

Principles for Keeping Jezebel From Stealing Your Spiritual Authority

The church is at one of the most pivotal moments in history. It will either enter a great revival and heal the culture woes of our times as it has done in the past or go the route of social compliance and irrelevancy.

Many souls are weighing in the balance of this choice, and what it may come down to is your sexual integrity as a leader.

Our previous generation of leaders was birthed in a culture of morality. They knew that character was what you did when you were all by yourself. They feared God and tried to live a godly life.

This generation has the sexual influences of Hugh Hefner and a culture that tells them that if it feels good, do it. We need sexually pure leaders more today than at any other time in history.

Impure sexuality, which would include lust, pornography, masturbating, flirting or any sex act outside of marriage with anyone, can determine how God sees you.

If you read Leviticus 18, the Old Testament chapter that addresses sexual issues, God tells the people not to engage in a list of various behaviors. In verse 24 He says, "Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, for in these practices the nations I am casting out before you have defiled themselves."

You see God uses our sexual behavior to determine if we are defiled or clean. According to verse 28, if we are impure, we are told the land will vomit us up. Jeremiah 3:1, 9 also

describes how God evaluates a nation.

If this is true, America is more defiled than clean. What about your state, your city and your church? And how does God see you?

Let's go to the New Testament, where Revelation 2:20-26 talks about the church at Thyatira. Jezebel, a woman in the church, was teaching immorality. Scripture says Jesus gave her a time to repent but she wouldn't, so He was going to kill her children. Christ was upset with this church because it tolerated the teaching of permissiveness concerning immorality.

You see, God is patient but He is not tolerant. He has never tolerated sexual sin even with leaders in the church such as Jezebel. She taught that you could do whatever you wanted with regard to sex and still have God. This is in direct opposition to Scriptures that tell us that our bodies are the "temple of the Holy Spirit" and we are not to be immoral.

If Jezebel were alive today she would tell church leaders, be they male or female, you can have secret e-mail accounts, chat online inappropriately, look at porn on your cell phone or church computer or have secret liaisons. You see, Jezebel would not be a controlling woman in your church. She instead would have a permissive attitude toward sexual immorality.

The most powerful part of Revelation 2 is verse 26, which says, "'To him who overcomes and keeps My works to the end, I will give authority over the nations" (Rev. 2:26). God wants you to have authority, but you can't be immoral and have authority. If we as leaders will confront and deal with sexual immorality in every area of our lives, God will give us the authority we need to change nations.

It's not just your sexuality that the devil is after; it's your spiritual authority. We all know leaders who have fallen and have not repented. Notice how their authority has

shriveled.

Viewing pornography and having a sexual secret are at an all-time high among spiritual leaders. We can't expect to be strong in our nation if we do not stop this spiritual cancer from metastasizing.

As a Christian leader, I too had to face this question within our counseling center. We decided as a group of counselors to take annual polygraph tests to determine if any of us were involved in any type of sexual impurity. This keeps our counseling center clean and everyone who calls us for telephone sessions, group meetings or our three and five-day intensives knows that the counselor lives a pure life.

I long for the day churches are proactive and not tolerant of secrets. We can't heal what we won't confront in our leadership.

When I speak at men's conferences all over the world, I talk to men—of whom 50 percent or more admit they are sexually addicted—about how to combat a sexual battle in the early stages.

James 1:15 talks about the three stages: lust, sin and death. The best way to avoid sexual immorality in your life is to start by killing the seed of lust. Killing a seed is easier than killing a tree.

1. Rubber-Band Method

You can start by placing a rubber band on your wrist. Every time you lust after a person, snap the rubber band (you can also quote appropriate Scripture if you like). In about 30 days, you will actually retrain your brain to shut down lust. If you lust while watching pornography, you have neurologically imprinted sexual acts hundreds or thousands of times in your mind through fantasy, and you have sinned against your own body (see 1 Cor. 6:18). The rubber-band

exercise will help you fight the urge at every point.

2. Confess

The military has a buddy system that would work well for Christian leaders. If you want to stop tolerating sexual temptation, then expose it to the light. So many leaders want to deal with the issue by confessing to Jesus using 1 John 1:9, which says Christ is “faithful and just” to forgive us if we confess our sins. But you won’t be healed. That comes when you follow James 5:16, “Confess your faults to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.” You have to get honest with somebody even about the small instances, and the problem won’t continue to grow.

I have been sexually free for more than 30 years. I have an accountability partner. If anything remotely comes into my life, I am immediately open with him and he does the same.

3. Get Accountable

A pastor or Christian leader without an honest accountability partner is much more likely to fall than someone with an accountability partner. I spoke at a pastor’s conference, and only about 15 percent of the pastors in attendance had an accountability partner. And we wonder why so many leaders fall. If you are struggling and you feel you can’t talk to a local person, make a telephone counseling appointment with one of our counselors to start the process. We need every leader to stay sexually pure.

4. Get a Porn Blocker

Another very proactive measure for you as a leader to be sexually successful is to get a porn blocker on all your computers. If you have a cell phone with access to the web, you can block the internet on your phone. Remember, the internet is the largest porn store of all time, and it’s a good idea not to have easy access to any porn store.

5. Intimacy With your Spouse

The last area of sexual integrity I want to stress is to have fulfilling sex in your marriage. This is not just about being physical because sex includes spiritual, emotional and physical intimacy.

As a Christian leader, if you are not praying with your spouse, not only are you a hypocrite, but it will also affect your marriage and make you more vulnerable. Also, sharing your feelings with your spouse and making time daily to connect emotionally is critical. If this isn't happening, you can actually sabotage your marriage and your sex life.

Your spouse needs to be your closest friend. Intimacy is a result of discipline. If you lack basic relationship skills of daily prayer, the sharing of feelings with each other and praising your spouse, you will lack intimacy, become vulnerable to another person and can easily join the group of fallen leaders.

I know it is possible to have sexual integrity. We have helped so many ministers get and stay free from lust, sin and death, so consider your value in the kingdom. Your Savior has done what He can to bless you. He needs more leaders with sexual integrity, and you deserve that blessing. If you need to strengthen your marriage, please do. If you don't presently have an accountability partner or group, get one soon. If you have secrets you haven't told anyone, please share them with someone now.

Jesus wants every leader to grow and prosper, save souls, make disciples and keep his testimony of sexual purity until the finishing line. You deserve that feeling of knowing you have been a good and faithful servant in this critical time. {eo}

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