Well tonight we are kicking off a new teaching series called, “The Yellow Brick Road” and our focus tonight is all about that very idea or that question, what would my life be like, what would purity in my life look like, *“If I only had a brain”*.

For me to ask the question, “Do you think it’s difficult to live a life of purity?” would be stupid question. Why? Because that’s obvious. If you don’t think it’s tough to live a life of purity then we need to check your pulse because no one is exempt from this type of temptation. Now you may think that you have it easier or more difficult than others and that’s fine but everybody struggles with this area to some degree.

* If you’re a dude, you can’t walk down the hallway at school and not see something that probably should be covered up.
* If you’re a girl then you probably can’t escape the talk from seemingly everyone about who’s fooling around with who and how far this person went and what someone heard so and so did with so and so.
* Impurity is all around us.
* Impurity is on TV, it’s on Netflix, it’s in music, it’s all over social media, it’s seems to be the majority of what’s on Youtube. I mean if you took off all of the sexually impure videos off of Youtube, there would be like 9 videos uploaded a day.
* Impurity is everywhere.

How are you supposed to filter through all of the impurity that’s around you and remain focused on living a life of purity as God’s Word maps out? How is that supposed to happen? Is that an unreasonable expectation for Christ followers? I mean does God really expect me to be 100% pure all of the time?

What I want us to look at tonight is the idea that while you may struggle with staying pure and while some of you may struggle with going too far with your boyfriend or girlfriend and some of you may struggle with thinking about impure things, even in the midst of what seems like everyone else giving up on the idea of purity, you can have success by using your brain.

Let me give you 4 quick suggestions on how to use your brain when you are striving for purity in your life.

**Number one. Don’t be a dummy and think it’ll never happen to you.** You can’t possibly be naive enough to think that you are somehow above the temptation of impurity. Well, I’m really focused on sports or school so I don’t even think about boys or girls, I’ve never been tempted to look at something on the internet that I shouldn’t look at. I’m not even, that’s not even on my radar. You’re a dummy.

Listen, when you stop using your brain and assume that you’ll never be tempted to look at something or do something, or talk about something or however impurity rears its ugly head in your life, when you’re not prepared for that moment, that’s when you are going to get knocked off your feet.

These are the things we think:

* Well, I didn’t go looking for that website, it just popped up.
* Well, we didn’t mean to take things that far but it was just us in the car or in some corner of the school after the basketball game.
* It just kind of happened.

Listen, stuff doesn’t just happen. Stuff happens when we’re not prepared to defend ourselves and when we stop using our brains and assume that we’re somehow different or exempt. You have to be prepared. You have to establish boundaries in your life. Before it’s even on your radar you have to decide:

* What kinds of shows I’m going watch.
* What kind of music I’m going to listen to.
* What kind of boundaries I’m going to put into place with those of the opposite sex.
* When I’m going to get on the internet to ensure that I have accountability for what I’m looking at.

Those and more, are questions that should be answered long before they have to be and you find yourself in the midst of making a tough choice. If you develop strong answers to those questions now, making the right decision later becomes so much easier. Don’t be a dummy, use your brain, make a plan.

**Number two. Use your brain and be picky.** What I mean by that is you and I have a lot of choices for entertainment. We have lots of choices of who we hang out with. We have lots of choices of Netflix series. We have lots of choices of which bands to listen to. We have lots of choices.

And for whatever reason, we sometimes slip into this brainwashed, hypnotic trance and we just listen to whatever someone says we should listen to. We just watch whatever it is that someone says we should watch. We just hang out with whoever happens to approach us. We should be very picky with what we allow into our hearts and minds.

We’re being led like lambs to the slaughter right? We just blindly follow those in front of us and we never lift our heads to figure out where this trail leads. All of our choices, what we watch, what we listen to, what websites we frequent, what we view on social media, who we hang out with, all of our choices should be filtered through the truth of God’s Word.

Philippians 4:8 says, *“And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.”*

If you were to run your choices through that filter, the Philippians 4:8 filter, how many would make the cut. Use your brain and be picky about what you allow into your heart and mind.

**Number three. Don’t allow yourself to forget that you’re powerful.** Now, I’m not talking about your own will power. I’m not talking about your own discipline. You can’t possibly live a life of purity on your own strength. When I say that you are powerful, I mean that you are powerful because you’ve got God’s power at your back.

With God’s power you can make better decisions. With God’s guidance and direction you can begin to weed out some of the dumb choices you’ve been making with regards to purity. Sometimes we get into these impure patterns and we feel trapped. We feel like we’ve lost control. We feel like things are hopeless and there’s no way out.

Philippians 4:13 (NLT) says, *“For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.”*

It’s like somehow when we get into these bad situations or habits we allow our brains to be shut off. We just keep doing them because we assume there is no other way.

In John 10:10 (NLT) Jesus says, *“The thief’s purpose is to steal and kill and destroy.”* You’ve got to fight against what the devil wants to do in your life. The devil wants you to leave your brain switch in the off position.

* He wants you to assume that you’re stuck.
* He wants you to assume that there isn’t any other way and this is what everyone else is doing so you might as well just go with it.

But Jesus says in the other half of that verse, “*My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.”* Jesus comes along and says, let’s flip the brain switch to the on position. Let’s encourage people to think about what’s really happening here. Jesus says, use your brain and remember that just because things appear to be hopeless doesn’t mean all is lost. Jesus looks at us and whispers, *“You are powerful, because I am powerful.”*

**Last one. Use your brain and remember to be proud of yourself.** I think a lot of the time people slip into lifestyles of impurity because they searching for their identity. For lots of different reasons they don’t feel valued or they don’t feel like anyone notices them or they enjoy the attention they get from living out an impure lifestyle.

It’s like we sometimes allow the world to tell us that we can only be proud of who we are if we live a life that is different or one the edge of what society thinks is acceptable. I mean where the Netflix series or A&E TV shows on the high school students that are loving God and trying to honor Him with their lives? You should be proud of who you are and what God is doing in your life.

If you think about your life, you have accomplished some pretty fantastic things. Some of you speak other languages. Some of you are excelling at sports. Some of you make great grades. Some of you are very mechanical or very qualified to work on computers. With God’s help you have done and will continue to do some amazing things and you should be proud of that fact.

You have to fight against this temptation to only find your value in what other people see as valuable. You should be proud of the person of character and Christlikeness that you are becoming. The approval of friends at school or teachers or coaches is so fleeting. We work so hard to make all of the wrong people proud of us and we often ignore the things that would bring praise and affirmation to us from God Himself.

Use your brain. Pray with me.