

Keep Thyself Pure

by John Isaac Edwards

Generally, we demand that things be pure and kept pure, especially when it affects our physical health and well-being. For example, great lengths are taken to ensure pure water. A well may be shocked and sanitized periodically. Water may run through an eradicator to turn “stink water” into fresh water. It may pass through a water softener for the removal of calcium and magnesium. A whole house filter may be employed. A reverse osmosis system may be installed in a kitchen for drinking and cooking purposes.

Have you thought about the three-word command in 1 Timothy 5:22: “...keep thyself pure”? How much effort do we give to self-purification?

1) **Keep.** This is one of many action verbs for Christians. To “keep” is to attend to carefully, take care of. The Lord often calls upon His people to be keepers. Some things to keep: the Lord’s words, sayings and commandments (Jn. 8:51-52; 14:15, 21, 23-24; 15:10; 1 Jn.

2:3-5; 3:22, 24; 5:2-3), the unity of the Spirit (Eph. 4:3), self (1 Tim. 5:22; Jas. 1:27; 1 Jn. 5:18; Jude 21), the faith (2 Tim. 4:7), and things written (Rev. 1:3).

2) **Thyself.** Keeping pure is something you can’t do for me and I can’t do for you. The Scriptures often address personal duty and responsibility with the spiritual word “thyself”: “Exercise thyself unto godliness” (1 Tim. 4:7), “Take heed unto thyself...” (1 Tim. 4:16), “Study to shew thyself approved unto God...” (2 Tim. 2:15), “In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works...” (Titus 2:7), and “...keep thyself pure” (1 Tim. 5:22). We have a tendency to magnify the impurities we perceive in others, while failing to see the blatant impurities in our own lives. Read Matthew 7:1-5. We need to practice 2 Corinthians 13:5, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”

3) **Pure.** To be “pure” is to be wholly clean, separate from uncleanness and without impurity. Hearts are purified by faith (Acts 15:9). Peter wrote, “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth...” (1 Pet. 1:22). Some pure things of the Bible include: gold (Ex. 25:11), oil (Ex. 27:20), myrrh (Ex. 30:23), frankincense (Ex. 30:34), candlestick (Ex. 31:8), incense (Ex. 37:29), table (Lev. 24:6), blood (Dt. 32:14), word of God (Ps. 12:6; 19:8; 119:140; Prov. 30:5), heart (Ps. 24:4; Mt. 5:8), offering (Mal. 1:11), conscience (Titus 3:9), water (Heb. 10:22), religion (Jas. 1:27), minds (2 Pet. 3:1), and heaven (Rev. 21:18, 21; 22:1). Since “...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Mt. 12:34) and “... as he thinketh in his heart, so is he...” (Prov. 23:7), the key to keep thyself pure is to “Keep thy heart with all diligence...” (Prov. 4:23). We must think on things that are pure (Phil. 4:8). Our thoughts are made up of what we hear and see. Let’s set in place some strong, spiritual filters for our eyes and ears!

Can Any Man Forbid Water?

by John Isaac Edwards

When the gift of the Holy Ghost was poured out on the Gentiles and the Jews heard them speak with tongues, Peter answered, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized...?" (Acts 10:47). Some may have forbid water to the Gentiles, but the Holy Ghost falling on them served to convince the Jews, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18).

1) John Forbad

Jesus. When Jesus came from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized of John, the Bible says, "John forbad him..." (Mt. 3:13-14). Jesus answered, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (Mt. 3:15). If there was ever a person we may think who would not need to be baptized, it would be the Lord Himself. Yet, the One who did no sin (Heb. 4:15; 1

Pet. 2:22) was baptized, not for the remission of sins but to fulfill all righteousness. If water could not be forbidden to Him, how can men today forbid water?

2) Some Today Forbid Water.

Denominational preachers forbid water when they preach salvation by faith only, without water baptism. Water baptism is a common theme in the conversion cases from Acts 2 through 19. Water was not forbidden in any case.

Some brethren forbid water to those coming out of religious bodies other than the church of our Lord who desire to be members of the Lord's church. They are accepted on a handshake without being "baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12:13).

Some may forbid water to one thinking he is too young or is not intelligent enough. In some cases, there have been

those who were discouraged from being baptized who never again expressed the desire to be baptized. Such is sad!

3) These Should Be Baptized. Baptism is for those guilty of sin (Acts 2:38), who have been taught the truth (Mt. 28:19; Mk. 16:15-16), who believe with all their heart (Mk. 16:16; Acts 8:12, 36-37), who repent of their sins (Acts 2:38), who confess their faith in Jesus as the Son of God (Acts 8:37), to enter Christ (Gal. 3:27) and the one body (1 Cor. 12:13; Acts 2:47). When an individual has been taught the truth, believes the truth and wants to obey the truth, recognizing that baptism is a requirement of the Lord to be saved and to go to Heaven and he wants to do what the Bible teaches, can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?

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