

LENEXA EDIFIER

“and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32)

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Separating You From His Love

Jim Stauffer

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (Romans 8:35)

The passage raises the question as to what will and how it will separate us from the love of Christ. We must in our integrity or by the demand of eternal judgment answer this question. It is better for us if we answer it now to prepare ourselves for that day of judgment (**2 Corinthians 5:10; Acts 17:31**).

The commonality of those things listed in the verse as possible separators of us from His love is they all emanate from our concerns over physical life. It boils down to whether we believe in Christ as the prophet of old and New Testament writers relate.**“BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”** (**Romans 1:17**)

What the inspired writer is telling us by way of question and his eventual answer is that if our faith is in Christ, the things of the flesh will not detract us from our loyalty to Him and as a result, from His love, which we know is unconditional. We can then connect His unconditional love to us permanently by being obedient to his **conditional** salvation.

What are the fleshly things that detract you from your loyalty to the Lord? Is it social status, wealth and comfort in this life, temptations of the flesh as listed by Paul in **Galatians Chapter 5**? Do you find it difficult to*lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us....* (**Hebrews 12:1**).

Paul answers us this way, *For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (**Romans 8:38–39**) You see, His love is there and the only way we are separated from it

is by our own submission to the ...*schemes of the devil.* (**Ephesians 6:11**)

A Place Called Calvary

“And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him.....” **Luke 23:33**

When the time came that God was ready to reconcile the world to him, he sent his only son into this world. His son (Jesus) went about teaching and doing good (**Acts 1:1**). There were some who received him but the great masses of people rejected him, scorned him, falsely accused him and treated him in a shameful manner. Then one day he was led from Gethsemane to be tried, condemned and crucified. The tomb could not hold him, he arose from the grave to live forevermore as our mediator and redeemer (**Heb. 7:25, 1 Tim. 2:5**). Because he lives, we can face tomorrow with no fear.

What an honor, what a blessing it is to be a child of God. Listen to John as he says, *“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God”*. Be impressed because this blessing, this honor did not come without a tremendous cost being attached to it. First, God gave his son (**John 3:16**). Secondly, Jesus gave his life **Rom. 5:8**. Thirdly, the church was purchased with the blood of Christ (**Acts 20:28, Eph. 5:25**).

I sometimes wonder what manner of love do we show to the Father and Son? How deep, how high, how wide is our love for them? Do we love God and his Son so much that they come first in our lives (**Mark 12:30, Matt. 6:33**)? Does our love for them come before family or friends (**Matt. 10:37**)? Does our love for them come before possessions and material things (**Matt. 6:19-21, 1 John 2:15-17, Col. 3:1-2**)? Are we still in many respects babes in Christ when we should be full grown (**Heb. 5:12-14, 1 Pet. 2:2, 2 Pet. 3:18**)?

Just what is the size of our inward man? What are our goals? Do we stand fast in the faith? How far does our

love extend toward God, the church, our homes, each other and our fellowman? What are we doing as a child of God? Is our light shining before men? Are we like a candle or a great floodlight?

We may say that we love God. We may say that we love Jesus. But words spoken are insufficient. We show our love through the measure of commitment we make to them. I just have to wonder, is our commitment to them such that they are impressed with our love for them.

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Don't Walk--Run! **Jefferson David Tant**

Suppose you were taking a walk and happened upon a gang fight where they were shooting at one another. What would your reaction be? You would have three choices. (1) Stand around and watch, or (2) calmly walk away, or (3) run. I think I know what the reaction would be--to run as fast as you could to get out of the way of danger. If you stayed to watch, or even walked slowly away, it is possible you might get shot.

While there is very likely universal agreement with such a reaction, in our world today we are faced with another dangerous situation, and that is sexual immorality.

With respect to this article's title to Run rather than Walk, we have various admonitions from God's Word giving this advice in **I Corinthians 6:18**: "**Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.**"

Paul wrote to the young man Timothy and told him: "**Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.**" (**II Timothy 2:22**) In other words, "Don't hang around. Get away as quick as you can."

In a recent Bible study at the Broadmoor church I attend, the teacher, Skip McCord had done a good bit of research connected to Paul's exhortation in **1 Thessalonians 4:3**: "**For this is the will of God, your**

sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality" We will consider some of his findings in this article.

If you have lived for at least a few decades in our nation, you are well aware that pornography, fornication, adultery, homosexuality and abortion have increased greatly in your lifetime. It used to be that if you wanted a copy of the sexy Playboy magazine, you had to ask the store clerk to retrieve it from under the counter. But now scantily clad girls are in popular magazines and even on billboards for your viewing while you are out driving.

And now I believe I have read of some nude beaches.

Can you believe that 100 years ago we had such as Beach Police? I believe the accompanying photo was taken about 1922, as a measurement was taken to assure that the woman's attire was not too short. Even though her swimsuit may not be modest by Biblical standards, it was certainly more modest than what is worn today.

The worldwide pornography industry is a gigantic moneymaker. It's worldwide worth is some \$97 billion dollars. And the United States amount is \$13 billion. That's a LOT of money! Studies show that over 40 million Americans are regular visitors to porn sites.



The porn industry generated more income than the broadcasters ABC, NBC and CBS combined.

40 million Americans are regular visitors to porn sites, and there are multiple opportunities for this, as there are some 42 million porn sites containing some 370 million pages of porn. It is sad that 47% of American families have a problem with this in their homes. The use of pornography increases marital infidelity by more than 300%. That's a tragedy, with 56% of divorces in the US involving one party having an "obsessive interest" in pornographic websites.

Well, what about those who claim to be religious? Studies show that 68% of church-going men and over 30% of pastors view porn on a regular basis. Among young religious adults 18-24 years of age, 76% actively search for porn on the internet.

Some medical studies have shown that the use of pornography releases dopamine in the brain similar to an addictive drug. This would be similar to the use of cocaine or tobacco. Those who are hooked on these often find it very hard to overcome. One big difference is that you must have money to purchase these addictive elements, but pornography is free. It can be accessed on the internet in just a few seconds.

But sexual immorality is nothing new on the planet. Why were Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed? Sexual immorality. Why is adultery mentioned 34 times in the Bible (17 times in the New Testament)? Why is lust mentioned 23 times in the Bible? Why are we told to "flee" from sexual sins? Why is fornication mentioned more than once in the New Testament? Evidently, because it is not only sin, but also because it is addictive.

Idol worship often involved sexual sins. Some of Rome's emperors were known to be sexual perverts. The ancient city of Pompeii was destroyed by an eruption of Mt. Vesuvius on August 24, 79 A.D. I have read that in the ruins of the city are portions of homes still standing with pornographic art still visible on the walls.

Women can also greatly help to prevent the urge in men to view pornography. How? BY DRESSING MODESTLY! The more females show of their bodies, the more it stirs up the lustful thoughts of men.

Modesty in dress goes all the way back to the garden of Eden. You will remember that when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they realized they were naked, and made for themselves "*loin coverings*." (The Hebrew word may be translated "apron.") But God was

not satisfied with what they had made, so he made some new clothing for them. *The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.* } (Genesis 3:27) "*Clothed*" is from a Hebrew word that is defined as "coat, garment, robe," a garment that reached to the knee. Now, if "knee length" was good enough for God, that should give us an idea what would be good for us today.

God's standard has not changed. The way some women dress today can certainly stir up the feeling of lust in men.

Note Paul's admonition to women: "*Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness.*" (I Timothy 2:9-10) Paul is not forbidding wearing jewelry or braiding the hair, but he is putting emphasis on her example, how she lives and how others see her. But note that her clothing must be "*modest*" and "*discreet*." If a woman thinks her swimsuit or the shorts she wears out in public would be out of place when she comes to a church service, then they are not "modest" anywhere! Paul does not write that women should wear proper clothing only in church services.

Women can greatly help men avoid the desire for pornography by how they dress.

So, how does one avoid becoming addicted to alcohol or drugs? DON'T TAKE THE FIRST SIP OR INGEST THE FIRST DOSE! It's that simple.

The same goes for avoiding addiction to pornography. DON'T TAKE THE FIRST LOOK! It's that simple. And this will also greatly increase the stability of a present marriage or one to come in the future. And if you are already a viewer of pornography, make a vow to yourself and to God that you will stop and sin no more in this regard. It may be hard to overcome, but God will give you strength if you put your trust in Him and rely on Him.

And a final word to parents. Many believe it is good to have their children's computers in an open area of the house rather than tucked away in their bedrooms. Give some thought to it.

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Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

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Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10