



Grade 12 Class of St. John the Beloved

ORTHODOX SEXUALITY AND PURITY 13 Points You Should Know

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 12. Satan will lie to you about sex, but Jesus tells you the truth.
 13. You must learn to think long term, not short term.
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Orthodox Sexuality and Purity

13 Points You Should Know!

1. Sex is good. God created it, God called it "good," and it existed before there was any sin in the world.

Sex was not created by Satan, Playboy, Hollywood, HBO, rock musicians, the Internet, or some pervert lurking in the shadows of a porno shop. Sex was created by the holy God of heaven, where purity reigns.

He designed it and He makes the rules and tells you when you can and when you can't use it. For Example...When you buy a new shirt and it gets dirty you look at the manufacturer's guidelines on how to wash it if you want it to last.

It's ok to talk about sex: God made sex physically desirable by creating us all with sex drives. God's Word speaks openly of the pleasure of sex within the marriage relationship:

Proverbs 5:18, 19 "Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth. ¹⁹ As a loving deer and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; And always be enraptured with her love."

Song of Solomon 7:1, 6-9 How beautiful are your feet in sandals, O prince's daughter! The curves of your thighs are like jewels, The work of the hands of a skillful workman. How fair and how pleasant you are, O love, with your delights! 7 This stature of yours is like a palm tree, And your breasts like its clusters. 8 I said, "I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of its branches." Let now your breasts be like clusters of the vine, The fragrance of your breath like apples, 9 And the roof of your mouth like the best wine.

Is talking about sex a joke? We shouldn't be ashamed to talk about what God wasn't ashamed to create. However, God requires us to address the subject in keeping with his intentions and requirements, not the world's. He warns us not to talk about sex in any inappropriate context:

"But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place." (Ephesians 5:3-4)

God designed sex for the sacred union of marriage, and reserves it for that union. It is both the means by which children are conceived (something very close to God's heart) and a means by which marital intimacy is expressed

and cultivated. When it takes place in its proper context, God is definitely pro-sex as it is the holiest way a man can show his love for his wife.

2. Like all good gifts from God, sex can be misused and perverted.

Water is a gift of God, without which we couldn't survive. But floods and tidal waves are *water out of control*, and the effects are devastating. Fire is an energy-producing gift of God that gives warmth and allows us to cook. But a forest fire or a house burning to the ground or a person engulfed in flames is fire *out of control*-it is horrible and frightening. Water and fire are good things which, when they occur outside their God-intended boundaries, become bad.

Likewise, God designed sex to exist within certain boundaries. When exercised in line with God's intended purpose, it is beautiful and constructive. When out of control, violating God's intended purpose, it becomes ugly and destructive. Sex is a good thing which, when it occurs outside its God-designed boundaries, becomes bad.

The problem isn't sex-the problem is us. We're sinners who can pervert, abuse, and rip away from their proper place the good things God created. The greater the gift from God, the more power it has both for good and bad. Inside marriage, sex has great power for good. Outside marriage it has equally great power for bad.

3. The boundaries of sex are the boundaries of marriage.

Sex and marriage go together. *Sexual union is intended as an expression of a lifelong commitment*, a symbol of the spiritual union that exists only within the unconditional commitment of marriage. Apart from marriage, the lasting commitment is absent and the sex act becomes a false expression, a lie.

Every act of sex outside of marriage cheapens both sex and marriage. Sex is a privilege inseparable from the responsibilities of the sacred marriage covenant. To exercise the privilege apart from the responsibility perverts God's intention for sex.

Do you want to know how it is cheapened? Think of Christmas. You go and hunt around your house for the gifts that your parents got for you. You find it and open the gift before it is given to you. How do you think your parents feel when they catch you? They couldn't wait to see the look on your face Christmas morning when they gave it to you. But you ruined that feeling and every time you or they look at that gift you remember the embarrassment.

4. Your sexual purity is essential to your walk with God.

Sexual purity is not an option for an obedient Christian, it's a requirement. God's will is centered on our character and moral purity much more than on our circumstances, such as job, housing and schooling. You want to know God's will? You don't have to wonder. Here it is: *"It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality"* (1 Thessalonians 4:3). So we can say that there is no sense seeking God's will in other areas when you are choosing to live in sexual impurity in your mind or body.

"Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart." (Psalm 24:3-4)

"If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." (Psalm 66:18)

"If anyone turns a deaf ear to the law, even his prayers are detestable." (Proverbs 28:9)

"When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen," says the LORD Almighty." (Zechariah 7:13)

Sexual purity is inseparable from a committed Christian life. If you are not living in sexual purity, God will not hear your prayers until you offer the prayer of confession and repentance and commit yourself to a life of holiness (1 John 1:9).

5. You are vulnerable to sexual immorality.

Don't kid yourself that it can never happen to you-it can. And if you don't think it can, it almost certainly will.

"So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" (1 Corinthians 10:12)

"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin . . . watch yourself, or you also may be tempted." (Galatians 6:1)

If you think you'll never be burglarized, you'll fail to take precautions to keep it from happening. If you think you'll never fall sexually, you'll fail to take precautions to keep it from happening.

Why will we fall? Because Satan has perverted everything. Sex is a \$7.3 Trillion industry.

6. You are targeted for sexual immorality.

WHO DOES SATAN ATTACK THE MOST?

The more involved you are in serving Christ, the greater vested interests Satan has in destroying you and God's work in and through you. The evil one wants to take you down *and* to use your life as a bad example to other Christians, who will imitate your moral compromise. God requires that we be holy and pure instruments to be used by him (2 Timothy 2:20-21). More Christians-including Christian leaders-become useless and are lost to serving Christ due to sexual immorality than anything else.

Here's the reality-the forces of evil have taken out a contract on *you*. There's a price on your head. Satan has declared war on you: "Our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers of darkness, against spiritual forces of evil in the invisible realm" (Ephesians 6:12). These evil beings have vested interests in your moral collapse. They will do everything in their power to strike out at Christ and his church through enticing you into immorality.

Satan does not have to waste his time on those who have already made the biggest messes of their lives. Rather, he specially targets those whose fall would have the greatest negative effect on the kingdom of God. That's why God's Word warns Christians:

"Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

7. Your body belongs to God, not you.

"You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body" (1 Corinthians 6:20).

When you came to Christ, when you affirmed him as Lord of your life, you surrendered your entire self, including your body, to God. The title to your life was transferred from you to God. Christ owns you and your body. You are bought and paid for. "Your body" is really *his* body. He paid the ultimate price for it. What price? The shed blood of God Almighty! We are his both by virtue of his creation and his redemption. God has every right to tell me what to do

with my mind and body. *I have no right to do whatever I want with what belongs to God.*

8. Sexual purity begins in the mind, not the body.

"As a man thinks in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).

"For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality . . ." (Matthew 15:19-20).

"But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28).

You will inevitably adopt the morality of the programs, movies, books, magazines, music, Internet sites and conversations you participate in. GIGO- Garbage in, garbage out; Godliness in, godliness out. The cognitive is basic to the behavioural-you become what you choose to feed your mind on.

Sow a thought, reap an action;
Sow an action, reap a habit.
Sow a habit, reap a character.
Sow a character, reap a destiny.

Your future can be accurately predicted by what you allow your mind to dwell on. Sinful actions don't come out of nowhere-they are the cumulative product of little moral compromises made over time, which ultimately culminate in ungodly behaviour.

EVERYONE HAS HEARD OF THE ACRONYM GIGO RIGHT?

YOU WILL GET OUT WHAT YOU PUT IN

Actions, habits, character and destiny all start with a thought, and thoughts are fostered by what we choose to take into our minds. Therefore we should take extreme care about what we feed our minds on.

"Above all else, guard your heart [mind, inner being], for it is the wellspring of life" (Proverbs 4:23).

If someone wants to pollute water, he pollutes it at its source. If he wants to purify water, he purifies it at its source. Our thoughts are the source of our lives. All our lives flow from our mind, and through the choices we make every day we program our minds, either for godliness or ungodliness.

"Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word" (Psalm 119:37)

ON THE OTHER HAND WE SHOULD THINK LIKE THIS

"Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure . . . think about such things" (Philippians 4:8).

We can't avoid every temptation, but we can avoid many of them, and we can certainly resist their attempts to take hold of us. Martin Luther said, "You can't keep the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from making a nest in your hair."

Be careful what you expose your mind to. If you're on a diet, don't go to Baskin & Robin's. If you do, your resistance will break down. If you want to abstain from lust you don't go places and watch movies and programs and read things that stimulate lust.

Your body will go where your mind allows it to. When it comes to your sexual purity, the ultimate battle is in your mind. Don't give your mind junk food. Be sure you're getting spiritual nutrition.

9. Since God doesn't want you to have premarital sex, neither does he want you to do that which prepares your body for premarital sex.

"How far can I go?" This is a common question, but it isn't the best question because usually it means "how close can I get to disobeying God without actually doing it?" If a parent tells his child "Don't step out on the freeway," an obedient child won't go dangle his leg over the freeway, he'll stay far away from it. By putting himself close to the freeway, he subjects himself to unnecessary temptation to act on his impulses, disobey and put himself in grave danger.

God made the body and mind with sex drives, and as those drives are stimulated they move toward a climax-this is a simple fact of life that no one should be naïve about. Caressing each other in sexually stimulating ways is foreplay, and foreplay is designed by God to culminate in sexual intercourse. Since intercourse is forbidden outside marriage, so is foreplay. Since sexual intercourse before marriage is wrong, it is also wrong to engage in activity that propels mind and body toward sexual intercourse.

"Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." (2 Timothy 2:22)

Guys are more quickly and easily stimulated than girls. A girl often thinks extended kisses and hugs are fine, naive to the fact that the guy is sexually stimulated and is tempted to push for more. Again, make sure you draw the line far enough back that *neither* of you crosses it.

10. Once you let your body cross the line, it will neither know nor care about your Christian convictions.

Some Christians pray God will protect their purity, then wilfully put themselves into temptation and wonder why God didn't answer their prayer. This is like putting a book at the corner of a table and praying "God please don't let this book fall," when all the while you keep pushing it further and further off the edge. No matter how fervently you pray that the book won't fall, it will fall if you continue to choose to push it. No matter how fervently you pray that you will not fall into immorality, you will fall if you continue to make choices that feed your temptation toward immorality. Don't allow your choices to undermine and invalidate your prayers.

11. God would not tell you to abstain from impurity if it was impossible to obey him.

God is not cruel. He doesn't command you to abstain from necessities, such as eating or drinking or breathing. Sex is something everyone can abstain from-it is a strong desire, yes, but never an emergency, never a necessity. Christ has given us the resources to resist every temptation:

"The grace of God teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age" (Titus 2:12).

"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires" (2 Peter 1:3-4).

You do not have to watch that video. You can turn it off, walk out, go in the other room. You don't have to click on that link to an ungodly website. You don't have to fondle the person you're dating. You can and should draw upon your resources in Christ, and say "no" to temptations to sin.

12. Satan will lie to you about sex, but Jesus tells you the truth.

Jesus said of Satan, "He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:43-44).

Satan is an expert at telling lies, and he tells them smoothly and convincingly. He has persuaded many young people "it's okay to touch her there, it's okay to let him touch you, it's natural, it won't hurt anything." Soon there's lust, sin, devastation, disillusionment, loss of respect, conflict, insecurity and sometimes AS FAR AS unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Many young people end up angry and bitter at themselves and others because they bought the lie, the relationship is ruined and now they are paying the price.

Satan is a liar, but Jesus is the truth and the truth-teller (John 14:6). He said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). Those who believe Satan's lies about sex end up in bondage. Those who believe Christ's truth about sex end up free.

Identify and meditate on the truths Christ tells you. Identify and reject the lies Satan tells you.

13. You must learn to think long term, not short term.

Good or bad, you will always reap what you sow-you will always harvest the consequences of your choices.

"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." (Galatians 6:7-9)

It doesn't matter how smart you think you are. It doesn't matter whether you have a Ph.D. in physics, if you step off the tenth story of a building, you will fall to your death. Gravity is law-there's just no getting around it. Likewise, God has set up spiritual laws that govern the universe, including laws concerning our sexual behaviour. If we break his commandments, ultimately we get broken.

Scripture teaches two basic alternatives in life, the way of God and the way of men, the way of holiness and the way of sin. Proverbs speaks of the path of wisdom and the path of foolishness, and calls upon us to make right

choices, which are also wise, and avoid wrong choices, which are also foolish. After laying out the blessings of obedience and the curses of disobedience, God said,

"This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19).

The lifelong consequences of sexual impurity are worse than we can imagine. The lifelong rewards of sexual purity are greater than we can imagine.

Other Good Verses

Proverbs 6:25-26 Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, Nor let her allure you with her eyelids. ²⁶For by means of a harlot *A man is reduced to a crust of bread*;

Matthew 5:28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

1John 2:16 For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

Romans 13:13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

1 Timothy 5:22 "Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure."

Isaiah 1:21 ²¹ How the faithful city has become a harlot! It was full of justice; Righteousness lodged in it, But now murderers.

Ezekiel 16:15-16 "But you trusted in your own beauty, played the harlot because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry on everyone passing by who *would have* it. ¹⁶You took some of your garments and adorned multicolored high places for yourself, and played the harlot on them. *Such things should not happen, nor be*",

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 "It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honourable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God."