

“Purity, Mercy, and Power”

1 Thess. 4:3-8; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 18-20

1-2 songs

Prayer of praise/offering

Message

Intro

We have just come off of a wonderful conference here “Healing the Broken Hearted”, a conference on sexual purity, I want my message today to basically conclude this conference and share from God’s word a message of challenge and encouragement and hope.

It is not an understatement at all to say that we live in a culture that is obsessed with sex and sexuality ... everywhere you go today there is something sexual being put in front of us ... if it is not someone hardly dressed then it is an ad for Viagara or how to spice up this part of your lifeto MTV ... shows and movies ... the booming pornography industry...

TS But the good news today is that God’s holy word has a lot to say to us about this area. Praise God the bible is not some outdated book. It is God’s inerrant and infallible and never outdated Word!! The father knows best when it comes to this area. After all, God is the one who created sex and therefore it is a good thing, when done in its proper context.

Ex. Fire: good when used to warm us or cook our food or ... but when used to destroy our home, not a good thing.

Speaking of God’s Word, let’s stand in respect for God’s Word as I read our text today:

1 Thess. 4:3-8 and 1 Cor. 6:9-11, 18-20 (from these passages we are going to learn 3 things: God’s will; God’s Mercy; and God’s power: look for these as I read....)

Pray

1. God's Will – God the Father wants us to be holy and healthy. “*It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality ... live a holy life*” (1 Thess. 4:3, 7)

These passages and others call us to live a holy life, to be pure, to say no to temptation and to do the will of God.

1 Thess. 4 this is God's will: sexual purity .. controlling your own body ... not taking advantage or defrauding another ... v. 7 God did not call us to be impure but to live a holy life. Pretty clear!

1 Cor. 6 lists some specific sins: sexual immorality (pornos = variety of sexual sins), adultery, homosexuality, prostitution ... v. 18 sexual immorality being a unique sin...

why? Because it creates a soul tie and it is deeper than just a physical thing and because our bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit and because marriage is such a sacred thing.

What defines sexual sin? any sexual activity outside of the holy bond between one man and one woman, whether that be premarital sex, adultery, homosexuality, or entertaining any sexual thoughts toward someone you are not married to.

The bible says:

1 Peter 1 be holy for I am holy

Ex. 20 thou shalt not commit adultery

Hebr. 13 the marriage bed shall be undefiled

39 times the word **fornication** is used: sex outside of marriage

Lev 18:22 "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable.

Mt. 5:28 said if you lust in your heart after someone it is adultery of the heart.

God calls us to live holy and He does this because He loves us and cares for us and wants to protect and provide for us. It is so important that you understand the father heart of God behind His commands and instructions and prohibitions. He gives guidelines because He cares for us. He says “NO” to certain things for good reasons. He is not a divine kill joy!

Ex. Chainsaw for Sarah Beth – NO; eating chips and drinking pop all the time .. oh but Dad you are so restrictive.

God wants us to be holy in order to be healthy. He has our best interest at heart.

Jer. 29:11-13

When we follow God's Word and God's guidelines we protect ourselves from a lot of pain and hardship... we have heard that loud and clear in the testimonies the past month ... God gives guidance to protect us and provide for us.

To protect us from the pain of a broken heart that comes when we prematurely bind to someone through sex and then have the relationship broken off... to protect us from all the physical issues with STDS ... are STDs a Rom. 1 thing? stats Issue with homosexuality and giving blood....put the bible aside and you should still see that the homosexual lifestyle if not a healthy one.... Multiple partners, etc.

God's heart is that holiness leads to our ultimate joy and health.

Now, lest you think God is all about the "shalt nots" well in **1 Cor. 7** he says thou shalt ... be sure to have sex and have it regularly with your spouse. Meet each others' needs.

Couples: God wants sex to be practiced in the context of a marriage between one man and one woman. He wants it to be enjoyable and mutually satisfying. He wants it to help keep you united and close as a married couple, like glue. He wants you to feel loved and valued in the act. He wants to use it also to relieve stress and help fight diseases. I'm serious. This is documented in a recent article in Time.

Ex. Time article

God wants you to meet the needs of your spouse, to be committed to your spouse in thought, word and deed so that the holy expression of sexuality will be glorifying to God and meaningful to the man and woman. This is God's will.

TS What about when we don't follow God's Word and sin? And we all do. Is there hope then? There sure is:

2. God's Mercy – God the Son is willing to forgive our sin. "*But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Cor. 6:11)

1 Cor. 6:11 (it seems pretty hopeless until this verse and then we have hope!) ... washed by the cleansing power of Jesus (prop?), sanctified by the work of God's spirit, and justified (declared righteous) in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. His blood, His suffering, His sacrifice given for us!!!

Passion: when you see the movie the Passion, you see that He went through all of that not due to the Romans or the Jews but due to my sin and yours! It is Mel Gibson's arm that nails Jesus because as the director he wanted to make the point that he nailed Jesus to the cross. And so did I and so did you.

The Bible says:

1 Peter 2:23-25 23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. 24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

Aren't you glad today that our great God is not only holy and just but also loving and forgiving? The cross is about God's love and God's forgiveness. The blood of Jesus can take away all sin.

Eph 1:7-8

7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

Col 1:13-14

13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Heb 9:22

22 In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Acts 13:38-40

38 "Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. 39 Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.

Lam. 3 His mercies are new every morning, new every morning.

Ps. 103 says bless the Lord ... who forgives all your sins

When the **woman was caught in adultery**, Jesus forgive her and said go and sin no more.

When King **David** committed adultery God forgave and restored him, there were consequences yes, but also forgiveness and restoration! There will be consequences but there is also forgiveness.

God is holy and He is also loving and gracious and forgiving and merciful!
The bible says:

Prov. 28:13 If we hide sin and cover it up, we will not prosper. But if we come clean, admit it and turn from it, then we will find mercy.

1 John 1:9 if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness

Appl. So, maybe you are here today and you have some painful regrets in your life, some sins that you are very sorry for today. It still causes you pain to think about what you have done or are doing. Well, I am here to tell you based on God's word that if you bring those things to the cross, the blood of Jesus is able to take that sin away, whether it be adultery or pre-marital sex or pornography or abortion or homosexuality or lying or lustful thoughts or any sin. **The blood of Jesus Christ is powerful and sufficient and able to cleanse any and all sin!!!!** Sins you committed before receiving Christ as well as sins you have committed since receiving Christ.

Don't hide it or pretend it isn't there; don't try to cover it up. Don't sweep it under the rug, but rather **bring it out and hand it over to Jesus!**

(come down: what we will celebrate later this day – communion – is the greatest sacrifice ever made by the most holy man who ever lived (Jesus) for the deepest offense every committed: sin against God which we all have. Will you bring your sin right here so that God's mercy might flow to you? (pray? *Oh Lord God, pour out your mercy today...*

1 Cor. 6:11

----- Pause -----

TS Notice the last phrase in **v. 11** “by the Spirit of our God” – this is very important. Forgiveness is great and leaves us feeling clean and all, but what about after we leave the cross? I mean, we bring the sin to the cross and receive the cleansing of the blood of Jesus, but what about when we leave the cross, are we just left to our own power and strength and resources to just try harder to do good? No, rather if we are a follower of Jesus then we have:

3. God's Power – God the Spirit is able to empower our lives. “... *by the Spirit of our God*” (1 Cor. 6:11)

This is so important so listen carefully: When you receive Jesus (and some of you are new Christians), what happens at that divine moment is that the Holy Spirit comes to live inside of you.

Eph. 1:13 you were sealed with the HS until the day of redemption

Rom. 8:9 you have the same spirit that raised Christ from the dead living in you

The Holy Spirit is the power of God within you that enables you to live for Him. It is God's power in you that allows you to forsake that sin, say no to temptation, be healed of pain, and live in victory and obedience. Greater is He that is in you than that problem or sin or demon that you struggle with. And what you have to do is daily allow the HS in you to empower your life.

And that is why the Bible says to be filled with the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:8 you shall receive power when the HS comes upon you

Eph. 5:18 don't be drunk with alcohol but be filled with Spirit. When one is drunk they are under the influence of the alcohol and behave in different ways. When we are filled with the HS we are to be under His influence and behave in holy ways.

Let me illustrate this for you:

Ex. Flashlight and battery (big one)... the flashlight represents your life ... the battery is the HS, the power source. You have the battery in you, but are you allowing it to do its job? Is there corrosion blocking the power source? Is it turned on? You turn Him on by dealing with any points of blockage, by seeking Him, and by asking and depending on Him to empower your life every moment of every day! You are being tempted and you say, "HS, fill me, help me to say NO, empower me right now." You are about to lust in your heart, you turn your heart, quote the word of God and ask the HS to help you.

3 areas that I see His power helping us in:

1. Power to Live

This is what I was just dealing with. We cannot live the Christian life in our own power, but praise God His power in us can enable us to do whatever we need to do.

2. Power to Heal

What this means is that God wants to heal those areas in which we have needs or have sinned or still come back to plague us. Ask Him to heal you; have others pray over you to be healed; give Him that pain and ask Him to touch you with His power. Bring the burdens and hurts to God (prop: backpack) and receive a divine touch from God.

Ps. 34

Healing is one of those divine acts in which there is no formula for but where we bring our pain to God, allow Him to show us what we need to do, and then cry out to Him for comfort and healing. He is able and willing!

Finally,

3. Power to Use

What I mean here and I hope this really encourages some of you today is that if you allow God to forgive and heal you, He can use you in a mighty and effective way to touch others. There is no wasted sorrow when God is allowed to be in charge. Your sorrow and sin, though painful, can be redeemed in that you can minister to others.

The best healers and helpers of others are often wounded healers. What does this mean? Wounded healers are those who have been wounded by life, hurt by others, sinned, etc. but they have turned from those things and allowed God to do a mighty work in their life and then God does something that He is so good at: He redeems those things; He turns the negatives into positives; He uses us to minister to others who are in similar situations.

Because you have been through

a divorce you can help others; because you have been
raped and healed, you can help others (Kristy Falck), because you
have had

a terrible marriage, you can help others with their marital problems.

We see this in this church and we see this all through the bible:....Some of the greatest servants in the Bible came out of great sin: **David** committed adultery ... **Paul** killed Christians **Peter** denied Jesus 3 times And yet they were all mightily used of God, but it was only because they allowed God into that sin and pain and turned from it!

Appl. So, whatever you are dealing with today, whatever you need to bring to the cross, whatever past or present sin you have, if you truly confess and forsake it you shall not only find mercy as Prov. 28:13 says but you will see God use you to touch and help others.

2 Cor. 1 comforts us that we can comfort others.

2 Cor. 4:7f jars of clay ... that this all surpassing greatness is from God and not us.

Conclusion

Today we have learned of the Father's will, Jesus' blood of forgiveness and the Spirit's power. Challenging and encouraging, huh!

What is God saying to you today? He calls us to holiness; He extends mercy; and He supplies us with power!

Prayer

As we partake of communion today, meditate deeply upon your sin and upon the mercy of God in the cross. This is available for all who have Christ in their life or who want to come and receive Christ today.

Today you come and serve yourself Come to the cross ... if you want your children to partake, go and get them in about 10 minutes ... don't let the lines be long ... take your time ... elders/ministry team come first and then be along the sides and front

Pray: you are free to come when the singing starts

End: Benevolent offering

All be seated for a **special announcement**:

Benediction (mention CPR and Andre Kole tickets)