

# OpenTheo

## Purity (Part 3)



### **Toward a Radically Christian Counterculture** - Steve Gregg

In this talk, Steve Gregg discusses the topic of culture and purity, and emphasizes the need for a countercultural consensus among Christians. He touches on the messages in media that assault modesty and purity, and argues that Christians should focus on what is truly valuable and not place undue emphasis on physical appearance. Gregg also encourages Christians to be discerning in their choices and to prioritize purity over worldly pleasures, while being mindful of cultural norms that may not align with biblical values.

### **Transcript**

I wanted to spend one more session on this topic of the culture of purity confronting the culture of sensuality. All through this series, of course, we're talking about a Christian culture confronting the dominant culture, and as things stand, and as they probably always will stand, a Christian culture is of necessity a Christian counterculture. It is counter the dominant culture, and it may probably never change in that respect.

There are some who have a vision of the future. They believe that the gospel will prevail far more than I personally expect that it will. I don't want to be pessimistic, but some people believe the world will be Christianized someday, and that all societies and nations will be governed by God's laws and God's principles.

It's a wonderful vision. I don't know if it's a biblical vision. I have my own differences of opinion with those who see it that way.

But until such a development materializes, which, of course, I don't expect it to, but I'll be delighted if I am found to be wrong, we must say that the culture that Christianity creates is a counterculture. It is a culture that confronts the dominant culture, and we have in this series been talking about the various characteristics of a Christian culture that are in stark contrast to the dominant culture. And it's not so much that we are to withdraw into our own little enclave of monastic living where we can generate among ourselves this little cultural bubble and avoid the defilement of the world outside.

We must avoid the defilement of the world outside, but we need to do so even though

we live in the midst of it. In the parable of the wheat and the tares, certainly Jesus taught us that there will be growing alongside one another in the same field, godly fruit and ungodly fruit, children of the kingdom and children of the wicked one. And these will grow together until the time of the harvest, and they will mature more as the time draws near.

And the distinctions between them will become more evident because of the maturing. The maturing of the saints will result in the saints being more Christ-like. The maturing of wickedness and the tares will result in the tares looking more like their real parentage and exhibiting their true characteristics more clearly.

And the contrast is no doubt going to become more obvious as we go along. In the meantime, we can say the contrast is stark enough as things stand, especially in the area that we're considering right now. That is that Christianity is a culture of purity.

Christ is holy and harmless and undefiled, the scripture says in Hebrews. He's a pure person. God's eyes, it says in Habakkuk, are too pure than to countenance evil.

God is a pure God, and we're to be pure as He is pure. We're to be as holy as He is holy. And we're told in James that pure and undefiled religion... Now, I'll tell you this.

I avoid the word religion most of the time because, well, religion means something different in our culture generally than I think it meant to the biblical writers. When the biblical writers spoke of religion, they were speaking in terms of the reality of Christianity. What has come in the past 2,000 years is that there is religiosity that even goes under the banner of the name of Christianity, but isn't really the reality of it at all.

And that being so, the word religion doesn't always speak of reality when we use it. And sometimes it just speaks of a legalism or a Pharisee-ism or a religiosity that isn't what Christianity is. But James was writing at a time where the word religion still is synonymous for godliness.

And in James 1, 20, he said, "...pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, that we visit the orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." Pure religion before God, godliness, is to be unspotted, unadulterated, undefiled by the world. This is pure and undefiled religion according to James in the sight of God. We also read in James chapter 3 that there is a contrast that he wants us to note between wisdom which is from above and wisdom which is from below.

James said there is a wisdom that is characterized by a great number of evil characteristics. He said this wisdom is earthly and sensual and devilish. Earthly, it's of the world.

Sensual, it's of the flesh. Devilish, it's of the devil. So it's a wisdom that's of the world and of the flesh and the devil, none of which are good sources for wisdom for the

believer.

But he makes a contrast between that and the wisdom which is from God, the wisdom which is from above, which is to inform the Christian life and therefore to inform a Christian cultural consensus. What is the wisdom from above? Well, James says in James 3.17, but the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. Now all those things are parts of what the wisdom of God involves.

And a counterculture that is informed by the wisdom that is from above will be characterized in these ways. And the first thing on the list, although many of the things on the list are worthy of honorable mention and discussion, but the first in primacy, he even says it, he doesn't just list it first by chance, he says it is first. He accentuates that this is the first thing about it.

The wisdom that is from above is first of all pure, pure, unadulterated. And so Christianity, when it is lived according to the wisdom that is from above, the wisdom that God has revealed in His Word, when Christians actually conform to the truth that the Scripture presents to us, then there is purity that shines as one of the chief characteristics. And as I observed last time, I have not found this to be so in the Christian church generally speaking.

I would like to say that it was so in my own life more than I can honestly say that it is. I don't stand here as the paragon of perfection and the one who in all points exhibits everything that the Bible says should be exhibited in the Christian life. I will say this though, I stand up sincerely committed to the values that I'm presenting here and working still at approximating them as much as God gives me the grace to do.

And I encourage you to do the same because at some point in time if we continue on, if we follow on to know the Lord as Hosea says, we will cross some threshold where we're actually looking a lot more like we're supposed to look. And so we need to know what that threshold is and where that goal is. At least if we know where the goal is, we can keep going that direction.

If the goal remains undefined, then we won't know whether we're going the right direction or not and like is not where we won't be going the right direction half the time. One of the goals certainly in establishing a countercultural consensus among those who call on the name of the Lord would be to seek radical purity like that of Christ. And last time I was talking about how the world of course, I didn't have to tell you, everyone knows how impure the world is, but I wanted to talk especially about how the impurity of the world has really come in to the church and some of the reasons I thought it had.

I want to go a little further and a slightly different direction tonight. I want to say first of all that one of the reasons that Christians have succumbed to the culture of sensuality as

opposed to the culture of purity is because of the media messages that we have allowed ourselves not only to hear but in measure to embrace. The media by the way is owned and operated by the dominant culture and therefore it is very rare that you'll find anything in the media that is anything other than sensual, appealing to the senses and to the sensual nature of man.

That's largely because entertainment and the media are commercial ventures and you know they know what side of the bread the butter is on. They know where you know where they can get an audience and hold an audience and they know what motivates people and what motivates people in our culture very largely is sex to a very large degree and because that is so, that is the featured bait used in almost all advertising and almost all programming. It is that which attracts and holds an audience and so you should not be surprised if the media which which thrives and makes its living on attracting and holding an audience, if it is scratching the population where it itches and appealing to that salient material that appeals to the purient interests of the unbeliever and more than we would like to admit to the believer as well.

Paul did not deny this. Paul indicated that there are two laws at war in our members. There's that law of my mind that approves of the law of God and wants to be like Christ and wants to do the right thing but there's another law in my members that wars against that Paul said and he says when I'm not walking in the spirit and by the way there's no excuse not to but nonetheless we don't always when I'm not walking in the spirit he says this other law in my members drags me down and brings me into captivity for the law of sin and death.

This is this is not all right. Paul didn't claim it was all right. He said wretched man that I am who will deliver me from this state, this body, this death.

Now of course the solution is to walk in the spirit but walking in the spirit isn't some merely mystical activity. It has to do with taking in what the spirit speaks to us in the scriptures which the spirit inspired and any other way the spirit may speak to us. We need to take the truth that the spirit gives and we need to embrace the truth.

We need to mix it with faith and we need to press forward in the direction the spirit is drawing us in these ways and as he gives us the power within to do. Now what has happened in many cases is that Christians have not not only have they not walked in the spirit but they've walked in the spirit of this age and in many cases the churches have become so impure that we might wonder how could this possibly have happened and one of the reasons is because Christians are bombarded by media just like anybody else and Christians I have found to my amazement many Christians have almost no discernment. It's a strange thing to me.

They have almost no discernment. Now sometimes people talk about the gift of discernment although the Bible never mentioned such a thing. There is a gift listed in 1

Corinthians 12 called discerning of spirits.

That's something different. Discernment is not ever listed in the Bible as a gift. Discernment is something that is to be developed in a maturing Christian.

According to Hebrews chapter 5 solid food or what the King James calls strong meat is for those who are of full age who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. The ability to discern good and evil comes as a result of use of the Word of God which causes development of our spiritual senses with the result that we can now discern between good and evil in a way we could not before. The Word of God is that which cultivates that discernment.

It is as I said not a special gift that some people have. I've known a lot of people who said they have a gift of discernment. All they really had was a gift of suspicion.

But the fact is some people don't have the gift of discernment. Now some might have the gift of discerning of spirits but that's a different issue. We can talk about that someday if we ever talk about the gifts here.

But discernment is that which all Christians are supposed to develop and I think that is woefully absent from the modern Christian Church because there has been no use of the Word of God at least not anywhere near as much as there needs to be and therefore being deprived of the light of the Word of God which is a lamp unto our feet and a light to our path the church has been consigned to walking in the shadows and deep darkness and in the end times according to Isaiah 60 darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people and the darkness is very gross at the moment and if we don't walk in this light we simply won't have any advantage over the unbeliever and we will simply walk and stumble in the same darkness they have and that darkness and that lack of discernment is best seen when Christians do not discern the messages they're getting from the media and there are a great number of messages and I think many Christians have succumbed to them without excuse. Let me say first of all that one of the messages the media gives us and I'm mainly concerned tonight about talking about those messages that assault our modesty and our purity. There are other messages that appeal to our greed and to our pride and other things like that but that's not the issue I'm focusing on right now.

I want to talk about those messages in the media that particularly are directed against our own pure minds and particularly as I said last time in the area of sexual purity versus sexual impurity not because I'm obsessed with that subject nor that the Christian culture should be obsessed with it but the dominant culture is and if the Christian culture doesn't have something distinctive to say positively on that subject it will not be able to counter that which is the chief interest and the chief mistake that our dominant culture is making and so I want to talk about first of all some of the messages that we get from the media and some of them I dare say are trickling on through our filter and getting to

us because our guard is not up as much it should be. One of the first and most obvious messages the media gives us and we're hammered with all the time is that looks are everything. You value a person by the way they look.

Now of course there's a lot of different aspects of people's looks. Some people are I mean you know not many people walk around who look like Elephant Man but I mean Elephant Man was repulsive to look at. I love that everyone anyone here seen Elephant Man? I love that movie that is so edifying.

First of all it's about a man who is really a Christian but more than that that movie illustrates so powerfully the opposite of what the media usually is saying and that is here was a man who is about as ugly as a man could be because of a birth defect. His head was misshapen, his body was misshapen, his face was so deformed that when you first see it you think you're seeing a monster. It terrified people to see it.

He'd walk around with a bag over his head most of the time and this is a true story but early in the movie you're really kind of freaked out by how ugly this guy is and initially it is thought that he's greatly mentally retarded and can't speak but eventually it turns out he can speak and he's smart and when he speaks he's got the sweetest spirit and he loves the Lord and he quotes the scripture and he's just the most caring sensitive guy and I'm sure if you haven't seen that movie I recommend it. Elephant Man is a true story but this guy I mean this movie was so rare in terms of what the media gets across because the opposite of the normal message. It tells us this guy you would think he was a monster by looking at him but by the time at the end of the movie you don't even can't even you don't even remember that he's ugly.

His spirit is so beautiful and you know I'm sure you've all had that experience with individuals who weren't as ugly as Elephant Man but your first impressions of them when you saw them were not positive. The first time you saw such and such a person you thought doesn't probably isn't very intelligent or probably is not very enjoyable to talk to or you know probably you know have some other negative judgment you make at first glance because they don't have the look that we have been conditioned to to to equate with value in a person and then through some circumstance you've actually gotten acquainted with the person and you find out well this person's really I like this person I like being around this person and before long you can't remember why it was you thought they weren't attractive. You have that experience? I mean your initial impression is that that's not a very attractive person but once you get to know them they really are inside and then you suddenly can't remember why you thought they weren't and you look at me and say didn't I think that person was unattractive? I can't I don't know what I was thinking because what you were thinking initially is what Jesus said not to think.

Jesus said in John chapter 7 judge not according to appearances but judge righteous judgment. You shouldn't judge and assess people by the way they appear you should

judge and assess them by a more righteous standard than that and yet the culture tells us in many ways without saying it that looks really are everything a person is valuable and worth something if they are more than ordinarily beautiful, handsome, sexy, you name it. Fun to look at.

Now the world the world manages to find all the people and to cull from its population those who are the cream in this particular respect and to put them before us in movies, in magazine covers, in advertisements, obviously the models, the movie stars, the even singers. It's an amazing thing. I don't know if you've noticed it's very rare for a person to become a popular singer unless they also look good even though the majority of people who listen to their voice may never see them or know what they look like but it doesn't matter.

The world's not interested usually in promoting somebody who doesn't look good. They might be the greatest musician in the world and I'll tell you if they're really really good as musicians the world might promote them even though they're not real good-looking but it's very rare to find someone who's really a star even in the realm of music who isn't also good-looking enough to be a movie star because good looks are what the culture here affirms all the time and yet the Bible makes it clear that we're not supposed to evaluate people that way. Over in Proverbs chapter 6 as in several of the early chapters of Proverbs Solomon is warning his son about the danger of being seduced and allured by the wrong kind of woman.

Of course any woman who's trying to seduce a man is the wrong kind of woman but among other things he says in Proverbs 6:25 do not lust after her beauty in your heart nor let her allure you with her eyelids by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread. He's just turned into a commodity to her and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life. Now sounds like there's other considerations in evaluating this woman other than her good looks.

Don't lust after her beauty she probably has abundance of that that's how she makes her living but there's other considerations far more important. A person who is physically beautiful may also be spiritually beautiful but it's much less likely just I mean the law of averages and it's not just it's not just chance it's not just chance that those who are more physically beautiful often are deprived of morality or deprived of virtue. It's it's not necessarily something inbred it is it is nurture not nature.

When a little boy or a little girl at an early age are noticed by adults as being cute or more attractive than others of their generation they're fond on and they are affirmed and what are they always affirmed about their looks or what a cute little girl or a pretty little girl and I mean if they would as often be affirmed on what what an intelligent little boy what an unselfish little boy what a patient little girl that might be good but you hardly ever see that in the way that children are nurtured. If somebody is not good-looking they

might be affirmed in other areas of their life you know they might be affirmed for being quiet and well-behaved or something like that but if somebody is attractive you can be sure that even if the parents aren't making this mistake almost everyone else around them in the culture is going to affirm their beauty and they grew up learning that they're beautiful and they grew up learning that that matters. That matters to everybody that's what everyone talks about no one ever mentions anything else about me except that I look good.

That must be what matters that must be what's important and then of course in the this is true probably both of boys and girls but especially of girls if a girl is unusually beautiful she learns that the world can be made to revolve around her the unattractive girl doesn't find this an option and therefore she has to find value in something else maybe even in virtue maybe in character maybe in doing something worthwhile but the woman who is beautiful is never pressured to do anything worthwhile except just be beautiful the world comes to her the world fawns on her she can control men she can command positions and opportunities for herself every door will open to her if she's pretty enough and she finds that this is really what it's all about and you know what people who aren't as beautiful as her get the same message even though they aren't getting the benefits they say well no wonder she's a star look how beautiful she is you know and and even people who don't have those external gifts often admire those who do because why because the world has promoted them and put them up there as the admirable ones to emulate so that you can see the face of a movie star an actor or an actress or a model on the front of magazine one that you know nothing about them you may have never seen their face before heard their name before but your head can be turned and and and you can there's something inside that can say that is really somebody and in fact you know that irony is that they may really be nobody I mean in the world's eyes there's somebody but in the sight of God they may be nobody at all because God does not look on the outward appearance remember what it says in first Peter chapter 3 talking about women now a lot of things that are addressed to women of course are equally true of men if they have this like circumstances but but some of these things are probably more prominent among women but in first Peter chapter 3 addressing women in verse 3 it says do not let your adornment be merely outward now the word merely is thrown in by the new King James it's not in the Greek it just says let not your adornment be that outward adornment of arranging the hair wearing of gold or putting on a fine apparel again the word fine is thrown in by the new King James it's not the Greek just putting on apparel basically what Peter is saying is don't let your beauty be that which consists in the way you wear your hair your clothes or anything else that is merely your external appearance but rather let it be the hidden person of the heart with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit which is very precious in the sight of God now what's precious in the sight of God is not always what's precious in the sight of man in fact it's usually the opposite Jesus said I think it's Luke 16 15 Jesus said those things that are highly esteemed among men are an abomination to God so I mean if we want to please God



we're gonna have to not consider at all what men think is valuable we're gonna think well it's probably the opposite of what men think because what men highly esteem God finds an abomination in many cases and here he says what is in the side of God of great price is a the beauty and the ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit you know that is such a encouraging thing to people like myself and most of us who are not exceptionally gifted in the area of looks and you know only some are there's plenty who are but they're in the minority and if the world was right and the and looks were everything then most of us would simply have to see ourselves in a situation analogous to the peon class you know the the aristocracy of the beautiful is up there and it is our place simply to fawn on them and support them with our dollars to go buy their records and buy their books and magazines and and watch their movies I mean it's up to us to support them in their job of being beautiful it's like they're the you know the the ruling class and the rest of us got no no value except to support their value of their own beauty but God has things quite different than that he's got it so that the real ornament the real beauty the one that really matters is one that's accessible to everybody it's not genetic it doesn't depend who your parents are it doesn't matter how much extra weight you have on you or how little weight you have on you as in my case but the the fact is it's it's based on what you can control it's a it's a tragic thing to see people who embrace the culture of beauty which is of course just a tributary of the culture of sensuality and sex it's of course the sexiness the sex appeal of these people that is being exalted here to see them try to hang on or try to attain that which they were not born with when you see people who have you know they maybe have potential to be beautiful but they just you know the you know the the lips are not quite right of the nose is not quite right the ears stand out too far or something like that and then go get plastic surgery and spend all kinds of money and and you know as the skin begins to sag they go you know pull it up there and and tie it in the back behind their ears and cut off this extra and you know and you see people who've had several facelifts and they're just the most pitiful thing in the world I mean just I mean you see women in their 60s and 70s who are still you know if they can't continue to look 30 their life isn't worth living because they don't have anything else and they value appearance because the culture has made them value appearance and because they happen to have had in their younger years that which the culture valued it may have never occurred to them in those years when they were in the glory in the limelight with their great beauty that they're not going to have this forever this isn't going to stick around I mean you can dye the hair as long as you want my grandmother one of my grandmothers is 94 I think she still dyes her hair orange some of them start dying their hair blue for some reason I guess that's where the kids got the idea one hairdresser I knew referred to as menopause blue but then I mean I don't know why they do it I guess they think that's attractive to men that age maybe it is hope I never get that old but the fact is people are desperately trying to hang on to or attain that which God did not give them and which God does not value when that which God does value and what godly minded people also value is attainable to everybody I'm making a quiet spirit you can get that now you may not have been born with that and

you might not have been conditioned from your upbringing to be meek or quiet probably very few of us were but you can get there from here you don't need plastic surgery for that you just need to walk with God you just need to cultivate your inward life and be beautiful on the inside that's what God has made us to value because he values that that is in the sight of God of great price but to the world it's a very little price very little value and Christians need to simply get place where they just say no to that worldly value but it creeps in I'm maybe some of you are more immune than I am I have to admit if I meet someone they are more than ordinarily good-looking I something in me is conditioned to think there's somebody who's probably got some value that's the first I'd like to know why first of all they're not mine their beauty isn't going to do anything for me but it's not so much that it's not always lost it's sometimes it's just assigning value to that which really has no intrinsic value and that is one of the media messages that hammers us all the time and I'd I'd really wonder if many of us have escaped I I will I have I know Christian people I was thinking of one in particular who's of my parents generation but then I thought another my generation to people both women in this case who I have sat and watch movies with and they and they're Christians and they comment on the actor in the movie said oh isn't he a doll isn't he a hunk now I'm assuming they're not lusting I mean they would be embarrassed if they were lusting wouldn't they I would hope so but but they they're saying something that they're not embarrassed to say they're just saying that which they think any who wouldn't think such a thing about that guy well I don't know maybe he's a hunk I'm not sure I'm not always able to tell those things but I don't know that I want to get the place where I can it might make me feel inferior I'd rather focus on things that really have some value and evaluate people on the basis of something that really won't disappear as they get older but it'll get better as they get older and until we can dislodge our thinking on this from that which the world is continually conditioning us for to think the way God thinks on this we're going to be vulnerable to the other aspects of the impurity of our culture the first message we're getting all the time and it's the one that feeds the others that feeds the whole sexual immorality of our culture is looks looks looks or everything shape size features those are those are what makes somebody attractive well if you're attracted to somebody on that basis merely if you make a mistake of marrying someone who that's the only attraction you have you're going to be surprised how how little there is to hold your interest after you get down to the real business of living together and I would have to say honestly that although my first wife who she came before I knew her she was highly recommended to me by certain Christian men I respected and I will say I looked at her you know not just as a good-looking when I looked at her as someone who I thought was spiritual too I gave her much too much credit about that as it turned out she was pretending more than then I was able to discern but but I will tell you this it didn't hurt at all my attraction to her that she was a beautiful woman and if the truth were known I mean I can tell myself and I didn't tell myself she's a virtuous woman she's a godly when everyone says she's a godly woman but if the truth were known and I don't know that I know the truth on this I may have had as much attraction to her if she hadn't been

committed so highly because she was a woman that many people had always told her she looked like a particular movie actress and I thought she did too it was a movie actress I always thought was attractive and it didn't hurt that she came highly recommended as a Christian too but I found that in her case as in so many others of people I've met I think she maybe even wanted to be a Christian I she might have even wanted to be godly I it's hard for me to assess now looking back so far but but she had a tremendous disadvantage in that she was a beautiful woman now there may be someone here who's more than ordinarily beautiful male or female and who has known this conditioning and this troubling burden really that I'm talking about firsthand I don't know it from my own experience I know it from other people's experience I remember talking to a man who got converted in one of the I was leading a Christian house and and people were getting converted on a regular basis and moving in and this one guy I mean he was just he was a handsome man he was big well-proportioned this is back in the hippie days so he kind of long hair and beard but that didn't obscure the fact that he had great features and I mean he was he could have been a movie star and and he he got saved and he told me with a few months after he says I was complaining about how skinny I was and things like I said Steve you he says you don't have any idea the struggles that you are spared by being skinny and by being you know the way you look you know now he wasn't trying to insult my looks I had I had made the comments about my looks he was just saying you don't realize and he was trying not to say things in a way that sounded too arrogant but he was a guy everywhere he went women were hitting on him and I and I have to say well thank God I don't have that particular gift because I don't know how I would bear up under it I don't have to worry about that very often I thank God for that but people who have been raised beautiful I mean they are beautiful and they've been affirmed in that area I think they really have tremendous struggles that Christians in areas that Christians are usually hoping to get free from and it is not to their advantage it's not a value to be beautiful it's not even desirable except in terms of worldly advantage you want position you want recognition you want people of the opposite sex chasing you maybe people the same sex chasing too I don't know but if you want that then you then your advantage to be beautiful if you don't want that but if you want holiness and purity in your life and and limited opportunities to sin and so forth then thank God if you're not beautiful and do not envy those who are there's another another message of the media that that really hurts us a great deal and that is that the media affirms everywhere the legitimacy of serial romance for entertainment purposes now I've already talked before about my understanding of the scripture on this I believe the scripture indicates that God designed optimally that that one man have only one romantic relationship in his lifetime with one woman and vice versa that that that God did not design us for serial romances I think there are less than optimal circumstances for instance of a man's wife dies and he has another wife or if a man runs off with another woman and his wife is left alone and she remarried I don't think there's anything wrong with that in that case something less than less than ideal has occurred but the ideal is that you marry the first person you have a real romantic relationship with

and you stay with that person until you die or they do that's the way God design people and I can say that without any intimation of condemnation to those who had a less than ideal circumstance I have had one of those less than ideal circumstances twice and and I don't condemn me for it but I'm saying just because there is much that falls short of the norm that's no excuse for changing our opinion what the norm is and the norm is not that a person run from romance to romance I didn't just say jump from bed to bed that's really what the media is pushing it's not just romance it's it's beds and you'll hardly see any kind of a movie I imagine today I most movie I don't watch I don't know I can only assume but I mean even movies that promise to be family type movies often seem to in some way prop up this notion that romance for a while if it's fun is is a good thing and if that ceases to be fun then find one that is even if it's a marriage that ceases to be fun but there's another opportunity over here that looks more fun romance is after all entertainment a form of entertainment in the world's eyes it is not a form of it's it's not a means of fulfillment in marriage primarily it is simply something that serial romances are normative now we we have this hammered into us by the media not only by watching movies and hearing songs about well he he left her and it's my party I can cry if I want to because he was my boyfriend now he's her boyfriend and then then it's Judy's turn to cry when the next sequel to that song comes out well you know he left Judy he's back to me now boy lucky girl I mean whether it's the messages in the music or in the or in the movies or the tabloids well who is she with now you know this is marriage number what is eight or nine who's the lucky guy now you think that's lucky to be number nine out of how many total before she's done yeah it's an amazing thing these people are not criticized by the media for this they're simply made objects of interest objects of fascination because they have all these interesting serial romances not very interesting to me I'm not involved in them but the fact of the matter is someone's finding them interesting enough to buy tabloids about them all the time and people magazines not what you consider tabloids just a more classy tabloid same kind of material in there but the idea that romance is for a while and then nothing unusual about going to another one that has come down into the church the point where Christians you know having short-term romances that just seems to them normal enough that's that's the way life is well that's the way that the dominant cultures that's not the way Christian life is supposed to be and that message comes through to us in a lot of different ways well another message of the media is that there is a difference between a victimless crime and a crime of exploitation or somebody is victimized or let's change the word crime to sin a victimless sin now almost everyone even our dominant culture believes it's wrong to rape because the rapist is victimizing somebody but if two adults are consenting there's no victim both people are happy how could that be wrong it's victimless how can anyone condemn two guys or two women who find each other more attractive than they find some of the opposite who's hurt by it who are we to invade their bedroom tell what they can't do leave them alone they're not hurting anybody it's none of your business none of society's business right they're not hurting anyone it's victimless same thing with pornography I guess pornography is victimless to except except the maybe I guess

child pornography a lot of people would say that's wrong but I mean if somebody's looking at pornography pornographic websites in the privacy of his own home and his wife never finds out well who's hurt by that well there is somebody hurt by that and only Christians can be sensitive this fact and that is that God is hurt by that God is hurt by that God is grieving God is angered God's own happiness and tranquility are interrupted when we sin there is no such thing as a victimless sin because God at least is a victim in every case he's victimized by our abuse of him when we when we disdain his principles not walking but there's more every participant in a sin whether they see themselves as a victim or not are being destroyed by that sin the man who what looks at pornography you might say well what my wife doesn't know won't hurt her well it does more than he thinks because it takes his heart away from his wife and and gives it elsewhere so that when he's with her she's not really getting all that she should have from him she doesn't have his whole heart because he's as it says in Proverbs dispersing it abroad in the streets now they're the idea that as long as no one appears to be hurt no one should criticize any kind of sexual behavior or whatever is simply a message of the world that many Christians have not figured out how to answer it well there's an easy answer God is a victim of it in fact when we teach our young people to be sexually pure we usually give them all the wrong reasons to be sexually pure you get a good book written by some Christian author about abstinence and what you're mainly going to read about probably is listen if you abstain you won't a get pregnant be you won't get venereal disease see you won't get emotionally hurt by getting involved with someone then breaking up them for you won't you won't destroy your testimony as you would if you were caught in a sexual relationship as a Christian I mean in appealing to young people and saying listen be sexually pure we give them all the wrong reasons not you thought well those sound like pretty good reasons every one of them self-centered every one of them is if you don't obey what we're saying here about sexual morality you could suffer you could get pregnant you could get AIDS you could get shame on upon you you could have all kinds of regrets well what if the young person says well if I know no who stands to hurt by this maybe I'll take my chances after all some people do have illicit sex and they don't get AIDS they don't get pregnant they don't get caught so after all a lot of young people willing to gamble on that well hey if this is the reason not to do it and right now I've got raging hormones and I feel pretty strongly I'd like to do it I'm willing to take my chances here and so not surprisingly the church is appealing to young people in trying to encourage them to be sexually pure but they're not having any success at all you've got teen pregnancies in the church not that different a rate than you have outside the church and the whole reason is because the motivation that is given to these children is humanistic it's self-centered because parents know I guess that kids if they're tentative sex is because of sexual self-interest and if I got an appeal to that same self-interest in order to give them stronger motivations motivations to avoid it that's not Christian thinking that's worldly thinking Paul appealed to his readers to remain sexually pure but he didn't appeal to any of those issues you know Paul said over in first Corinthians 6 he says in verse 15 do you not know that your bodies are members of

Christ shall I then take the members of Christ and make the members of a harlot certainly not or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her for the two says he shall be one flesh but he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him now he says in verse 19 do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you whom you have from God and you're not your own this is how Paul motivates people to abstain from sexual immorality how you could get yourself in trouble no he didn't feed it doesn't mention whether you could get yourself in trouble that's not what motivates a Christian supposedly what motivates a Christian is concerned for God's glory what you're going to take the members of Christ and involve him in an act of harlotry if that doesn't it's if you're not aghast at that thought then it's easy I mean there it's hard to know whether you really have any Christianity in you at all if the idea that you could take Christ's eyes and have them look at pornography or Christ's body and join it with a harlot and by the way it wouldn't hurt us to start using the right words for things if someone has a lover somebody has a live-in boyfriend or girlfriend why not just use biblical terms it would help us a great deal somebody's whore or somebody's whoremonger that's I mean why not I mean you got a friend or a relative who's shacked up with someone else don't talk about his girlfriend or his his lover talk about his whore don't call him the boyfriend or the lover call him the whoremonger that's what that's what he is why sanitize it the fact that we sanitize it with our speech is both an evidence that we are succumbing to a numbness about the moral issues involved and be it's promoting a further numbness of it by not calling it by its right name Paul appeals to our concern about God as the ultimate victim in every Christian sin your body is Christ bought it what are you gonna do with his body your body is his temple the temple the Holy Spirit what are you gonna do with God's Holy Spirit temple what do you do about that that's what I want my kids to know I mean if they face temptation towards sex and we're doing all we can to not put them in those positions as much as a lot of teams are in unnecessarily but but I mean the days will come they're not under our roof they'll have situations opportunities I don't want them to be thinking well I'm strongly tempted but what's at stake here my reputation my health my this my that if that's all that's at stake those aren't strong enough motivations to keep you from temptation but I want them to know what's at stake here is the glory of God the purity of Jesus Christ and the testimony of Christ in you the defiling of his Holy Temple is what is now in your power to do or not to do these are the issues that Christians have to be sensitized to but we haven't been because we've bought the world's idea that some sins are victimless and they can't be quite so bad if no one's really being exploited everyone's agreeing to it you know no one's being hurt that's false one other message of the media we get and this certainly has come right into the church full force and that is the idea of sex divorce from the idea of reproduction I'm hammered on this enough in the past I just want you know that's one of the media messages we get is that sex is not really about reproduction sex is more about having a good time and as long as we think that that's what sex is for we're a not hitting with the scripture set on the subject and be we're not really we're pulling out from under ourselves the rug of one of the basic mentalities that help to secure our own

purity of thought toward the opposite sex if you think that sex is for having a good time principally then there's a whole lot of people around there that might be tempting as possible objects of a good time but if you think sex is an activity where a man and a woman work together with God to create another eternal being a sacred work well there's gonna be a lot of people you might be attracted to have a good time with but you're not gonna be attracted to raise kids with them and it'll give you a much stronger anchor against the mentality of the world which in the world's eyes sex and reproduction are totally non-sectors they're not they're not related to each other I mean sure they know that if you don't protect yourself during sex you're likely to end up with the misfortune of reproduction and it never gets through their head that maybe it was designed that way maybe I mean if sex isn't for reproduction why did God make it so hard to avoid reproduction why did it take so much technology so much advanced knowledge and science and medication met medicine to to get us point where we can now maybe have sex and not have reproduction but even not for sure now because notwithstanding all of our abilities to go put a man on the moon and send a probe to Mars we still haven't been able to overcome nature completely in this matter and people who try to avoid conception don't always succeed though they're using the most high-tech means available to man is it not obvious that God has made this thing these two things so inseparably joined that even man's best efforts can't perfectly avoid the consequence that sex is for reproduction and once you realize that sex is for having kids suddenly sex takes on a whole new dimension I didn't say dementia but those are the messages we have heard and those are the messages you might say Steve speak for yourself so I will I'll speak for myself those are the messages to a certain extent that I I think we I think most have succumbed to a certain extent now in the time I have left I want to talk about positively what the Bible presents as I would say normative godly social relations between men and women we cannot certainly must not take our cues from the world in this if anything I say sounds really wildly out of step with the world praise God because the world has demonstrated that it doesn't know how many women should relate together everything the world is telling us that they don't have any light on this subject and therefore we should think that although not everything the world does is wrong everything could very well be wrong and tell we judge it against the Word of God and decide what is right now there are certain things where we must really stand in stark contrast the culture and essentially speak against it and live against it swim against the tide as it were and there are certain things in our culture to become very normative and I'm not saying our they're not just in our generation it's some of these things been around for several part of this comes from the feminist movement and of course in this series I've had more than one opportunity to hammer on them and I don't want it to I don't want people think that's the only axe I have to grind but it's one of the bigger ones but the feminist movement has corrupted us in many ways and one of those ways is it has given women to a large extent the impression that they really aren't fulfilling a valuable purpose unless they get out there and do what a man does in other words feminism is anti womanhood feminism is misogyny institutionalized because classic

Christianity indicates that womanhood has a contribution of equal value to what man does that's different from what a man does so womanhood as a distinctive thing in itself is a value feminism says no that's not true women are only valuable if they do the same thing men do messages only men are valuable and the more a woman can be like a man the more valuable should be in other words feminism denies the value of womanhood it's misogyny the Bible indicates the opposite that women actually have a God-given role that is every bit as distinct and defined by God as that which a man has it's different but it's of equal value in some respects it's a more privileged role there to be honored for it the Bible says and as women they can have value as women not as pretend men now once we realize that we're a little more prepared for what the Bible actually says on these subjects and I think one of the things that has contributed to the perversity and sexual impurity of our culture is that taking its cues from feminism the church as well as the world has basically encouraged women to get out of the home and into the workforce now I don't think there's anything wrong with women helping to contribute to the family income I think I've said this in an earlier lecture the woman in Proverbs 31 contributed to the family income she had a number of home-based type things she did she sold stuff the merchants came to her house she sold them to merchants they took him to the marketplace and sold them she made a little profit that way she found a field and bought it so that she could plant a family vineyard and increase the family increased by that way she did a lot to help her husband generate prosperity for the family but everything we read of her doing is surrounding her domestic role in one way or another she is doing it mostly at home now I don't believe that women should never leave the home and I don't and I don't believe that women should never work but what I'm saying is this what I'm talking about particularly is that you go out into places that used to be primarily dominated by men and you find nowadays almost as many women there and one area I could mention that still bothers most Christians who are conservative is the military I'm not a great fan of military involvement for Christians I've talked about that earlier but I don't condemn it I mean to each his own conscience on this matter but I will say this if I said I didn't believe women belonged in corporate America in the corporate job world I probably have a great number of Christians who throw tomatoes at me for that but if I say I don't think women belong out in combat sharing the same barracks with men out on the battlefield most Christians would still say yeah that's definitely going too far so I might as well start with that which most Christians will agree on women and men are not equally suited for some things let's say combat for example you put women out on the field as if they were the same as men and you'll find they aren't especially if they're taken as prisoners of war you'll find that they're not treated quite the same male prisoners of war are very seldom raped female prisoners of war are almost always raped that's if that if that was the only bit of data we had to go on I think we could conclude women don't belong out there vulnerable to those situations but then if not there then where else do they not belong you see everyone has heard and knows this by now that when you put women sailors on ships and they go out and do a tour of duty away from home a certain percentage of those women come home pregnant even



though their husbands were not on the ships with them isn't that right anyone ever has anyone here not heard that I mean it's it is a it's a scandal in the military right now it's talked about a great deal it's been widely publicized that when women are on the ships with men they're sharing a community with men they're interacting with men and you know in in work and in in the mess hall and wherever they are and they're kind of confined they're on a ship they can't go very far from each other they just don't seem to stay out of bed either with each other now you must certainly be aware that adultery is rampant in the church as well as in the world but even if you don't know of cases in the church you certainly have a great number of cases out there in the world back when I was a kid adultery was not unknown in the culture of course but the typical stereotype that was given in in like comedy movies and and comics and jokes and so forth was you know if a woman was committing adultery who was she doing it with anyone remember 40 years ago the milkman exactly and why was it the milkman because he was the only man she came into contact with she was in the home with her kids and the milkman was still delivering milk to the home now I don't really know that milkmen really committed adultery very often with women it may it may have been a stereotype that didn't have much basis in reality but but it's it's indicative of something in the culture when there was adultery at least imagined whether it was happening very often I don't know but it had to be with some men who came to the home why because otherwise she was not in contact with other men than her husband but now the majority of cases of adultery where do the women meet the men at work the vast majority of adulterous affairs occur today among people who meet at work either with co-workers or with clients or someone else they meet in the job market now you might think that I'm being over simplistic when I say a very good cure for this would be for the women to go home some people say Steve you can't turn the clock back why not it's not reading the right time you might as well turn it back to where it belongs why can't you turn the clock back now maybe I can't turn the nation's clock back but if I'm a Bible teacher and Christian supposed to know what the Bible says it may be possible for us to turn the clock back somewhat to profit and to the benefit of the kingdom of God for at least a countercultural group of people now if there's no doubt a lot of women here who either do or have in the past worked outside the home and I just want you to know I don't condemn you I don't have a neck I don't have any negative thoughts about you make I have to say that because I speak strongly on my convictions about this and people who don't conform those conviction I think well Steve must be really be must not really like me I it's not true I'll speak what I believe to be the truth and leave it to the hearers to apply it as they as the Spirit commends it to them or not same thing with birth control or other issues I mean to me I hold my convictions personally I preach them as faithful as I know how and I leave it to every man's conscience or woman's to apply it if they if it's if it seems true to them I don't judge or condemn people who don't see it my way let me just say this the Bible is not silent as to the place of a woman Oh place of a woman what an old-fashioned term a woman's place well where did anyone ever get the idea that there's a woman's place maybe that came from a time when it was believed that women actually are something

different than men that women actually have a value and a role that is different than that of a man and that women don't have to be men to be valuable or to have a role maybe they got it from the Bible because the Bible teaches that very plainly and we've seen these scriptures before I mean just for those who maybe didn't see them or need to be reminded there's a couple of very clear places several clear places that tell us where a woman generally speaking belongs and again I don't mean that she's confined there completely but rather this is her sphere of principle act principal sphere of activity in first Timothy chapter 5 we know what Paul said about the younger widows he said the younger widows I will that they in verse 14 of first Timothy 5 therefore I desire the younger widows to marry bear children manage the house that's a job hey it's a management position the women it just need get concerned if the children form a union because the women are management you know let the woman marry bear children bring them up and manage the house she's a manager of a certain realm that God has assigned in Titus chapter 2 same message comes back again that the older women should admonish the younger women verse for Titus 2 for admonish the young woman to love their husbands love their children to be discreet chaste homemakers good and obedient to their own husbands why so the Word of God may not be blasphemed the Word of God is the Word of God blasphemed in our time and got any impressions about that wonder why now I'm not I'm not going to blame feminism for everything I know I made this point earlier I just can't resist I don't think that feminism ruined everything I just can't think of anything it didn't ruin but there's probably something but we certainly should not think it a coincidence if Paul said women be homemakers manage the house rear your children be obedient to your husbands this is your job this is your realm this is your calling and this is your glory and the cult it says do that so the Word of God doesn't be blasphemed the culture throws off these instructions what does God know about anything women go out there they're all the same places men are and man is the Word of God blaspheme today I'm not gonna say it's all because of that but it's hard to think of any part of it that isn't where did Jimmy Swaggart meet his women in their homes I don't think so now I'm not saying a woman at home is simply by being at home protected from all forms of immorality nor even from adultery there might be a guy next door who's unemployed or she might live somewhere there's still milkman I don't know but the fact is she's in much less danger there where God put her in a protected place then she is out where God didn't put her and where statistically it is obvious that women who go out there end up in much larger numbers losing their chastity losing their testimony sometimes losing their families possibly losing their salvation depending on how you feel about that issue now I think God's smarter than people and I don't care how many people disagree with him I don't care if everyone disagrees with him except me as long as I agree with him that's all that matters to me but I sure like it if more Christians agreed with him too I think it'd be better for the glory of God I think the Word of God not be so blasphemed I think that I think that the purity of God's people would would begin to approximate the purity of God more than the level out in the world look at something over in Proverbs chapter 7 this is about the immoral woman she is apparently a married

woman but her husband's gone on long business trips she says and she sees a young man coming down her street and she tries to draw him in to her boudoir and she is described in many ways here in Proverbs chapter 7 verse 10 says there there a woman met him with the attire of a harlot and a crafty heart she was loud and rebellious her feet would not stay at home now I you know I don't want to put too much on that one phrase but every phrase is there for a reason right I mean there's other phrases of other important things but I should not think that the Holy Spirit put a whole clause in the scripture for no reason her her feet she couldn't stay home now my my wife doesn't stay home all time either she goes to pankies and shops and she goes to lumberman's and gets you know well not anymore and they just closed but she goes places and I don't feel badly about her doing that she's a virtuous woman I don't have any fears about this but I don't want her starting a career outside the home just like I might be able to walk into a market and stand in line while I wait to get my gallon of milk and have those tabloids they're staring at me I may get out of there still with my virtue but I don't think I want to make a career of working in a magazine store I'm spending all my time there or a lot of my time there it's it's hard enough just seen it for a few minutes some of its unavoidable but I don't have to bombard myself unnecessarily I don't mind that now my wife's a beautiful woman if you don't agree with me you don't have to just know that most men think their wives are beautiful and I think my wife's a beautiful woman and I think I'm not the only man who would think so now I know she's a virtuous woman and I know that she's strong and I don't think I mean I'm not worried about her motives but still I don't think it's the healthiest thing and she doesn't either by the way she's fully in agreement on this she I don't think the healthiest thing in the world to take her out and put her in an office working around a lot of men or in a job where she has male clients or where she's a client to male sales people or whatever it's just not it's not wholesome it's not biblical and the culture that has ignored this fact has lost the sanctity of their marriages and so I'll tell you what I I don't like very much to go to banks post offices restaurants where there are attractive women working I've never gotten in trouble with that I don't expect I ever would but I don't like it anyway and don't tell my bankers this I like to go to banks where the tellers are not attractive and restaurants where the waitresses are not attractive I keep my mind on what I'm doing without any trouble I don't like going to places of business where I'm confronted with temptation and I think what about the men who work around these women they're there with them eight hours a day now these men may be a whole lot more spiritual than I am but I I don't know I don't know that the generality of the male population is and I don't really think that we are wise to put our women out in the workforce and again I don't condemn those who are there I just tell you there's wisdom in the Word of God and it's interesting how clearly that is illustrated by results when people reject the Word of God and go another direction as our culture has our dominant culture has I believe that godly man-woman relationships in the Bible presuppose that the woman is largely in contact with her husband is the principal male in her life she's not hidden behind a veil and like the Muslim women who she can't speak to or or or let any man see her other than her husband I don't believe in that the Bible

didn't teach that but there's I mean some people think you know if a little salt is a good thing a lot of salt must be a really good thing that's not true a little contact between men and women who aren't married is perhaps wholesome enough that doesn't mean a lot of it is more wholesome salt is good but too much salt makes food unpalatable just that which is good and wholesome can become very bad if it's if it's overdone and I think that in our society it is greatly overdone contact social contact between men and women who are not married to each other is greatly overdone in our society so much so that even people who don't profess have any interest in each other often are very chummy with women in the office or whatever and they'll you know pat him on the back or elsewhere put their arm around him sit and do lunch together both of them married to someone else they go and do lunch together in the old days that would have been look that look a lot like a date nowadays it wouldn't be right to point that out that you're just too old-fashioned that's not a date that's just doing lunch this is business right just business so how come they end up having so many affairs this way I'm not that naive I may be stupid but I'm not blind and I see that the world is not trying very hard to avoid immorality and therefore they're not very motivated to take their women out of workforce back the more that are out there the better even in the military even on the ships I mean you might think who's doing the thinking in this government to put women on the same ship with men who's thinking men maybe men who are on ships men who miss having women around when they're out at sea I hate to be jaded in my thinking but either that or they're just plain insanity it's either on purpose or it's just plain stupidity I suspect it's on purpose okay we're almost out time here let me take a few more issues here in terms of godly man and woman social relations woman in the workforce I think is not a good idea and I think the Bible's on my side on that another thing modesty what is modesty now I spoke on this not too long ago I'm not going to repeat myself too much like I can't go through this outline without saying something about it here modesty of dress we usually think of modest or immodest clothing largely in terms of how much skin is showing or how much shape is accentuated and there's that's decent that's that's a that's a decent definition but it's not holistic enough modesty isn't just concealing your private parts modesty is more of a disposition of being self effacing it's related to humility a person who is modest is akin to one who is humble it's a similar thing modesty is to be self effacing not desirous to draw attention to oneself there's a similar old word in the King James Bible called shamefacedness women are to be you know shamefaced that's a funny old word shamefaced actually what it means is that she should not be she should be somewhat shy around men that's basically what it means somewhat shy in the company of men now boy is that ever politically incorrect today but hey so is righteousness so is holiness you don't see much of it out there modesty means not really wanting people to notice you too much not thinking you deserve be noticed too much why should you who are you so special that people should be distracted by you it's humility it's the desire to go about your business quietly without getting too much attention and just to do faithfully what you're supposed to do and get out of there without distracting too many people now men are supposed to be that way too in fact

Paul said in first Thessalonians chapter 4 primarily speaking about men he says let our people learn to mind their own business and and to work with their own hands and quietness in others to just kind of don't be don't draw too much attention just do what you're supposed to do work with your hands be more or less quiet remember the prostitute we just read about in Proverbs 7 she was loud and rebellious actually you'll find three different references in Proverbs to the immoral is loud loudness is immodest that's not a much the way we usually think of it loudness isn't just necessarily sexually alluring but the loudness to be an inordinately loud is just an attention getting thing and that's not modest now of course behavior can be a modest to men and women both it used to be mostly women but men are about as a modest or can be about as modest this way as women these days the way one walks the way one glances at somebody there can be a flirtatious smile maybe nothing more than a smile might be it might be so much only a smile that the person if they were accused of being flirtatious what me all I did was smile but men know and women know there's a certain kind of smile a certain kind of look in the eye a certain way to stand a certain way to walk a certain way to move your limbs that draws attention and in many cases the attention is of sexual type whether it is or not it's still a modest to do that which is calculated to draw special attention to yourself unnecessarily and especially when this is done by a man trying to draw special attention to himself on the part of women or a woman seeking special male attention they might say what about an unmarried woman she wants to get married how she did that without calling attention to her listen let her cultivate the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is inside of God of great value and she will be noticed because she will be a rare find when I was single I was around a lot of young people in California the Jesus moment lots of people a lot of Christians a lot of young Christians a lot of good-looking Christians but I remember once a woman came into the midst of our circle who was not not overly physically attractive I mean she wasn't she wasn't ugly but she there was nothing striking about her looks that would turn a man's head but she wasn't there long before every man I knew every godly man I knew was noticing her not because of what she was dressing like or acting like but because what you know everything about her was about meek and quiet spirit a godly purity and she stuck out like a sore thumb without trying I remember she was volunteering working the office of a church and the pastor came to me says he says man where do you find a woman like that he says during her coffee break she pulls out William Law's serious call to a devout and holy life it's a big book this thick written by a Puritan writer I love it great book but very few people would stomach it because it's long and tedious but it's a great book that she's reading that during her breaks because that's what she wants she's she wants a devout holy life and I'll tell you every godly man I know including myself who was single at the time hoped to win her I didn't I didn't know Christian in those days but that woman you know she was not overly good-looking but she had that ornament that God values and that godly men value a woman does not have to be immodest or flirtatious in order to get the right kind of attention she just needs to be the right kind of a woman now what about clothes modesty has to do with clothing to does it not and clothing can be

immodest in at least two ways or three one way is of course it can just show way too much skin God did not intend for the skin of certain parts of the body to be exhibited publicly you know that and we should get back to a good biblical theology of clothing there's a theology of clothing when God made man and woman they didn't have any clothes on right and if I said they were naked but they weren't ashamed and you know why there's nothing to be ashamed of they were pure but as soon as they became impure by the fall sin became a factor in their in their lives suddenly they were self-conscious they didn't want to be seen even by each other that they were married couple they didn't even even then they felt so guilty not we don't have to feel guilty we don't have to hide ourselves from our spouses but but they didn't and they were just alienated from God and they felt thus alienate from each other too and they covered themselves to hide their shame but we might say well that was just a carnal reaction but then God covered them he killed animals and gave the skins to cover them because the fig leaves they made for themselves didn't do the job very well didn't last after the first washing so God made them coats of skins and they wore those and those last God wanted them to cover their nakedness and throughout the law of Moses we find continual expectations don't uncover the nakedness of don't uncover the nakedness I've don't uncover the nakedness of and the categories that were named were categories that you shouldn't have sexual relations with but the idea was you don't cover the nakedness either in fact one of the most the only very shameful thing in the story of Noah is that he got so drunk once that he lost his inhibitions and took his clothes off and he wasn't even in public but he was in a shameful state uncovered and his one of his sons did the shameful thing of seeing him and not covering him up but his more virtuous two sons insisted on covering him up without seeing him and walk backward through it some over why that's some kind of old-fashioned prudery or was that a not yet numbed sense of appropriate modesty the Bible indicates that clothing is not for ornamentation primarily clothing is to cover nakedness in some some climates it may also be for survival but in many climates clothing is not necessary for survival as seen by the fact that many tribal people never thought of putting clothing on and many place where they do wear clothing they could get along without it no one in Hawaii would have to wear clothing for survival but civilized people do wear clothing and Christians certainly do and the reason is because clothing isn't just for protection against the elements it's not just for ornamentation it is for modesty it is to cover nakedness now obviously some parts of the body almost of necessity have to show no matter what you're wearing you're I mean you can't work don't have to wear gloves and and hoods over your head all the time but but the but certainly the parts of the body that are in any sense liable to arouse lust in another party are those that should be given the more as Paul put it in first Corinthians 12 using an analogy of the body we bestow upon them the greater honor we they're the unpresentable parts Paul said you don't present those in public why because you despise them no because you honor them the honorable parts the unpresentable parts we bestow a greater honor and we conceal them that's the right thing to do and if someone says well Steve how far can you go how much leg can you show how much chest can you

show before the dress is too low-cut to be Christian I don't know let's let's avoid that line how near to the edge of the cliff can you get without falling off I don't know let's not go near there let's not try to push the limits when I was a young man and single I was I've never had a body that would attract positive attention but I lived in California and I was in a Christian community and we had worked through these in the afternoon and and several of us men were out working in the heat of the day of summer we're all sweating we had our shirts off we're shoveling and stuff but there were women out doing different chores around within view to it one of the women came up because I was the leader and she said you know these men with their shirts off she didn't say anything about me but some of the men with their shirts off she said this is kind of a stumbling block to some of us women and to tell you the truth it came as a total revelation to me I had no idea I had no idea a woman would be stumbled by seeing a man's bare chest now I knew that a man might have temptations that way I mean I knew there's a difference I thought there was difference in men and women that way and there certainly is a difference but the difference was not as absolute as I thought I mean I would have known for sure if the women were working without tops that that'd be wrong and that'd be immodest but I it never occurred to me that a man working with his shirt off was immodest and it may not be a problem in all circles but it came as a revelation to me it even that in some circles could be a stumbling block and so you know what I really don't think I was one of the ones that was a temptation but I generally speaking don't wear I generally don't go out without a shirt on in public now somebody say well that's overdoing it Steve well better to overdo it than under do it there's no in overdoing it now there may be a sin in imposing a standard on people that's extra biblical and getting legalistic about how people have to dress but there's no sin in you personally being as modest as you can be and modest meaning covering as much of that controversial skin as you can and a not the cut of your clothes not accentuating those parts of your body that are your sexual distinctives and in addition this and this may not be related to sex at all clothing that is simply loud and more designed for special attention than for function now I not everyone has to share the same convictions about clothing I have I don't like any clothing that's just for looks that's why I don't own a tie I'm not saying men shouldn't wear ties although there was a time when all Christians thought ties were worldly that's our culture has changed it used to be considered that ties were a worldly clothing item and Christian men didn't wear them but that's changed but to me I don't think anything bad about it's just it's non-functional I don't have any use for non-functional clothing when I buy clothes I want to be sturdy stuff I can wear for several years and that's all I mean I like it there's certain styles I like the looks of too but what I like about them is that they seem functional and sturdy now no one has to share my views on that but I don't think anyone would get into much trouble adopting a view like that of clothing rather than clothes that are mainly there to dazzle and to intrigue and to draw attention I'm out of time but I want to make very quick to well observations I yeah I'm gonna leave some of this stuff out I'd rather I'd rather say it but I'm I'm too scared some of that I just don't I can I can use this issues I don't have time for all the points I wanted to make let me move along

quickly here to some things let me just say now there's other things on my list but I only have a minute or two if I have that dating we've talked about patrol we've talked about different things I won't go into this at length but again dating is one of those things that promotes impurity especially in the youth since it's mainly the youth who are involved in dating of course older people when they find them so suddenly single again often go that way again but dating is simply an institutionalization of the idea of uncommitted romance for recreation and entertainment purposes and especially when it's among young people who are dealing with raging hormones that they've had very little experience controlling or even facing it's a very dangerous situation to have young people go out alone unsupervised with someone they find attractive for an evening or whatever I don't mind if I sound like a fuddy-duddy or old-fashioned I'm just telling the truth and I bet there's almost everybody in this room who's older and who dated whether you were a Christian or not I would imagine that you did some things that you'd prefer your children wouldn't do now I didn't see that's the proof is in the pudding there I mean if I get up and say something that's really politically incorrect like I don't think people should go out and be I don't think young people should be trusted alone with someone they are attracted to alone at night in a car for an evening most people say well you're not giving enough credit to these young kids so what do you think they're a bunch of animals or something well what were you did you never do anything in that situation that you hope your children won't do if you never did then maybe I'm wrong maybe I'm just too jaded maybe I'm just a Californian and you're not a home maybe Idahoans only think about farming and cleaning their guns but where I come from kids cannot be trusted alone with the opposite sex they can't and it's not because they are more corrupt than the average it's because they are human and that God did not design humans to be in those kinds of compromising tempting situations now when I say kids can't be trusted I'm not saying there's not a kid out there who can be trusted sure there are some there are some I think I knew one when I was a teenager I think I knew one who could probably trust he was a guy I don't know if he ever went on a date I doubt it but the fact is kids who go on dates seldom save their hearts completely for the one they marry and that in itself is a compromise of purity that Christians should protest and we shouldn't care how many people think we're old-fashioned or goofy or or whatever I revel in it if the world says you are way out of step Steve I say thank God thank you so much for saying that coming from you that is a compliment I hope I can get even more out of step with the world and more in step with God because frankly I have to confess I'm not making it in that area of purity as much as I want to so I hope to even get more out of step with the world as long as it's not just out of step with the world I want to be in step with God and his principles but that's what we need to do and until we're willing to do that even though it is radically seems like nonsense to the world around us we've got to be unashamed why should we be ashamed of the truth why should we be ashamed of holiness but too many Christians are too many churches are they're afraid to take a stand they'd lose too many customers I mean parishioners so anyway the purpose of this series is not to not to make a lot of people happy the purpose is that we could become a people who



make God happy and whose obedience helps to promote the kingdom of God not the size of a church or the number of tithers that come