

Playing His Tune

by Anne-Gerit Fann



The consequence of a slaughter is bloody and ugly. I have witnessed the results with my own eyes, and my heart has just been broken for the nth time this year. Another breach of faith. Another divorce. Another family destroyed.

I walk amidst the wreckage of impurity, beholding charred spirits and wasted dreams. I remember wedding days that now seem like frivolous promises.

I recall youthful pledges of "purity until marriage." Many of these pledges now echo hollowly from the maternity ward.

Single parents, confused husbands and wives, all shedding tears of despair and disillusionment. I didn't plan this. It wasn't supposed to be this way. These are my friends and my family that I cry for.

Asked to write about purity, I wondered if I could have any influence. As of Dec. 18, 1999, I am no longer single. I married an incredible godly man and am very happy,

but I do have something to say to single women about waiting.

I don't know if people will still take me seriously now that I am married. Singles sometimes have the tendency to roll their eyes and say, "Sure, but now you're married – you're not in the same position anymore."

That statement bothers me, however, because I was a content, happy single person and would have remained so without com-

plaint. Seeing women and girls so obsessed with finding a mate that they gave up their ideals always disturbed me because we already had the truest, most faithful mate possible in Jesus.

My real assignment was to write about purity in singleness. However, the more the topic haunted me, the more I realized the issue is not about whether one is married or single. Married folk have the same battle, much more so than one might care to imagine. The real issue is pleasing our God through holy living.

Frederick Buechner's Godric, one of the most honest characters of English literature, was a 12th-century holy man who grappled with sin, particularly that of sexual purity. He was tossed continuously between what was pretty to his eyes and precious to his soul.

He candidly commented, "Lust is the ape that gibbers in our loins. Tame him as we will by day, he rages all the wilder in our dreams by night. Just when we think we're safe from

him, he raises up his ugly head and smirks, and there's no river in the world flows cold and strong enough to strike him down. Almighty God, why dost thou deck men out with such a loathsome toy?"

The Greek word for holy (*hagios*) means "set apart for or by God." Even in the Hebrew texts, such as in Exodus 3:5; 29:37, 44, we see that anything set apart by God is holy, such as the altar and the tabernacle, which had been set apart as holy items.

The beauty of this blueprint is that later, in the letters of Peter and the Hebrew writer, the people of God are admonished to see themselves as holy, set apart by a cleansing that comes through Christ. Through Him, we have made entrance "through the temple veil" to the Holy of Holies and into the very presence of God.

Peter reminds us that to be "called out" is to be "called in" to a new way of living – unrecognizable to the world and unmistakably different. We are a chosen generation and need to act like it, despite the temptation that will regularly challenge us.

Do we follow the *hagios* of 1 Peter, or have we written our own moral code? It is easier to misinterpret "living in the world, but not of it" and to embrace tolerance instead.

Just how culture-conscious should we be? Often we inadvertently fill our minds with filth, passing it off as mature discretion, and imagine that these indulgences have no hold on us. What about our movies and our reading material, for example?

Are we surprised that this era and sexual purity seem unacquainted? Our generation has made it too easy to forget the self-controlled lives to which Christ has called us.

Our reasons for abstinence deal