

Keep Thyself Pure

When the Apostle Paul instructed the young evangelist Timothy, saying, “neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure” (1 Timothy 5:22), he sets forth an admonition to take special care that one is not defiled as a result of taking part in the sins of others.

Two terms which deserve consideration are, (1) Keep, i.e., to guard, keeping the eye on. It denotes giving vigilant attention to purity, thus (2) Purity, i.e., pure from defilement, not contaminated.

The admonition to “keep thyself pure” requires a standard by which one lives: as defilement and contamination are a result of what one does. As “Evil companionships corrupt good morals” (1 Corinthians 15:33), there is of necessity a standard outlining what constitutes purity, and what constitutes defilement. Those who do “not defile their garments...they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy” (Revelation 3:4).

Let us consider what the scriptures say defile the man: (1) “And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell” (James 3:6). As the tongue can destroy, it can also build up, as the Apostle Paul says, “Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear” (Ephesians 4:29). Are we mindful of what we say? If not, consider the consequences, as the Lord states, “And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matthew 12:36-37). (2) Jude speaks of moral defilement as a garment representing that which, being brought into contact with the polluting element of the flesh, becomes defiled, saying, “on some have mercy with fear; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh” (Jude 23). (3) Peter speaks of the vices of the ungodly which contaminate a person in his intercourse with the world, saying, “For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the

knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse with them than the first” (2 Peter 2:20). (4) And, as defined by the Lord when, “he called to him the multitude again, and said unto them, Hear me all of you, and understand: there is nothing from without the man, that going into him can defile him; but the things which proceed out of the man are those that defile the man” (Mark 7:14-16).

Remember the words of the Apostle Paul, saying, “beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1). ret