

Chastity at Work at Work

I recall that as a young man chastity was about avoiding impure thoughts, words, and deeds. The focus was on control by denial. Denial not that sex existed as a strong drive within me but denial to myself of any of the rush of pleasure or joy that sex might bring. Sex was about me. Chastity was about me, also. Its focus was on my sexual urges and controlling them, sometimes by denying their existence, sometimes by denigrating my own and others' physical, sexual traits.

What I have come to understand over time and life experience is that sexuality is about much more than pleasure for me. Yes, it is about the drive to reproduce the species. And more, it is about all that is necessary for the reproduction of the species to be successful. It is about a drive to union, to the intimate giving of myself to another in such a way as to help that person be a better person and to open myself up to letting that person help me to be a better person. That mutual openness, that mutual giving creates the setting within which a new life can begin and be nurtured. Such a love finds its full expression in the covenant of marriage.

With that consideration in mind, chastity becomes something much more than self-control for me. Its focus becomes other-centered rather than self-centered. Chastity's parent is love, true never ebbing, ever-increasing love for those whose paths cross our own. Human sexuality becomes, or rather, is, an opportunity for growth as a person.

A chaste person at work considers and respects others as persons of moral worth whereas an unchaste person considers others as bodies and means to personal gratification.

A chaste person at work seeks to give loving kindness in every situation and an unchaste person desires enjoyment and pleasure over all else.

A chaste person at work notes and seizes opportunities to give affirmation, consolation, and joy while an unchaste person notes and seizes opportunities to take pleasure and credit at the expense of others.

A chaste person at work seeks to overcome the loneliness of self by joining in the giving of life and blessings whereas an unchaste person seeks to overcome loneliness of self by using others.

A chaste person at work gives deep trust and commitment to others but an unchaste person trusts only self and commits only to his/her own purposes.

A chaste person at work is an unselfish blessing whereas an unchaste person is a self-centered user.

A chaste person at work is gracious while an unchaste person takes without gratitude or concern.

A chaste person at work seeks to advance others and self according to how God wants us to live but an unchaste person seeks immediate, personal gratification at any expense including that of others.

A chaste person at work serves others, seeing them as "the beloved of God," whereas an unchaste person seeks to dominate and exploit the "beloved" to his or her own benefit alone.

A chaste person subordinates the desire for self-centered enjoyment to giving respect and care for others whereas an unchaste person subordinates all to his/her personal enjoyment and pleasure.

It matters not where you are—at home, at work, or in the community—the hallmark of chastity is love for others revealed by selfless concern for their whole being—mind and body, heart and soul.

CHASTITY — A Faith Based Value at Work

1. What does applying the faith-based value of chastity in your workplace mean to you? What do you think it would mean to those with whom you work? How does its meaning change for your different workplaces, for example, home or where you volunteer?
2. Why is it important to gain an understanding of chastity in the workplace and how to apply that understanding?
3. How do/could you apply the concept of chastity in your workplace(s)?
4. What would happen in your workplace if you took and actively applied the value of faith-based chastity in your workplace(s)? How would the workplace sound different? Look different? Feel different?
5. What first step are you willing to take this week?