

Victorious Over Sexual Temptation

One of the most common sins throughout the entire world is sexual immorality and with it sexual temptation. This has been something that the devil has been tempting people of various ages and backgrounds with and successfully bringing pain and reproach, as well as spiritual death upon them. Even King David experienced sexual temptation and yielded to this deadly sin (2 Sam. 11:2-5).

But David wasn't the only one tempted with sexual immorality! We read of how Joseph was victorious over this in the following verses:

So he [Potiphar] left in Joseph's care everything he had; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate. Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he refused. "With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her. One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house. When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, she called her household servants. "Look," she said to them, "this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but I screamed. When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house." She kept his cloak beside her until his master came home. Then she told him this story: "That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house." When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, "This is how your slave treated me," he burned with anger. Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined. But while Joseph was there in the prison (Gen. 39:6-20).

One of the Most Wicked Women

Alongside other wicked women in the Bible would have to be Potiphar's unnamed wife. She didn't care if she sinned against God or her husband. This woman was wicked to the core. All she wanted was well-built and handsome Joseph to gratify her sinful desires and she wasn't even shy about it in the least! She flatly started off by bluntly telling him *come to bed with me!* How the devil will use people we come into contact with, to defile us, if possible. (Sooner or later, for many, a person like that evil woman, who might be more subtle, will try to seduce you.) Christians MUST stay on our spiritual GUARD at all times. We are in a spiritual war! Sexual temptation can be powerful.

Imagine how the devil must have put thoughts in Joseph's mind about her over and over again. And each day her evil words and actions would be given to Joseph anew. This woman grew in boldness to the point of grabbing Joseph's cloak, trying to physically force him to yield!

She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house (Gen. 39:12).

Christian Singles: Remember Joseph Who Was Single and Sexually Tempted

Remember also, at that time Joseph was single when he was sexually tempted to this severe degree to be adulterous. Joseph is especially a good person for single Christians to model regarding how to resist sexual temptation. How do we know he was single? Notice the following two verses, which we read two chapters after his temptation:

Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphara, priest of On, to be his wife. And Joseph went throughout the land of Egypt. Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh's presence and traveled throughout Egypt. (Gen. 41:45,46).

How Old Was Joseph?

How old was Joseph when he stood faithful against the kind of sexual temptation which causes many to become defiled? We can't be sure, but he was younger than 28 years of age. This is how we know that: After innocent Joseph was put in prison, because Potiphar's wife lied and slandered him, we read:

So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did. Some time later, the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their master, the king of Egypt (Gen. 39:22-40:1).

So an undesignated period of time existed from when the warden of the prison exalted Joseph to when the king's chief cupbearer and baker were put into the same prison. After they were there they each had a dream, which Joseph correctly gave the meaning of, and soon thereafter came the release of the chief cupbearer from prison. Then the following applies:

The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him. When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream: He was standing by the Nile (Gen. 40:23, 41:1).

Therefore, Joseph was 30 when he got married, but his severe sexual temptation with adultery occurred 2 years plus an undesignated period of time before. So he was younger than 28 years of age (and single).

If you are acquainted with the David-Bathsheba event, then you should readily agree with the following contrasts between David and Joseph.

Four Major Contrasts Between David and Joseph When Sexually Tempted

(1) David had multiple wives when tempted with sexual immorality, while Joseph was a single man, younger than 28.

(2) David went after Bathsheba and was the cause of them both committing adultery, while Potiphar's wife tried to bring this wickedness onto Joseph.

(3) Potiphar's wife wanted Joseph to be sexually immoral with her day after day, yet Joseph resisted! David, on the other hand, aggressively proceeded after the first time he saw Bathsheba's naked body.

(4) David tried to gratify his sinful nature with no apparent resistance, while Joseph literally ran from sexual temptation and immorality to seriously resist sin. Again, Joseph was very serious about not committing sexual sin. This reminds me of the following Scripture:

In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood (Heb. 12:4).

Paul wrote specifically and told Christian what they need to flee:

Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. (1 Cor. 6:18)

Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. (1 Cor. 10:14)

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. (1 Tim. 6:10,11)

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 Tim. 2:22)

According to these verses, the Christian is to flee from: sexual immorality, idolatry, the love of money and the evil desires of youth.

NOTE: Joseph obeyed both 1 Cor. 6:18 and 2 Tim. 2:22 before they were written down as Scripture!

He Refused to be Alone With Her

Also, there is something else that needs to be mentioned regarding how Joseph handled sexual temptation:

And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her. (Gen. 39:10)

Joseph wasn't going to give any foothold or opportunity to the devil and his temptations. He knew he needed to avoid that woman:

and do not give the devil a foothold (NIV). (Eph. 4:27)

and do not give the devil an opportunity (NASB). (Eph. 4:27)

I've noticed in my Christian life that some believers who let down their spiritual guard and are not willing to go to the extreme of giving the devil no foothold and to be **open, faithful** and **bold** about their Christian beliefs, soon get swept away or "fall away." They give the devil some opportunity to tempt them into sin, ever so gradual as it may be, and they turn back to the darkness and spiritual death they were in before their salvation.

****Dearly beloved, take warning! You better take this war against sin seriously. For it is most serious! In fact, it is the most serious thing you have ever gotten involved in, for it will stretch into all eternity!**

Paul was not going to some outlandish extreme to warn the Christians as he gave us Eph. 4:27, nor when he wrote the following:

... do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure (1 Tim. 5:22).

If people like Potiphar's wife come into your life and it can happen anywhere—don't share in their sins! Keep yourself pure! Note: It is the Christian's responsibility, not God's, to do this. (This is true grace teaching, not legalism, like the eternal security heretics of our day falsely accuse.)

So unlike David, Joseph never yielded to sexual temptation, which came to him while he was single and younger than 28 years of age. He was victorious over sexual temptation and you can be to, especially since we have these examples in the Bible to read and learn from.

A Mighty Throng

Finally, as stated at the beginning of this article, many fall to sexual temptation. Ponder the following passage about wicked women like Potiphar's adulterous wife:

At the window of my house I looked out through the lattice. I saw among the simple, I noticed among the young men, a youth who lacked judgment. He was going down the street near her corner,

walking along in the direction of her house at twilight, as the day was fading, as the dark of night set in. Then out came a woman to meet him, dressed like a prostitute and with crafty intent. (She is loud and defiant, her feet never stay at home; now in the street, now in the squares, at every corner she lurks.) She took hold of him and kissed him and with a brazen face she said: "I have fellowship offerings at home; today I fulfilled my vows. So I came out to meet you; I looked for you and have found you! I have covered my bed with colored linens from Egypt. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon. Come, let's drink deep of love till morning; let's enjoy ourselves with love! My husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey. He took his purse filled with money and will not be home till full moon." With persuasive words she led him astray; she seduced him with her smooth talk. All at once he followed her like an ox going to the slaughter, like a deer stepping into a noose till an arrow pierces his liver, like a bird darting into a snare, little knowing it will cost him his life. Now then, my sons, listen to me; pay attention to what I say. Do not let your heart turn to her ways or stray into her paths. Many are the victims she has brought down; her slain are a mighty throng. Her house is a highway to the grave, leading down to the chambers of death (Prov. 7:6-27).

The KJV cites verse 27 as:

Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

Moreover, the Scriptures are clear that sexual immorality (even for people previously saved), will send them to the lake of fire (unless they repent and get forgiven):

But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death. (Rev 21:8)

So don't be deceived by anyone, even teachers who claim they reject eternal security but would say a single (or occasional) act of adultery won't cause you to lose your salvation. Such people are ferocious wolves in sheep's clothing, even though they might not know it themselves. Here's proof that one act of adultery will make a person an adulterer:

If a man commits adultery with another man's wife—with the wife of his neighbor—both the adulterer and the adulteress must be put to death. (Lev 20:10)

Real grace teaching states:

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor 6:9,10)

Adultery in Two Other Forms

Two final points to ponder—many get into a very subtle form of adultery through a marriage that is not recognized as a marriage in God's eyes. It is possible to commit adultery this way too:

But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. (Mat 5:32)

And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery. (Mat 19:9)

So if you are single, be very careful who you marry in light of these verses on adultery through an illegitimate marriage. No person is worth going to Hell over.

Secondly, to lust in your heart after another is also adultery:

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

What an indictment against those who think pornography is not deadly! Pornography is a major source of sexual temptation and had led to broken homes and criminal acts.

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