

## What Pleases God: Moral Purity

Ponder: Biblical holiness

Scripture: “And I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, whose hands are fetters. He who pleases God shall escape from her” (Eccl. 7:26, NKJV).

Solomon complained about many of life’s inequities in his book of Ecclesiastes, but he came to realize that most of his troubles were of his own making. I must plead “guilty” too! How about you?

Despite being gifted by God with unfathomable wisdom, King Solomon foolishly and sinfully married hundreds of pagan women. They led him astray from God, just as He had warned in the Law of Moses. No doubt Solomon was more than passingly familiar with pagan immorality. He warned against the seductress repeatedly in his Proverbs. Solomon knew the temptation; he also knew the disastrous results of yielding to it.

God has always been pleased with morally pure behavior. This remains true after the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. Hear the apostle Paul: “Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God . . . For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality . . . not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God . . . For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness” (1 Thess. 4:1-7).

Holiness and sanctification are the same thing: both mean to be cleansed and set apart to serve God. Remember that Thessalonica was a predominantly pagan city; most of the Christians there would have grown up taking immoral behavior for granted. But Jesus called them through His gospel to deliverance from such corruption and to morally pure behavior.

Friends, God did not call us to be like the world, but to please Him with moral purity. Even as we witness the world’s downhill slide into a moral cesspool, let us renew our determination to be holy as God is holy.

Song: “Living For Jesus”

Prayer: Holy Father, we praise and thank You for Jesus’ blood that cleanses us and sets us apart from the world. Help us, we pray, to behave with moral purity. In Jesus’ name, Amen.