

“Purity That Lasts” – May 18, 2008

I. Why we need this message of purity

A. *As our culture drifts from God, what is happening?*

B. *What is the difference between a life built on rock, and one built on sand?*

C. *What did Jesus do about our sin nature, and about our untrained nature?*

Jesus lived to _____ us how to live rightly.

Jesus died to give us the _____ to live rightly.

Jesus rose again to give us the _____ to live rightly.

D. *To have a purity which lasts we must never forget:
God’s _____.*

II. Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see

Grace reminds me of my _____ and my need for Jesus Christ.

A. *Why has one ‘liberal’ hymnal removed the word ‘wretch’ from its rendering of this hymn?*

B. *What is the biblical view of human nature?*

C. *John Newton was a slavetrader. Are we better than him because we don’t have slavetrading today?*

D. *Remember your brokenness and it will change the way you look at:*

1. _____ people.

2. _____

3. _____

III. *‘Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear, the hour I first believed*

If I’m going to have purity that lasts, why is grace important?

Grace reminds me of my lifelong need to keep _____.

A. *“The more you grow, the bigger I become” ~ Aslan to Lucy*

B. *Didn’t Jesus just die on the Cross that we might be forgiven of our sins?*

C. *Can we keep growing in each and every season of life?*

D. *(For long-time Christians): Write down some examples of sinful behaviors which Jesus has largely freed you from.*

E. *(For everyone): Write down some examples of sinful behaviors which you are determined to overcome with Jesus’ help.*

IV. Through many dangers, toils and snares; I have already come

‘Twas grace that brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me, his Word my hope secures

He will my shield and portion be as long as life endures

Grace reminds me that this life is not _____; grace will help me _____ Jesus in all my trials.

A. *To live life well, Christians must have a biblical ‘theology of suffering’. What does this have to do with purity?*

B. *Is Satan behind \$4 a gallon gasoline?*

V. **Grace reminds us what awaits us in the end. To stay pure, never, ever let _____ out of your line of sight.**

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I. Why we need this message of purity

A. As our culture drifts from God, what is happening?

The more godless it starts behaving and the more godless everyone starts acting, the more society begins to crumble, the more out of control everything becomes, and the more at risk we all are.

B. What is the difference between a life built on rock, and one built on sand?

Jesus said without apology “Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew, and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” (Matt.7:24-27)

C. What did Jesus do about our sin nature, and about our untrained nature?

Jesus lived to **teach** us how to live rightly.

Jesus died to give us the **power** to live rightly.

Jesus rose again to give us the **reason** to live rightly.

D. To have a purity which lasts we must never forget: God’s **grace**.

II. Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me

I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see

Grace reminds me of my brokenness and my need for Jesus Christ.

A. Why has one ‘liberal’ hymnal removed the word ‘wretch’ from its rendering of this hymn?

The mainline, liberal so-called Christians of today deny the biblical truth about human nature that we are sinful. They want us to believe we’re all good and warm and fuzzy inside. That the

problem’s all out there, not in here. Fix the environment – make sure everyone has a job and a pension and health insurance and we’ll all live happily ever after because everyone naturally is good and loving.

B. What is the biblical view of human nature?

The biblical view of human nature is the highest one imaginable. There’s a reason why we are wretched. It’s because we are fallen. To say we are fallen says that there is a place, a height, a status from which we have fallen. True Christians teach that humans are fallen royalty. Young people, you won’t here that taught in biology class, I promise you. God created us in his image, to be his sons and daughters, to rule over this creation with him. But we forfeited that destiny when we sinned. We still bear the marks of our greatness. We yet retain the image of God, though now it is marred and distorted almost beyond recognition, corrupted by the wretchedness of sin which infects every part of our being.

C. John Newton was a slavetrader. Are we better than him because we don’t have slavetrading today?

You may have abolished an outward sin with the passing of a law – and that’s a good thing, laws exist to rein in lawlessness – but have you changed the human heart with that law? Have we abolished racism from the human heart? Barak Obama’s candidacy would teach us otherwise. The same hatred, and pride and racism and ugliness that coursed through John Newton’s veins runs through our own. A human being is not so much good, as untested.

D. Remember your brokenness and it will change the way you look at:

1. **Lost people.**

2. **Yourself**

3. **God**

III. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear, the hour I first believed

If I'm going to have purity that lasts, why is grace important?

Grace reminds me of my lifelong need to keep growing.

A. "The more you grow, the bigger I become" ~ Aslan to Lucy

And that's how it truly is for a Christian – the more we grow in our faith, the bigger God becomes. And if that doesn't happen, well then, you're not growing.

B. *Didn't Jesus just die on the Cross that we might be forgiven of our sins?*

Jesus did not just die on that cross that we might be forgiven of our sins, but that we might be *saved* from our sins. Don't fall for that line that "Christians aren't perfect, only forgiven" as though the only difference between a Christian and a non-Christian is the fact of forgiveness. That is *not* the only difference. As you go on following Jesus you will become more mature in your faith and grow in purity. Sins will gradually be weeded out. More of the fruit of the Spirit will be visible. "We...are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory," Paul wrote (2 Cor.3:18). That's the goal here.

C. *Can we keep growing in each and every season of life?*

Too many Christians get stuck. They're the same at thirty as they are at forty as they are at fifty. And in fact, if you're not careful, it can get worse as you get older, because as life gets harder, and your body starts to wear out, and dreams you had evaporate, and loved ones die, it's very easy for despair and bitterness and cynicism and apathy to wash in. It's very easy for sins which you didn't root out to earlier on in life to become even stronger and uglier in later years. Scripture promises us that we can keep growing all the way through. Psalm 92:12-14 – "The righteous flourish like a palm tree...they will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green." Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 4:16 – "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day."

D. *(For long-time Christians): Write down some examples of sinful behaviors which Jesus has largely freed you from.*

E. *(For everyone): Write down some examples of sinful behaviors which you are determined to overcome with Jesus' help.*

IV. *Through many dangers, toils and snares; I have already come
'Twas grace that brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
The Lord has promised good to me, his Word my hope secures
He will my shield and portion be as long as life endures*

Grace reminds me that this life is not heaven; grace will help me honor Jesus in all my trials.

A. *To live life well, Christians must have a biblical 'theology of suffering'. What does this have to do with purity?*

There are so many times when we unconsciously bargain with God concerning our obedience. We reason to ourselves that if we do our best to honor God by living the right way that he then is obligated in some way to make our lives easier. Because what happens when a danger, toil or snare comes along? We think to ourselves, "Wait a minute? Here I've done all this for you, I've made all these sacrifices, I've tried my best to keep pure, and this is how you treat me. This is what I get in return?"

B. *Is Satan behind \$4 a gallon gasoline?*

We need to be careful with what we give Satan credit for. If you're going through financial struggles right now, that's not Satan attacking you. That's life. Satan doesn't control the world oil markets. He's not the head of Exxon Mobil. You may think he is: but Satan is not responsible for gas being \$4 a gallon. Now Satan will attack you by trying to get you overly discouraged about money, or by getting you to mismanage your money – but you must resist him, and your faith must be stronger. If life is stressed because you've got two or three kids at home, that's not Satan attacking you. That's life. Don't rebuke the devil because your kids are out of control – discipline them. Don't you go shaving their heads looking for a 666 on their scalps.

V. **Grace reminds us what awaits us in the end. To stay pure, never, ever let eternity out of your line of sight.**

