man of God must strive with lionlike passion to flee sexual thoughts, pornographic views, extra-marital relationships, and flirtatious movements and statements. Christ's servant must be holy and above reproach. He must be faithful to his own wife so that she knows that he is faithful and that she has full confidence in him. A shepherd in the local church must be sexually pure so as to remain qualified in the ministry. No one is automatically qualified for life in Christ's church. Everyone is subject to disqualification if sin persists. May Christ's servants who preach His Word kill sin, annihilate lust, fight for purity and remain qualified by the grace of God and by the enabling strength of the Spirit.

**10. To certify and validate that he himself is born again and to make his calling and election sure.**

Those who live ongoing lives of sexual immorality will not inherit the kingdom of God. Those who live in sexual sin resemble the Gentiles (=non-believers) who do not know God. Sexual purity is a mark of a child of God. To desire chastity and fidelity to one's spouse is a mark of grace in one's soul. To indulge in immorality and to plunge into sexual promiscuity is to show that one does not know God, is not satisfied with God, has not tasted the goodness of the Lord, and has not the life of God in him.

### **11. To model for the other men (young & old alike) in that flock what true godliness, purity, integrity, & marital fidelity looks like.**

The shepherd is a model. To pastor is to serve as an example. To be an elder is to be one with an exemplary life, that is, one worth emulating. The preacher must model sexual purity so that all others (men and women; young and old) will see what godliness, purity, integrity, and marital fidelity looks like. If people in the flock cannot look at the shepherd and see one who models sexual purity and *how* to live a life of sexual purity, that man ought not to be in the Master's service. Pastors must speak frankly, openly, clearly, and unashamedly about these issues of sexual purity and the right place and time for sexual relations (within the marriage covenant alone between one man and one woman) because the Bible does so. And pastors must model — that is, provide a template to follow — what purity is like, why purity is important, how to pursue purity, and how to run when temptation lurks.

### **12. To glorify God and put the pure beauty of His gospel on display in the church**

Marriage pictures the gospel of Jesus Christ. The God-ordained meaning of marriage is and always has been to be a walking, living, breathing portrait of Christ's passionate love for His bride, the Church. When a man of God rightly pictures this in his own life by faithfully loving his wife (or, if he's single, waiting for the wife who is to come), he glorifies God and puts the pure beauty of the gospel on display since he is not going to other lovers but is demonstrating accurately the gospel of Christ by the pure, single-minded, sole-focused love for one bride alone.

### **13. To demonstrate that the supremacy of Jesus Christ & the enjoyment of Him is infinitely more satisfying than any sexual lust.**

To sin is to reject the satisfying supremacy of Jesus Christ in that particular moment. When a believer sins, he actually elevates something — anything — to the rightful position of Jesus Christ as the supreme, preeminent, worthy One. The man who holds the Word of God to preach and teach it week after week must be sexually pure to unashamedly demonstrate that Jesus Christ and His glory far surpasses the temporary treasures of sexual lust. Like a poisonous snake, sexual lust may linger dormant for a few moments and then it will lift its poisonous head, strike, inject the poison, and bring quick death. Sexual lust functions the same way. The enjoyment of all sexual lust may be for a moment but the man of God realizes that enjoying Christ, treasuring Him, cherishing His glory, reveling in His satisfying person, work, and nature far outweighs the happinesses of any indulging in sexual immorality.

*Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.*

**— 1 Timothy 4:12**