

# **PURSUING RIGHTEOUSNESS IN RELATIONSHIPS**

**BY ANTONIO BALDOVINOS**

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## **I. THE LORD LOOKS AT THE HEART**

*“Return to me with all your heart, with fasting, weeping and mourning (over sin). Rend (tear) your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love...”* (Joel 2:13)

*“The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”* (1 Samuel 16:7)

- a) God tells us what we are to do to receive His mercy and deliverance—we are to turn to Him in wholeheartedness.
- b) We can fool others but God sees where our hearts are.
- c) Rend your heart (tear your heart a part), not your garments. Not what it looks like on the outside to everybody, but tear your heart a part because that is what God sees.
- d) Repent – turn your ways towards Him. Stop what we are doing and surrender to Him.

## **II. WE NEED GOD’S HELP IN THIS HOUR**

- a) The sanctity of marriage has come under siege. The family structure is one of the main targets of the enemy. The devil starts working on family even before a person even has one.
- b) Sexual immorality, both heterosexual and homosexual, is reaching epic heights of depravity, with easy access to pornography via the Internet and the hyper-sexualization of our culture promoted by the media.
- c) 3 out of 5 clicks into the Internet are for pornography today. 80% of men are addicted to pornography. 21% of women. Now couples are viewing pornography together to reach climax. And/or couples are simply not having sex.
- d) The avg first time viewing of pornography is 11 years old. And from the ages 12-18 years old, 96% are viewing porn daily from 3-5pm while ‘doing homework’.
- e) Every second \$3,000 is spent on pornography.
- f) The number of women and children being trafficked into the sex industry is growing at an alarming rate. And many believe it’s a direct result of pornography.
- g) Imagine where we will be in five years? Lust has an insatiable thirst that cannot be controlled, it aims to kill, steal and destroy each person, marriage, family, with the main goal to destroy whole “generations”.

## **III. SEEDS OF TOLERATION**

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***“Do not be deceived, God cannot be mocked; for whatever a man sows this he will also reap.  
(Galatians 6:7)***

- a) Through sitcoms, TV Shows, Movies and Video Games we tolerate sowing to the flesh and this will produce fruit.
- b) We become desensitized to the power of immorality- we watch fornication, homosexuality, adultery, and sexual immorality of all kinds. Our defense mechanisms are getting broken little by little to eventually taking over our lives and we will, inevitably act out what we watch, see and hear.
- c) ***Its not the violent hitting us, but it's the “dulling” that puts us to sleep:*** We are so used to saying, *“spit out the bones and watch the rest”*. These are the seeds of toleration. God is not comfortable with this!
- d) This ultimately affects our spiritual life, where our conscious is dulled to sleep, but this also affects intimacy with our spouses.

## **IV. HOW TO WALK IN FREEDOM & WHOLENESS**

- a) First of all, we have to call sin- sin. Sin is to fall short of God's standard. He has a better way for us to live. Are we living by His standard and ways?
- b) We must make quality decisions to say no to sin, to feed our spirit on the Word of God, and to ask God to help us.
- c) We must study how temptation affects our personality by knowing what specific situation makes us vulnerable to specific sinful desires. We understand how our fatigue, moods, music, movies, locations (private room, sports bar, party, etc.) alcohol, disappointing situations, various stresses all work together in our personality to trigger us into great temptation.
- d) Protecting our 3 gateways:

1.) Mouth- ***“We stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check...the tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell itself”.*** (James 3:2 & 6)

2.) Eyes – ***“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad your whole body will be full of darkness.”***  
(Matthew 6:22)

***“I have made a covenant with my eyes: why then should I look upon a young women?  
If my heart has been enticed by a women...”*** (Job 31:1)

***“I will behave wisely in a perfect (spiritually mature) way...I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set nothing wicked before my eyes.*** (Psalm 101:2-3)

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3.) Ears – *“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” (Phil. 4:8)*

*“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind”. (Romans 12:2)*

## **V. NURTURING A GOOD MARRIAGE**

- a) Divorce is the same in the church as the world, (51%) we are supposed to look different, be different.
- b) Humanism has become what governs our marriage. Humanism is when we are God. Selfishness has got to get ripped out of our relationships and replaced with unconditional love.
- c) Often we want the results of a good marriage without being willing to pay the price. Anything that has value has a price.
- d) We must **“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. (Matthew 22:37-38).** If the first commandment is first then the second commandment flows easily: **“And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ (Matthew 22:39).**
- e) So often we try to love without loving God first, it doesn’t work.
- f) We must get a vision for not just getting by, but believing for a 10 out 10 marriage. Any marriage can be that. We want to believe for every person that is married and is in hopes of getting married that they would have all that God has for them... 10/10 marriage!!
- g) There are so many marriages that have stayed together, but have quit in their heart. I am so glad Jesus didn’t do that. He said **“God love them with the same love you love me” (John 17:23).**
- h) There are longings that God put into our hearts that were meant to be fulfilled in Him and take us to Him. Instead we so often search to fulfill those longings everywhere but Him and wonder why we are void and empty, and we put those expectations on our spouse when we enter into marriage.

## **VI. PRAYER**

- a) 1,800 to 1 marriages that pray together, stay together. Prayer is the key foundation that God intended for all marriages to stay strong.
- b) We cannot afford to have mediocre marriages; we must have marriages **“on fire”**. Keeping our hearts alive and in love with the Lord is the only real chance we have for an amazing marriage.
- c) We must become houses of prayer and His presence, our marriage depends on it and our kids depend on it.

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## **VII. A NEW LIFE**

- a) God promises when we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)
- b) Begin seeking the Lord. Begin praying Eph 3:17-19 – for God to strengthen your marriage and your home.
- c) Turn media off in your home and watch day by day how God will transform your home, desires and how His presence will saturate your home and lives.