

RESTORATION PATH

NEWSLETTER - JULY 2012

Finding Freedom in Jesus Christ from sexual and relational sin.

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Freedom is Not Free - Galatians 5:13



by: Tommy Corman

Freedom is not free is a bumper sticker that commanded much attention after 9-11. This was a statement that many people understood as we were at war. And whether you agreed with the war or not the statement makes sense. Freedom is not free, not even for our salvation. Somebody had to die for our sin and that was Jesus. We can accept that gift gracefully

but now what? How are we supposed to live as Christians in a culture that is sexually promiscuous? How are we to make decisions when we don't know exactly what truth means? Part of this struggle as a Christ follower is to identify how we are to let go of past behavior if we are going to let God minister to our hearts. God, as a gentleman, doesn't always break down all our defenses to get us to see something we should change. Many times it's the still small voice that nudges us in our consciences that what we are doing is wrong. It's our choices, the free will we have, that needs to be exercised here for His purposes.

A specific area that I have been getting frequent calls about lately has been about cohabitation in the church and how leaders should deal with it and the singles that aren't living together, but are engaged in sexual activity that is reserved for marriage as the Scripture states.

One element that I have encouraged pastors with is to stand with the congregates to walk in purity. If you don't, you are affirming the wrong behavior as permissible. Others will know you know and then perceive that as acceptable. There are other negative effects that occur when two people are sexually active before marriage. The relationship struggles in the future for the wife and the husband, there will be a lack of trust and respect. There is usually intimacy that is not seen as pure or special for those intimate times too.

Here is one example of what we hear often at Restoration Path:

A young person is planning to get married and is currently sleeping with their fiancé. They, as a couple, have approached the pastor at their local church and he tells them they are sinning. The pastor has counseled them to get married. They want to but are waiting until next year when they are out of college. The option for them to live in separate apartments doesn't fit their tight budget either. The pastor feels that there are many factors he has to address when he can keep it quite simple: *"Do you want to pursue purity at this time or not?"*

When the answer is yes, they want purity, encourage them and offer to help one of them find a place to live within the body of Christ, if it's a good option. Help them get counsel, separately and not in the same session together. If the answer is given with a nonchalant attitude, than kindly tell them that you are not able to counsel with them. Jesus told the disciples to share the good news and if it is not received to dust their feet at the edge of town and keep moving. Speak truth to those that are listening AND applying it. Don't cast your pearls before the swine.

Another question may be: *"Should I not just marry this couple so they can keep having sex without guilt"*. If that is the extent of a pastor's decision then one has to think he's looking out for image control in the body more than what is best for the couple and community of believers. And for those that have been duped into doing this would need to share with others the dangers of thinking that marriage is the quick answer to not sin. The quick answer to not sinning is to stop doing it!



Freedom is not free, not even for our salvation

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The couple needs to be putting Christ first. It is important for them to know that the life of marriage is self sacrificing. A man is to leave his family and be united with his spouse. The disciplining of a couple separately is very important. The reason is they will never be completely honest with the counseling or themselves. The brain chemistry in the release of oxytocin at this point in the relationship is so strong that one's defenses will keep them from being open to spiritual truths.

And the classic minimization for cohabitation is, "Marriage is only a piece of paper. I love you so let's have sex." This justification calls for impatience and immediacy that is actually opposite requirements to have a successful marriage. Purity is more than I have an urge and I don't want to feel guilty about it, so can we have monogamous sex? Purity has to do with faithfulness and trust to another person for life because of lasting consequences.

We need to know that our decisions have consequences especially in relationships. Have another couple disciple the younger in what and why they should have done their courting differently. Don't settle for lies from the enemy as a leader, that it's just more difficult in this culture. If you are committed to a way of life you will show it. I know that relationships and sex is being sold all around us. We can also choose how much we want to take in from what goes on around us.

In the early twenties stage of development one is finding acceptance by losing oneself in someone else, finding that euphoria in orgasmic pleasure is more important to me than when God says be patient. It's good but the timing is wrong. Marriage doesn't cure sex addiction either. Some will get married to try and cover the guilt. Young people usually have such a minor understanding of boundaries, respect, monogamy that is deeper than purity, and etc...

Finally, the Song of Solomon states three times "Don't give yourself to love before it is too soon." 2:7; 3:5; 8:4. Understanding hermeneutics laws that is actually quite important for a wisdom book to repeat the same quote three times. This relationship book of the Bible on sex also addresses how small things will spoil a relationship.

2:15 states, "Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards, our vineyards that are in bloom (that spoil).

Jesus affirms co-habitation is wrong by his comments to the woman at the well. He stated you have been married 5 times and man you are living with is not your husband.

If I say I am free does that mean that the choices I make about relationships and sex can be in abundance as long as I confess them? Absolutely not. This is directly subscribing to minimizing one's behavior.

What a glorious season for us to be free in Jesus. Set healthy boundaries, limits, for the lifestyle God has called you to.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Event	Location	Date	Time
4-Day Intensive	RP Office	Call to Schedule	9:00 AM
Hourly Counseling	RP Office/Phone/Skype	Call to Schedule	
Family Support Group (FFTIL)	RP Office	2nd Tuesday of Each Month	6:30 PM
Online Workshops	RP Office/Internet	Call to Schedule	