

7 Reasons Christian Leaders Fall Into Sexual Sin

In my last article I discussed the epidemic of adulterous and sexually inappropriate relationships coming to light on a regular basis, particularly among middle-aged men.

Ponder for a moment, while praying for these individuals, the following middle-agers who have confessed immorality or inappropriate behavior in extramarital relationships: Doug Phillips, Marcus Lamb, Rory Alec, the late Zachery Tims, Bob Coy, Jim Bolin, Paul Sheppard, Bill Gothard, Eddie Long, Benny Hinn, Bobby Petrino and Gen. David Petraeus. The moral failures of Jimmy Swaggart, Jim Bakker and Ted Haggard now seem like ages ago.

It would do us good to consider the reasons middle-aged men get involved in sexually inappropriate or adulterous relationships. If we identify some signposts leading to the shipwreck, hopefully we'll steer clear before it's too late.

1. Heart issue where they've never really submitted totally to Jesus Christ as Lord and then got established in an authentic local church for ongoing nurturing and support.
2. Unhealthy fear that time is fleeting and they must "grab the gusto" and experience whatever sexual pleasure remains before it's too late.
3. Sensing a lessening of physical attractiveness for their spouse and possible floating bitterness that she is "letting herself go," thinking it's all right to be attracted to and involved with other available women.
4. Because a spouse is disinterested in sexual activity, maybe experiencing menopause, thinking God understands and "gives a pass" to engage in extramarital sexual behavior.

5. As children have grown and left for college or marriage, there's simply more time for other pursuits, which can include exploring new realms of sexual relationship.

6. Greater financial prosperity enables discretionary income to be tapped for recreation, hobbies, gadgets and—why not some sexual pursuits?

7. Whereas resolving relational conflicts quickly was once a priority, now laziness and selfishness rule, allowing the marriage to drift and a gulf to widen—a setup for Satan's alternative.

David was not a young man when he succumbed to sexual sin: Commentators believe his age was approximately 51. His devastating failure was a classic example of Satan's pattern leading someone from fantasy to flirtation to the fall.

“When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death” (James 1:13-15).

The subtlety of sexual sin was seen in the entrapment of David with Bathsheba. We must be on guard for *external* danger signals in relating to the opposite sex (growing dependence on someone; receiving affirmation and praise; listening to complaints about loneliness; receiving gifts; enjoying physical contact) as well as *internal* danger signals (regularly thinking about a person; comparing the person to my spouse; finding excuses to be around the other person; having sexual fantasies about the woman; scheming ways to be alone with her; sharing marital problems with her; exploring Facebook contacts; keeping “articles of affection” from an old flame).

In these challenging times, it is critical to be aggressive in

putting to death fleshly impulses and guarding our minds. May we discern any subtle signs of attraction and seduction and radically avoid associations where we might be drawn into temptation.

No matter what our age, let's resolve to be aggressive in avoiding temptation and attacking sin when it first rears its ugly head!

"I pursued my enemies and overtook them; I did not turn back 'til they were destroyed. I crushed them so that they could not rise; they fell beneath my feet" (-38).

This is the final installment of a two-part series on this topic. [Click here for Monday's Part 1.](#)

Larry Tomczak is a best-selling author and cultural commentator with 42 years of trusted ministry experience. His passion is to bring perspective, analysis and insight from a biblical worldview. He loves awakening people to today's cultural realities and responses needed for a restored, influential church. Please visit and follow him on Facebook or at @larrytomczak on Twitter.