

BATTLE PRIMER

Why Identity Matters

By Paul Klassen, Broken Strength Executive Director



Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. -Ephesians 5:1,2

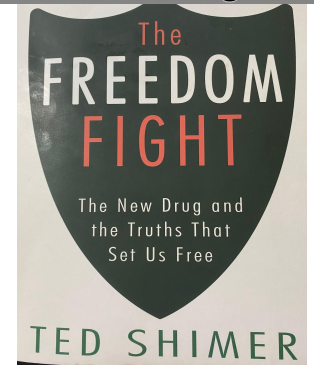
“Well, you be you, my friend!” This could mean you’re stubborn, unique, or “you’ve got a good thing going, don’t stop!” If you’re a Christian, you can lean into the latter, because you’ve got it good! The first 2 verses of Ephesians 5 are in the middle of this incredible letter from the

Apostle Paul to the church in Ephesus. This letter details our new identity as Christians - no longer defined by our sin or our past, but as “beloved children.” Using the same Greek word, *agape*, that is used to describe God’s committed, unending, love for us, Paul is saying that this is actually WHO WE ARE! We aren’t only loved by God, but **His love defines us.**

Then comes verse 3: “But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.” We are given a command with a *passive* verb, not the usual *active* verb (e.g. -“resist the devil,” “submit to God”). Though not technically passive, it’s kind of like a parent telling

their child, “Don’t even think about going to Tommy’s house after school!” Uh, how do I not think about it? What we mean as parents is that you should not put yourself in any situation that would lead down the road of going to Tommy’s house. “Sexual immorality” here is the Greek word, *porneia*, which is used numerous times in the New Testament as a one-word description of sexual behavior that goes against God’s design and order. So, in the spirit of Tommy’s Mom, “Are you making sure that you’re not in a situation where you could compromise what God has for you in your sexual life?” No matter where you’ve been, what’s happened to you, your age, or the depth of your personal struggle, you can step out of that and walk in your identity in Christ.

Resource Highlight
thefreedomfight.org



Verse 4, then, gives us a key in making sure that our lives don’t compromise God’s

truth: thankfulness. Not just saying, “Thank you,” but actually, constantly, thankful. Put yourself in the position, each day, that you are living a thank-filled life as *the beloved*, giving your life just as “*Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice.*”

Sad Stat of the Month

Pornhub is the 4th most visited website behind Google, YouTube, and Facebook.

<https://www.semrush.com/blog/most-visited-websites/>

Over the next months, through this newsletter, we will look at other contexts in which *porneia* is used in Scripture and what that means for our lives.

We invite you . . .

- Do you know a church or individual who would like to be informed or added to our prayer team? Send an email to pklassen@apathtopurity.org
- Would you like to help us continue to offer our services for free so that more churches broach the topic of pornography and sexual integrity? It is our goal not only to increase the conversation but to provide a solid means of hope, freedom, and victory in the name of Jesus to as many churches as possible. You could help financially, by either sending a check to Broken Strength, 755 73rd Ave. NE, Fridley, MN 55432 or donate at www.apathtopurity.org

This month's updates

We thank God for . . .

- Opening up new avenues and venues in which to address pornography (i.e.-dovetailing our message of hope with anti-sex-trafficking advocates)
- Two successful events to kickoff our Fall:
- A great Board of Director who have invested time, energy, and financial resources.
- A productive mini-retreat for our Board on September 9. We came up with some 10-Year dreams and immediate ways to advance the conversation into action within the local church.

We ask God for. . .

- Guidance, protection, and courage for the 7 Scheduled Purity Events:
 - October 7, 2023 | GracePoint Church, New Brighton, MN
 - October 14, 2023 | Northwest Bible Church, St Michael, MN
 - October 28, 2023 | Northfield Community Church, Northfield, MN
 - November 18, 2023 | Upsala High School, Upsala, MN
 - January 12, 2024 | Alexandria Covenant Church, Alexandria, MN
 - January, 2024 | Milaca E Free Church, Milaca, MN (rescheduled)
 - January-February, 2024 | River of Life, Hastings, MN (rescheduled)
- Giving our board discernment and for providing additional board members as we seek input and investment from others who have a passion for God and a heart for this topic.
- Wisdom and direction on how to proceed through doors that God is opening with denominations, anti-sex-trafficking groups, schools (HS and college), and various networks.