

Works of Darkness: Lewdness and Immorality

The Bible describes the contrast between light and darkness not only as a metaphor for good and evil but also as a clear call for moral clarity. In *Romans 13:12*, the apostle Paul exhorts us: *“The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.”* Among the works of darkness listed are *“revelry and drunkenness, lewdness and lust, strife and envy.”*

This article will focus specifically on the works of darkness associated with **lewdness and immorality**, particularly **fornication** and **lust**, which have become increasingly normalized in modern society, yet remain spiritually destructive according to God’s word.

What Is Lewdness and Lust?

Lewdness and lust refer to expressions of sexual immorality that violate God’s design for intimacy. These include:

- **Fornication** – sexual relations outside of marriage
- **Adultery** – unfaithfulness to the marriage covenant
- **Lust** – covetous or impure desire, particularly in a sexual sense

These sins not only violate God's commands but damage the soul and relationships. Scripture repeatedly calls believers to flee from such actions, recognizing their corruptive power.

The Darkness of Fornication

Paul writes plainly in *1 Corinthians 6:18*:

“Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.”

The Greek word often translated as "sexual immorality" is **porneia**, which encompasses all forms of illicit sexual activity. This term appears frequently throughout the New Testament—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, and Colossians—emphasizing its importance in Christian instruction.

God established sexual intimacy to be experienced and honored **within marriage**. As Hebrews 13:4 declares:

“Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”

Genesis 2:24 and 1 Corinthians 6:16 both affirm the intimacy of marriage:

“The two shall become one flesh.”

Outside of marriage, this intimacy becomes spiritually dangerous. Proverbs 6:26-28 and Song of Solomon 8:6-7 warn about the consuming nature of sexual desire when untethered from God's design.

Why It's Spiritually Dangerous

1. **It is spiritually damaging** – breaking our fellowship with God
2. **It weakens self-control** – building habits of indulgence
3. **It damages marriages** – whether present or future
4. **It brings consequences** – physical, emotional, and spiritual

The Darkness of Lust and Pornography

Jesus warns in *Matthew 5:28*:

“But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Lust corrupts the heart and turns others into objects. In today's world, one of the most pervasive forms of lust is **pornography**, which has a well-documented neurological and spiritual impact.

Medical and psychological studies affirm what Scripture has already warned us: pornography is **addictive** in nature, much like drugs or alcohol. It alters the brain's reward system, often creating a dependency. But unlike chemical substances, it also deeply distorts how we view relationships, intimacy, and self-worth.

The Consequences of Pornography

- Addictive and compulsive
- Emotionally and relationally harmful
- Spiritually destructive, dulling our conscience
- Often a hidden sin, but deeply isolating

Overcoming the Darkness

God calls His people not just to resist, but to **flee** from sexual immorality. *1 Corinthians 6:18* and *2 Timothy 2:22* both use the language of active escape:

“Flee sexual immorality.”

“Flee also youthful lusts.”

How to Protect Yourself

1. **Guard your vessel** – *“that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor” (1 Thessalonians 4:4)*
2. **Guard your heart** – *“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.” (Proverbs 4:23)*
3. **Guard your soul** – *“Take careful heed to yourselves, that you love the LORD your God.” (Joshua 23:11)*

Reject Lust

- *“Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.” (1 Peter 2:11)*
- *“Let us walk properly, as in the day... not in lewdness and lust.” (Romans 13:13)*
- *“Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.” (Romans 13:14)*

Vessels in Sanctification

God’s will for His people is sanctification—living set apart from the world. As 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 states:

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor.”

Conclusion

The works of darkness, especially those tied to sexual immorality and lust, are ever-present temptations. Yet God offers not only a warning, but a path to light. He calls His people to holiness—not just in action, but in heart and mind.

Let us reject the shadows and walk in the light, guarding our hearts, honoring our bodies, and embracing the sanctity of marriage. Let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.