

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

Lesser Discussed Sins: Lewdness

by: Justin Brewer

In our last article, we discussed the fact that Christians cannot possibly address every single activity that is sin every time that they are dealing with one particular sin; furthermore, the fact that they cannot address every sin every time is not a stamp of approval on the sins not covered. On the other hand, it is clear that Christians do need to spend more time on the sins that tend not to be discussed in depth as often so as to not allow them to slip through the cracks; there are many people in the world and even within the church who may be participating in sin unknowingly and would fix this issue if they had the proper instruction.

As mentioned in the previous introductory article of this series, there are numerous passages that contain an abbreviated list of what “not to do”; in other words, they contain a list of sins

and, in Galatians 5:21, the Apostle Paul includes “and the like” to ensure that we understand that there are sins not specifically mentioned in Scripture. In this article, we will examine the sin of lewdness (Galatians 5:19 NKJV), which is translated as lasciviousness in the KJV. While Christians do not often spend a great deal of time on this specific sin, what applications can we make about it? What is lewdness/lasciviousness? How do they tie into our lives as Christians and how do they overlap other sins?

According to Strong’s, the transliterated word is “aselgeia,” which is defined as “unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence.”¹ Additionally, the Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines lasciviousness as being “filled with or showing sexual desire”

¹ “Aselgeia – New Testament Greek Lexicon – King James Version.” Bible Study Tools. Accessed August 01, 2016. <http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/kjv/aselgeia.html>. Files from the public domain.

and “lewd, lustful.”² Likewise, lewd is defined as “sexual in an offensive or rude way,” “sexually unchaste or licentious,” and “obscene, vulgar.”³ Lust is defined as a “strong feeling of sexual desire,” “a strong desire for something,” and an “intense or unbridled sexual desire.”⁴ From these definitions, it is clear that this sin can overlap with and accentuate other sins such as immodesty, fornication, and adultery. How can it have such an impact?

Each spring and summer, a plethora of articles are written by faithful brethren on the topic of modesty and this is a wonderful thing. Immodesty is a significant problem in our society and, sadly, within God’s church. However, discussions concerning modesty too often come down to arguments over exact length of pants, skirts, and whether or not a Christian can wear a bathing suit. How might lewdness and lasciviousness impact these types of discussions? The definition of aselgeia includes “unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence,” which means that the sin included in Galatians 5:19 is applicable to two groups of people: 1.) Individuals who are being lewd in their own dress and actions, and 2.) Individuals who are lustful towards others. Often when immodesty is discussed, the person arguing for loose guidelines on modesty will state that they aren’t forcing others to look at them; if others are lustful, how is that their problem? The answer is found in the definition of aselgeia! This word incorporates both the person acting in a lewd/lascivious manner and the person who is lustful of that person.

Perhaps we should consider it in this manner: Jesus said that a “good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by its fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush” (Luke 6:43-44). If the fruit of our own immodesty is that others are led to lust, then is this good fruit? Likewise, consider again the words of Jesus when He says that “whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea” (Mark 9:42). If the way we act, the way we talk, or the way we dress causes others to stumble, we have become the lewd one and we have facilitated the lewdness of others. Should we be shameless, as the definition

2 “Lascivious.” Merriam-Webster.com. Accessed August 01, 2016. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lascivious>.

3 “Lewd.” Merriam-Webster.com. Accessed August 01, 2016. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lewd>.

4 “Lust.” Merriam-Webster.com. Accessed August 01, 2016. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lewd>.

of aselgeia includes? As the Lord said through Jeremiah the prophet, “Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; Nor did they know how to blush” (Jeremiah 6:15).

This examination is not comprehensive, but explores some of the significant applications to be made concerning lewdness/lasciviousness. What we should recognize is that rarely, if ever, is one sin independent of another; that is to say, when one sin is committed, there is frequently any combination of sins committed with the first. If we are knowingly lewd, then we show a lack of love for our fellow Christians, God, and we are likely rebellious. Our goal, as Christians, is to draw closer to God and to our fellow Christians so that we can reach Heaven. The central message of 1 Corinthians 13 is that if we truly have the love for one another that Christ had for us, then we monitor our own actions and that we work to help one another; we can have all the knowledge in the world and we can go through many of the other motions of being a Christian, but if we lack love for one another, then everything else is moot. As Paul wrote, “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13). Why is love the greatest? Because it guides us to follow the commands of God and to look out for the best of other Christians! Going back to our previous example, is stating that if someone else looks at our immodestly clad bodies it is their problem and not our own showing the proper love? Or is it showing the shamelessness embedded in lasciviousness?

Let us strive for the love that Christ had for us; as is written in 1 John 3:16, “By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” Which is more important to us? Lewd talk, behavior, and dress, or our souls and the souls of our brethren? Let us follow the words written in Hebrews 12:1: “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us...”

Study Opportunities

Sunday Bible Study: 10:00 AM
Sunday Worship Assembly: 11:00 AM

Meeting At

Homewood Suites of Bozeman
1023 E Baxter Ln,
Bozeman, MT 59715

Everyone Welcome!

David's Mighty Men

by: Larry Rouse

At the end of King David's life the Holy Spirit tells us of thirty-seven men. These thirty-seven were described as "David's mighty men" by God Himself (2 Sam 23:8, 39). At the time of David's death when these men were recognized, some of them had passed from this life having fallen in battle. By making this list God wanted all of us to know that King David, described by God Himself as "the man exalted by the Most High, the man anointed by the God of Jacob" (2 Sam 23:1), did not accomplish these great things alone.

Have you ever had a close Christian friend? I pray that all of you can answer in the affirmative and that in fact you may list many names of those who have stood beside you in the fight for righteousness. What David found in the support of his mighty men, other righteous men everywhere have also sought in their service to God. "As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend" (Proverbs 27:17).

How did these mighty men come to be a part of the life of David? From the scriptures we learn that it had nothing to do with social standing, accomplishments or family. These men came to David having already been rejected by the world as misfits and useless. "And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him. (1 Sam 22:2)"

So then how did they come to seek David? They likely came to David the way Jonathan became best friends with him, by seeing the power of a living faith in David's life. Jonathan first met David after his stand by faith allowed him to be the instrument used to slay Goliath and demoralize the armies of the Philistines. Jonathan saw David with the severed head of Goliath talking with his father Saul and the scriptures tell us: "Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. (1 Sam 18:1)"

This close association with David, a man of courage and faith, produced men who in many ways became like David. God tells us about the courage and tenacity of these men. Eleazar attacked when others were fearful. He fought so hard that his

sword stuck to his hand after the battle! Because of his courage the entire battle for the Lord was won. (2 Sam 23:9-10) Shammah, like Eleazar stood in a field when others fled. One man against a troop of Philistines was nothing to a man who by faith knew that God was with him. Does this not remind you of David? (2 Sam 23:11-12)

These men displayed a loyalty and love towards David that went beyond mere obligation. Our God wanted us to know of one remarkable event involving the mighty men and David. Hear God's account: "Then three of the thirty chief men went down at harvest time and came to David at the cave of Adullam. And the troop of Philistines encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. David was then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem. And David said with longing, "Oh, that someone would give me a drink of the water from the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!" So the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and took it and brought it to David. Nevertheless he would not drink it, but poured it out to the LORD. And he said, "Far be it from me, O LORD, that I should do this! Is this not the blood of the men who went in jeopardy of their lives?" Therefore he would not drink it. These things were done by the three mighty men" (2 Sam 23:13-17)"

When a relationship is based upon the love of God one does not have to wait upon pressure from men before they act. Love will always seek what is best for the one who is loved. All these mighty men needed to do was hear the desire of David and it immediately became their desire as well. They fought through the enemy lines twice just to bring back a drink of water from the well of David's childhood. David recognized the precious gift these men had given and in turn offered it to the God who gives this kind of love! Remember this truth from God: "Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. (Rom 13:8)"

These mighty men, even though possessing strength and strong wills, listened to David and as a result they subdued their instincts to act against a helpless enemy. On one occasion Abishai boldly accompanied David when he went to the camp of Saul and found him and his guard asleep and helpless. Abishai concluded that God wanted him to immediately kill Saul. Only one man could stop him from acting: "Then Abishai said to David, "God has delivered your enemy into your hand this day. Now therefore, please, let me strike him at once with the spear, right to the

earth; and I will not have to strike him a second time!” But David said to Abishai, “Do not destroy him; for who can stretch out his hand against the Lord’s anointed, and be guiltless?” David said furthermore, “As the Lord lives, the Lord shall strike him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall go out to battle and perish. The Lord forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the Lord’s anointed. (1 Sam 26:8-11)”

Unfortunately David’s influence was not with these men at all times. Under the influence of his older wicked brother Joab, Abishai lied to, ambushed and then murdered Abner just after David had made peace with him. What would David do? This was one of his mighty men who loved him dearly. But David loved God more than he loved any man. When it came to right and wrong no one got a free pass! David publicly responded “And I am weak today, though anointed king; and these men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too harsh for me. The Lord shall repay the evildoer according to his wickedness. (2 Sam 3:39)”

We could not complete our examination of these mighty men without revealing how Satan through the sin of David led him to commit a great sin against a close friend. The account of the sin of adultery between David and Bathsheba is well known, as well as how David was unable to cover up his sin by having Bathsheba’s husband Uriah the Hittite recalled from the army so that he might be with his wife. Uriah refused to enjoy the comforts that his fellow soldiers in the field could not, so he slept outside rather than enter his home. David’s cover-up had failed. What was he to do? David had this faithful servant murdered by commanding Joab to let him die by withdrawing troops from him in the heat of battle.

Most of you know the rest of the story, but there is one fact that you may not know. At the end of the list of David’s mighty men, these men who would give their lives for their beloved leader, was this name: “Uriah the Hittite” (2 Sam 23:39).

Let no one doubt that David went to heaven and served the remainder of his life faithful to God. Also, let no one doubt the terrible consequences of sin. How many have forsaken their faithful companion who is their mate, or faithful Christians who would give their lives for another, because of the temporary allure of sin and then the terrible web of consequences that follow. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8)”

Today we are to be Jesus’ mighty men.

1. We are called out of a world that rejects us as useless. (1 Cor 1:26-29)
2. We are drawn to the life of the one who died for us.
3. We are molded into the image of our mighty leader whom we closely follow. (Rom 8:29)
4. We are motivated to act not just out of obligation, but out of love. (2 Cor 8:8-9)
5. We are not afraid to fight for what is right even when others flee. (Titus 1:9-11)
6. We will fight the efforts of the wicked one to separate us and destroy us from our faithful leader.

Will you be on God's list as a mighty man of Jesus when you die? Let us seek the association of these kinds of friends. This is how the path to heaven is paved!

There is no friend like an old friend
Who has shared our morning days,
No greeting like his welcome,
No homage like his praise.

- Oliver Wendell Holmes

It takes 70 hours and 40 minutes to read the Bible at pulpit rate.

It takes 52 hours and 20 minutes to read the Old Testament.

It takes the 18 hours and 20 minutes to read the New Testament.

In the Old Testament the Psalms take the longest to read: 4 hours and 28 minutes.

In the New Testament the Gospel of Luke takes 2 hours and 43 minutes to read.

—Eleanor Doan

Tan, Paul Lee. Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times. Garland, TX: Bible Communications, Inc., 1996. Print.

Daily Bible Reading

December 2017

December 1 Philippians 1:19-2:11
December 4 Philippians 2:12-3:11
December 5 Philippians 3:12-4:23
December 6 Colossians 1
December 7 Colossians 2
December 8 Colossians 3:1-17
December 11 Colossians 3:18-4:18
December 12 1 Thessalonians 1-2
December 13 1 Thessalonians 3-4
December 14 1 Thessalonians 5
December 15 2 Thessalonians 1-2

December 18 2 Thessalonians 3
December 19 1 Timothy 1:1-3:7
December 20 1 Timothy 3:8-5:16
December 21 1 Timothy 5:17-6:21
December 22 2 Timothy 1
December 25 2 Timothy 2
December 26 2 Timothy 3
December 27 2 Timothy 4
December 28 Titus 1-3
December 29 Philemon

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