

THE CONSEQUENCES OF MORAL FAILURE

**“It is God's will that I should be sanctified: that I should avoid sexual immorality.”
(1 Thessalonians 4:3)**

Whenever I feel vulnerable to sexual temptation, I find it helpful to review the consequences my action could have:

- Grieving the Lord who redeemed me.
- Dragging His sacred Name into the mud.
- One day having to look Jesus, the Righteous Judge, in the face and give an account of my actions or, should I fail to repent, or perhaps facing the Father in the great White Throne Judgment and spending eternity in Hell.
- Following in the footsteps of those people whose immorality forfeited their ministries and caused great disrepute to the Cause of Christ.
- Inflicting untold hurt on Brooksyne, my best friend and loyal wife and severely jeopardizing my marriage.
- Losing Brooksyne's respect and trust.
- Severely negatively impacting Brooksyne's call to ministry.
- Hurting my beloved daughter, Ester.
- Destroying my example and credibility with my daughter, and nullifying both present and future efforts to teach her to obey God ("Why listen to a man who betrayed Mom and us?").
- Setting an example I would never want my daughter to follow.
- If my blindness should continue or my wife be unable to forgive, losing my wife and my daughter forever.
- Causing shame to my family ("Why isn't Daddy a pastor anymore?").
- Losing self-respect.
- Creating a form of guilt awfully hard to shake. Even though God would forgive me, would I forgive myself?
- Forming memories and flashbacks that could plague future intimacy with my wife.
- Wasting years of ministry training and experience for a long time, perhaps permanently.
- Forfeiting the effect of years of witnessing to my unsaved loved ones and friends and reinforcing their distrust for ministers that has begun to soften by my example but would harden, perhaps permanently, because of my immorality.
- Undermining the faithful example and hard work of other Christians in our community.
- Bringing great pleasure to Satan, the enemy of God and all that is good.
- Heaping judgment and endless difficulty on the person with whom I committed adultery and bringing great harm, perhaps destruction, to her marriage and home.
- Possibly bearing the physical consequences of such diseases as gonorrhea, syphilis, chlamydia, herpes, and AIDS; even death.
- Possibly causing pregnancy, with the personal and financial implications, including a lifelong reminder of my sin.
- Bringing shame and hurt to the Church, my denomination and fellow pastors.
- Causing shame and hurt to these friends, especially those I've led to Christ and discipled.
- Becoming a stumbling block to those in my present church, creating mistrust and suspicion for all future ministers they will have.
- Invoking shame and life-long embarrassment upon myself.

The above is adapted from a 1988 [Leadership Magazine](#) article by Randy Alcorn. I modified it slightly, adding several points and personalizing it.

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