



Shine in Purity

Philippians 2:15 says, “That ye may be blameless and harmless the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.” How can we “shine as lights” in a dark and sinful world? We must live lives of purity.

DRAW NEAR—*Worship and and prepare your heart to hear from God’s Word.*

Share prayer requests and spend some time in prayer. Listen to worship music of your choice and prepare your heart to hear from God’s Word today.

Suggested Songs:

“Word of God Speak” — Kutless

“Always Enough” — Casting Crowns

“Completely” — Ana Laura (*Facing the Giants* soundtrack)

“Forever Love” — Francesca Battistelli

“Lead Me to the Cross” — Hillsong United

“Show Me What It Means” — Meredith Andrews

GO DEEP—*Dig into the Bible to learn truths from God’s Word.*

When you hear the word “purity,” what do you think about? Most likely, you think of sexual purity, of saving yourself for your future husband. You’ve probably heard your youth leader or pastor talk about abstinence, you might have signed a “True Love Waits” pledge or your parents may have bought you a purity ring.

You hear a lot about sexual purity during your teen years, and it’s understandable. At church and at home, you’re taught to remain pure in your thoughts and actions. Your parents and teachers at church know you are going to have to deal with lots of temptations, and they want to prepare you for them. They know that when you’re at school and hanging out with your friends, you get mixed signals. Music, movies and magazines tell you that you need to be sexy for a guy to like you, and the way your body looks is more important than what’s on your mind or heart.

Those mixed signals are dangerous and confusing. The demands of your friends at school, the desire to be popular or for a certain boy to like you, and the expectations your parents have for you can all get tangled up and leave you thinking dangerous thoughts... “Everyone else is doing it.” “I can control myself, so why does it hurt to have a little fun?” “But he says that he really loves me, and I love him, too.”

What’s a girl to do?

Let's dig into God's Word a little and see what HE has to say about purity. Look up the following Bible verses and match them with the area of your life that God expects you to be pure.

Romans 8:6	Pure Heart
Ephesians 4:29	Pure Thoughts
Philippians 4:8	Pure Body
1 Corinthians 6:15-20	Pure Conversation
Matthew 5:8	Pure Mind

In 1 Timothy 4:12, Paul told Timothy, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou and example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

God takes purity seriously. He wants you to remain pure in *all* areas of you life so that others can see that you are a believer. You are His representative, and that means that you have to have a pure mind, pure heart, and pure body.

Yes, it's hard to remain pure in all areas of your life. Romans 3:23 tells us that everyone has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

Once you sin, it is impossible for you to make yourself pure again. That's why purity is such a big deal. Once you cross that line and have sex, you can't take it back. You can't take back hurtful words you've said. You can't delete bad thoughts. You can't erase the black spots of sin from your heart.

But there is something you can do.

In Matthew 4:17, Jesus preached to the people that they should repent. To repent means to turn away from something. God wants you to turn away from your sins and turn to Him. Then, He can begin to make you pure again.

If you repent of your sins, 1 John 1:9 says God "is faithful and just to forgive [you of your] sins, and to cleanse [you] from all unrighteousness." God wants to cleanse you and make you pure again so that you can shine!

GET REAL—*Apply God's Word to your life.*

Purity is about so much more than just not having sex. Purity is a way life.

Purity begins in your heart. The things you fill your heart with show up in your thoughts, and then in your actions. You have to choose to stay pure, no matter what.

That's a tough choice to make in the world we live in today. So this summer, get together with your Young Women Active for Christ group (or just some friends) and put together a Girls Only Retreat.

Get your friends to bring their sleeping bags and Bibles to your house or church for a night full of fun! Check out some of the ideas below or get together with your friends and come up with your own.

"Modest is Hottest Fashion Show" – Set up a runway and have girls model some outfits that aren't so modest (like a short strapless dress). Then, show a few quick things she can do to make her outfit more appropriate (like adding leggings and a cute cardigan or jacket). You can get more ideas for how to host your own show by visiting www.modestishottestfashionshow.com.

"Self Portrait" – A lot of times, girls that don't have good self-esteem are more likely to fall into temptation because they don't realize how special they really are. Set up some tables and give each girl a poster board or canvas. Get each girl to paint a picture of herself as a Princess and print a favorite Bible verse on it that reminds her of how much God loves and values her. You can use this time to do a devotion with all the girls. Check out Sheri Rose Shepherd's *His Princess* books or her website (www.sherirose.info) for some great devotions about how precious you are to God.

“Keep It Clean” – At the beginning of the night, give each girl a clean, white sock. Have the girls stick the sock into their waistband or pocket where part of it is visible. You can get someone else’s sock dirty, but make sure to protect your own. The girl with the cleanest sock at the end of the night wins a prize. The sock represents you and your purity. Others will try to get you to do things that will make you dirty and impure, but you have to fight to stay clean and pure.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Christina Hopper is 24 years old and attends Sulphur Springs FWB Church in Northport, Alabama where she teaches the Junior Youth Group. She asks for you to join her in prayer for the victims of the severe storms that have devastated the south. She welcomes questions and comments on her Facebook page or through email at cmhopper.warrior@gmail.com.