



Purity in MIND

I jumped over the wall to purchase a movie ticket for this adult rated movie. I was just 16 years old. I knew deep down in my heart that I should not be at this place. It was a third grade, low standard movie theatre, which meant no one would care or stop a young boy from buying a ticket. This was a theatre where they showed adult rated movie with dirty clips in between. I preferred to sit on the floor right in the front. Why sit on the floor? Because no one would then see me or recognise me, just in case if there would be any. This place was dirty with lots of dried vomits and other stains. Most of the men who came into this place were drunk. I could hear all kinds of foul mouthed conversations seasoned with all types of dirty words. I finished watching the movie and started back home, but now I was feeling guilty. Deeply unsatisfied! I was trapped in my own dirty thoughts and was feeling filthy deep inside and very insecure.

I had no confidence. My self esteem was very, very low.

My heart and mind were contaminated and dirty.

In the next five posts I am planning to address the issue of purity from five different angles. Let us understand the word 'Purity'. It means 'set apart'. When you need something to be pure, you are very careful not to touch it or contaminate it.



Today we can just talk about the concept of 'purity of the mind'.

Think about this. It is not about how pure you are, but it is about knowing how impure you are. From another angle, it is to know what real purity is. Unless there is a standard in purity that you could compare to, you wouldn't know if something is in fact impure.

When we indulge and involve in wrong compulsions over a period of time, it becomes a habit.

Then when the habit is hard formed and deeply rooted, having no self-control, it becomes a necessity. At this stage you call it addiction.

You know this. Temptation in itself is not wrong, but yielding to temptation is wrong. Did you know that no one falls into doing wrong things all of a sudden?

Just as growth happens over a period of time, fall too happens over a period of time. Many a times, it is a gradual slip and not a sudden fall.

So, where does the fall start? **It starts with the mind.** Now let me do a post-mortem of my 16 year old mind. How did I think? How was I struggling? What did I do? Watching all those dirty movie clips and allowing my mind to imagine and drift, did not do me any good. None at all! No. I still remember how difficult it would be to have right and pure thoughts. That and my teenage puberty and drive, my mind was going completely bizarre.

I cannot ever forget one incident. I was roaming and strolling on a mud road towards the lake near my house one afternoon. I saw this old lady (she would have been around 60+ years) tying dried sticks. I had often seen people collecting dried sticks, tie them up and carry it home for their fire wood. Now, this old lady saw me coming around and asked if I would help her put this stack of sticks on her head.

I readily agreed to help. But let me be transparent here, please don't feel offended. I had such a dirty thought about this old lady that I did something with my hand that shocked her. I touched. She immediately started shouting at me and I ran away from her as fast as my legs would carry me. *Oh, I cannot even begin to describe, how terrible I felt that afternoon?*

Guilt ridden thoughts began flooding my mind. Why have I become so cheap? Why? Why? Today when I look back, I know the answer. What I was seeing had begun to affect what I was thinking.

I discovered that my thoughts were linked to my visual stimulations.

I remember those several times when I had cheap, dirty, naked thoughts about my class mates, my neighbours, my teachers or friends based on all that I had seen on movie screens.

I tried desperately to work things out, be disciplined and keep my mind focused. I prayed and tried so many things. But nothing helped. Over a period of time, this was becoming a vicious cycle. I was this young 16 yr old strong, tall, athletic boy. But I lacked self-control and I had no strength. I was becoming increasingly desperate.

Yes, now, I know what you are wondering. How did I come out? Hmmmm..... good question! **I did not understand my battle field. And so I did not know how to fight my battle.** We are talking here about the battles of the mind.

I thought, I could keep seeing dirty pictures and movies and keep reading adult rated stories and jokes and they would not affect me. But no, that was so not true. It did affect me badly and really badly. My emotions were affected. My studies were affected.

So what is the principle that helped me deeply? It was the **‘REMOVE and REPLACE’** principle. I could not discipline myself or focus while still keeping and allowing dirty things to nest comfortably in my mind. I had to remove them, discard them. It took time and did not happen immediately or ASAP :). **I had to first identify specific battles, in order to win the war. I had to understand the pattern in which I always yielded and fell. I had to walk far away from those things that would bring the wrong trigger.**

The REMOVE principle involved me stopping, intentionally moving away, identifying those dangerous cycles and those influences.

At the same time, I had to engage the REPLACE principle. I consciously started seeing things that were right, edifying, listening to things that encouraged and strengthened me, reading inspiring lives, spending intentional time praying and understanding the meaning and purpose God has for me. I began to occupy and fill my life with schedules that were productive.

Over a period of time I took complete victory. My inner self had now become more restful. I began to love others genuinely. Today I am amazed at how I am able to sit and counsel so many teenagers and young people. I cannot believe that I am in a place like this. But as I look back, it was the right realisation, at the right time, followed up with the right decisions, being involved in the right process and I started seeing the right results :)

I read an interesting statement one day. **“Snake which cannot cast its skin has to die”** This is so true. Let me compare this to our topic today.

The **mind** which cannot cast its **wrong anchors of impurity**, will force life to take its own death. What do I mean? When we allow our minds to become impure our life will start going down the drain.

It all starts with the seed in our minds. What we think, we speak. What we speak, we act. How we act, becomes our habit. Our habits determine our character. Our character channels our life. Our life takes us to our purpose.



Practically speaking..... Be careful of what you watch, read or hear, on your gadgets, during your Googling time, with your friends and those late night calls and chat rooms. Be careful. Be wise. Set your mind pure.