

Flee Youthful Lusts

by Fred Tomlinson

This sermon emphasizes the importance of maintaining purity and holiness in a world filled with temptations, focusing on the lust for recognition, misguided priorities, and sexual impurity. The speaker urges radical measures to avoid falling into sin, highlighting the need for discipline, waiting on God, and walking circumspectly in wisdom. The message stresses the responsibility to cleanse oneself, flee from lustful desires, and pursue holiness to be vessels of honor for God's use.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 5:6, Titus 3:4, Matthew 5:29, Ephesians 5:15, Exodus 33:7, Proverbs 4:23, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 1 Timothy 5:22, 1 Peter 5:8, James 4:7

Topics: "Purity", "Holiness"

Description

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Transcript

Well, in the few minutes before I turned on this video, I was thinking, you know, it's now 51 years since I preached my first message. I will never forget that moment, that was in the UK, it was in Lancashire in a free Methodist church. I remember it clearly, I remember what I preached about, at least the topic.

But, you know, since that time and over the years, one of the really rich experiences that I have enjoyed has been waiting on the Lord and looking to Him to speak to me, to give me a sense of His word for the people that I anticipated addressing. And the whole experience has been very rich for me personally, but I can say this, that in all of these years, there have been very few occasions, in fact, offhand I can only think of one occasion, when I felt the Lord speak to me and say that He wanted me to speak on the subject of youthful lusts, but that's what He did today, and I felt it come very clearly to me, probably not a topic I would choose to speak on, when there are so many other wonderful options, but I do believe in my heart, this is what God has laid on my heart for tonight, and I trust that He will enable me to share with you whatever it is that He wants me to share on this topic, and that whoever He wants to speak to will be listening with inward ears, wide open, to hear what God is saying. Before I go any further, although the topic is titled youthful lusts, I want to make a statement, which is really, of course, tremendously obvious to every one of us, and that is that this issue that we'll focus on somewhat this evening is not merely

something that involves teenagers.

As a matter of fact, the issue that we're really looking at, although we'll look at it in three brief little cameos tonight, is an issue which stalks men and women, and on through their middle life, and on into their senior lives, and undealt with, it will impact inevitably every area of one's life. As I'm saying these words to you, I'm thinking of an occasion many years ago now, when I was privileged to speak in a church in northern Ontario, and the pastor was an elderly man, I was younger then than I am today, that's for sure, and I spoke in that meeting on purity of heart, and I shall never forget when I had finished speaking, and I returned to my seat which was next to the elderly pastor, and before he actually got up to make his own address to the congregation, he whispered to me, and he said, I need to talk to you after the meeting, and when that moment came, I remember how that dear man, well advanced in years and having been established as a Christian minister for a long, long time, he confessed to me that this was a real problem to him, and would I just stand with him in prayer, which of course I did very gladly. So there you are, my goal I think in speaking on this topic this evening, and from the text which I'll turn you to in just a moment, takes me to the Apostle Paul himself, he's going to be the writer, he's the one who penned these very words, which are the title of my message, but he at the stage when he was writing, he was right on the last lap of his journey in this world, he was in prison for the second time in Rome, he'd been exonerated the first time and then out travelling and preaching, but he was back in again, and this time he knew that his execution was imminent, and many things were going on through his mind, I won't take time to try to remind us of what they were as he's recorded them in his second epistle, but the fact is that he had this tremendous weight of responsibility that he felt concerning the Christian Gospel that God had revealed to him in a very unique way, and they didn't have a New Testament at that time of course, it was actually being written so to speak, but he was anxious that the message that God had committed to him should be maintained in its pristine condition, that it was the authentic message that God gave to him, and there were certain men that God gave to him, younger men, that he had been privileged to spend much time with, and he'd been able to mentor them and help them to understand the nature of the truth of the Gospel, and so he's writing to Timothy who was certainly one of those men that he loved and cherished and was counting on to be one who would carry the truth on after his own death, and so in this second letter he is expressing his love for Timothy, and he's giving him as it were some last words of instruction and encouragement, and so it's in that context that we find this text, and I can't help but just add to that, that whilst of course I'm not for a single second thinking of myself in any way parallel to the Apostle Paul, but certainly as far as the passion of my own heart is concerned, I think what I find in Paul as I'm reading him resonates in my own heart and echoes in my own heart, my desire over these years has been to not only just discover what God wants to say, but to be able to minister it in the Holy Spirit and to minister it to men and women, and as I've become older, I'm coming toward the end of my seventh decade, I'm very conscious of those who are much younger than me, even within the context of my own personal family, but I'm thinking of those that I have the privilege of speaking to and teaching, and with all my heart I want to help steer and guide and help and teach the modern Timothy, the modern Luke, or the modern Phoebe, or the modern Priscilla, and to the extent that I succeed in communicating something of the Word of God and the Spirit of Christ to those people, I will count myself profoundly satisfied and richly blessed.

So to the text that I'm thinking about, if you're looking with me into your Bible, I'm in 2nd Timothy and chapter 2, and I will read verses 21 and 22. The Apostle says in verse 21, If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts, but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Amen. And the word here is, Timothy, be sure to cleanse yourself. The word which is translated here for us in verse 21, If a man therefore purge himself from these, is a word which occurs on only one other occasion.

I'll look at 1st Corinthians and chapter 5. I should just prefix my reading with these words, it's all recorded in the first part of the chapter. But Paul on this occasion is addressing the church via this letter that is written, because he's been made aware that the sexual impurity going on in the assembly, and he refers to it in this old King James translation as fornication, and he says it is of such a nature that it is not even named among the Gentiles. In other words, there was something very, very serious taking place in the assembly, and he's writing in this letter to address this, along with other issues that he's been made aware of.

And so here in this chapter, he's dealing with the person who is responsible for this sexual act that he's referring to and has been told about. And one of his other concerns was the attitude of the rest of the assembly. They seem to be almost blithely unaware of the seriousness of it.

Anyway, Paul deals with that. And then he says, when they come together in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, and my spirit with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good.

Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump as you are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. And then he continues on.

So he is speaking here about leaven, of course, and he is using that as a metaphor for sin. He's talking about the sin in the church. And to illustrate what's going on from his point of view, is he said, this sin that you are permitting in your assembly, and particularly in this person who evidently was a guilty person, he said, it's like leaven.

And he said, you know about leaven? Leaven influences the whole lump, he says. It chemically modifies the dough. And it spreads once it's introduced into the dough.

It can't be halted. It can't be removed. And this is Paul's view of the seriousness of this sin that was going on.

He said, it's like leaven and it's permeating the whole assembly. And he said, there's only one thing that can be done. He said, you must cleanse it.

You must purge it out. You must thoroughly purge it out is the word here. You must go to great lengths to remove it.

And so he goes on to describe what should be done in the assembly with that. But this is the whole point that there needs to be a thorough cleansing. And so Paul is writing now in this letter to Timothy.

And he's saying that there's certain things going on. If a man purge himself from these, then, of course, he will be a vessel unto honour and sanctified and meet for the master's use, prepared unto every good work, flee also youthful lusts, and so on. So this whole idea is to get rid of, to eliminate, to remove it completely altogether.

Now then, there's a sense in which it wouldn't be wrong to allow our minds just to go back to a different situation. But it helps just illustrate a very important point at this stage. And that is what took place in the upper room when Jesus was gathered with the disciples.

And you will remember that after they shared the meal together, Jesus takes a towel and girds himself and a bowl, and he begins to wash the disciples' feet. And it's Peter who recoils to this. And he says, Lord, you'll never wash my feet.

And Jesus then made a statement, which I think is so much broader and deeper than that immediate situation. He said, if I wash thee not, thou has no part with me. And of course, when Peter heard that, he responded in a very different way.

He said, Lord, you know, and I paraphrase, if that's what's involved, you know, wash me, wash my hands, wash my head. And Jesus then made another incredible statement. He said, he that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet.

He that is washed needeth not but to wash his feet. And that reminds me profoundly of another verse of scripture that I find very close to where we are right now, in the book of Titus. And in Titus chapter 3, and in verse 4, I read, for after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through our Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen. And so what Paul is talking about there is the fundamental washing, the washing of regeneration, the washing that is a way of thinking about and describing and referring to the new birth, which is really referred to in that passage. The word regeneration is made of two Greek words, palindionasia, again born.

He's saying that we've been brought to this new birth experience by this washing that he's referring to there. And this, of course, is foundational to our entrance into the family of God. Remember now what Jesus said in the upper room, he that is washed, he doesn't need to be washed again.

You need to have another fundamental, total washing, but you need a superficial washing as he lives his life out in this dirty world. There'll be a need to wash our feet as it were, wash our hands of the things that we touch in the world in which we live. And so as we continue on here in this session, I'm assuming that we have, that each of you have experienced that fundamental washing of new birth.

You've been brought into the family of God. You've experienced a real beginning in the things of God. But having experienced that, we are to continue living in this world, which I've referred to as a very dirty world.

And we need the continual washing of his word to our hearts to cleanse us as we continue on. And for that, there is a responsibility that Paul is passing on to Timothy when he's passed on to each and every one of us. On the one hand, that fundamental washing is entirely the work of God himself.

Only he can do this, the washing of regeneration. It's the washing that produces regeneration in our experience and changes our whole status of relationship before God. But the subject tonight is our responsibility, our daily responsibility, or if you like, our continual responsibility before God.

That responsibility is not to fight against lust, but it is to embrace the provision of the grace and power of God within our lives that enables us to know true victory. There's a hymn that we sing, which goes like

this, Jesus, keep me near the fountain where the pure are keeping clean. And this is the great truth.

What a wonderful thing. Every single person that is truly and authentically born again of the Spirit of God is washed, cleansed, and of course, by the cleansing power of the blood of Christ. And that's the key, the door, the way in to the Christian experience.

But again, to that hymn, Jesus, keep me near the fountain, near that same fountain, where the pure, those who have been fundamentally washed, are maintaining their purity, where they're keeping clean. And so, when we read about a personal responsibility, flee from youthful lusts, or purge out or thoroughly purge out the sin, this is not something that is left to us to do on our own. Because if it was left to me alone or to you alone, our experience would be one of perennial defeat and our situation would be marked by hopelessness.

We can't do it. No one can, in and of themselves, maintain spiritual purity. It is impossible.

So, fundamentally, we're in need of the overarching work and power of God in this whole process, from start right through to finish. But having said that, clearly there's a human responsibility. And it's that that we're thinking about here on this occasion.

And it's so necessary for us. When I was bringing my thoughts together a little earlier, I thought of a strange kind of illustration, a futile kind of illustration, really. I was thinking about a person who is from a very humble background.

And they have a friend who lives in a very wealthy area of the city. And on this occasion, they're over visiting as a guest. And while they're there, just wanting to be helpful while they're staying there for a few days, they say, maybe I could do some vacuum cleaning for you.

So they say, oh, yes, certainly. Well, it turns out that they had central vacuum built into the house. And of course, this guest had never come across that before.

So with all the good intentions in the world, she's following the initial instructions. She's plugging the hose into the outlet in the various rooms and working hard and brushing hard with the vacuum head on the floor. And eventually, totally exhausted, she's finally finished all the rooms in this huge house.

And yet she's concerned because it really doesn't look any different. And the truth of the matter is it isn't any different for one reason. And that is that she had not been told about the switch that she had to turn on to start up the motor for this to be an efficient functioning system.

And it seems to me that that's how so many people are attempting to live their Christian life. They're faced with all of the filth and all of the issues that are part and parcel of the world in which we live. And they're not finding success.

They're not finding victory. They've got a name that they live, but they're dead. It's not working at all for them.

And that's because of this need to have God deal with things by his power, his way. And so we'll see where we get to with that. Let me now, in the remainder of my time, just divide my thoughts into three categories, three areas, if you will, of lust, three categories.

The first one I'm calling the lust for recognition, the lust for acceptance, which is fundamentally pride. And we know from reading the book of James that God hates pride. He resists the proud, we're told in the book of James.

But we also know that pride was the original sin, the very original sin. Do you remember when it was actually Lucifer who said, I will be like unto the most high. And of course, you know that as a result of that pride and how that came about where he was, I can't answer.

But the fact is, as a result of that, God judged that proud, arrogant spirit immediately and he was cast out. But pride fundamentally is a desire, it's a lust for independence. Someone years ago wrote a book, which I never read, but I know the title was, it was American person, I wanna be me.

And that fundamentally is where so much of our natural human nature exists. And it's a preoccupation with self, it's all about me. It's certainly our view in early life, teenagers, I think it's sort of there, you can almost see it in their DNA to be oppositional.

But that oppositional attitude and behavior progresses with the later years, it becomes even more expressed as men and women grow older. And there it is, it's this insistence on choosing one's own way. I know someone who was stopped by a police car and the policeman came up and as a result of what that driver had been doing, and you know how policemen always have these smart little words, I know because I used to be there on the other side.

But they come along and that doesn't mean I got arrested by the way. But this policeman came up as the window was wound down and said, quite the little individualist, aren't we? And you know how true that is. It's this motivation to be a standout.

Sometimes that can even be a pride of our own plainness of dress, it's not only in the more exotic expressions of the way we present ourselves. But there you are, why should this happen to me? Very interesting when we read about Jesus, he made himself of no reputation. And the Apostle Paul himself was said to say on one occasion, though I be nothing.

He referred to himself as nothing more than a basic simple slave, a slave of Jesus Christ and so on. And I think what Paul is doing here when he's writing to Timothy, he's reminding Timothy, Timothy, make sure that this sense of your divine calling and this gifting that God has enabled you to know and to move in, he said, make sure it never goes to your head in any way. Because although he didn't put it this way, this is certainly true that every true man and every true woman of God walk with a limp.

There's something that God does that deals with that root of pride and arrogance within us. So, another area, a second area to think of, of lust is the lust of misguided priorities, a desire for things that are inappropriate priorities and a desire for them and so on. This again, I think is very plainly obvious in our youthful days, but it doesn't go away as I said right at the outset.

It's just another aspect of this, this lust which is unclean at the end of the day that pursues us and stalks us for the whole journey of our life. But I think fundamental to the Christian life is a commitment to wait upon God, to spend time in his presence. If that desire isn't in your heart, you would have to question seriously whether you've truly ever been born again.

But this love to be in the presence of God and to wait on him and to allow your mind to be open to what God is wanting to make real and precious to you. But in all too many cases, it's our feelings that rule us

and dictate and so on. And as a result of that, our own common sense trumps our godly thoughts and our desire for the word of God.

You know, these true thoughts, these true attitudes and understandings concerning who we are in relation to God and how God wants us to behave ourselves, they're all garnered during these times of quiet waiting upon God. And I have to wonder how many really, really experience this in this busy, busy world, in this crazy world of activity and activity and of noise and clamour. How many of us who profess to be Christian men and women know what it is to regularly, regularly draw aside and to quietly wait upon God in his presence.

And this is serious because this is such an important need for each and every one of us. And it's in those moments that God speaks and reveals his word to us and quickens the written word to our hearts and so on. But in so many cases, we're too busy protecting our own privacy and protecting our own comfort zones and so on.

And it seems more rare to find men and women are prepared to break through those sort of barriers and make ourselves available to God in a very disciplined and consistent way. As I'm saying this, I'm thinking about the record I find back in Exodus, where a number of things have happened. Sin has come into the camp in a very serious way.

God is removed from the immediate presence. But then Moses moves the tabernacle of congregation and he places it away from that scene. And he would go out there with Aaron as well, and they would seek the Lord in this tent that was removed outside of the camp.

If you wanted to meet with God, it was outside of the camp. And the way the text is worded is that all they that sought the Lord went out to that place. But the next part of this, the story reads like this, that really it was only Moses and Aaron that went out.

And all the other men stood in their tent doors and watched as these two men walked past their tents along their little tent street and went out of the camp to go and wait on God. Be sure that you're not like one of those men just standing in his own tent door while someone else goes through to God to experience his presence in that remarkable way that we are able to know it. And there it is.

You know, someone said in my hearing many, many years ago now, he said, there's nothing like good, solid thinking in the hands of the Holy Ghost. And you have to be quiet to do that, quietened, without your own agenda. Or F. Frederick Faber, he put it this way.

He said, only to sit and think of God. Oh, what a joy it is to think the thought, to breathe the name. Earth has no higher bliss.

Well, looking at it from a slightly different position, it was Spurgeon, Charles Spurgeon, who said this. It's very profound. He said, if Christ is not all to you, he is nothing to you.

He said, he meaning Christ himself, he said, he will never go into partnership as a part saviour of men. If he be something, he must be everything. And if he be not everything, he is nothing to you.

What a tremendous challenge to really do some deep and serious thinking about this. And I think once again, thinking back to the person receiving this letter of old Timothy, I think Paul was saying to Timothy, Timothy, if you're going to make any kind of list of your priorities, make sure that it's the Lord first and

central. And then next, make sure it's others who you are caring for.

And thirdly, it can be yourself. And that reminds me of a friend of mine in England who many years ago, when he was engaged to a young lady, they made, came to an understanding together, that that would be the way they would conduct their marriage through the years that God would allow them to be together. And they're still together to this day.

Let it be Jesus first, others next. And then what's over, he said, we'll share that together. But there you are.

So now, category three before I'm finished. And this is the lust, which is sexual impurity, certainly something experienced in youth. It's this period of discovery and exploration.

But it's also a period where addiction is birthed. We know that we live at this moment in time in such a very, very unique period of time. I'm thinking of the technology that is so much a part of our society in these days and the part that technology has in partnership, as it were, with immorality.

And our society is saturated with pornography and with sexual impurity and lusting. It's just become so normative. This is the dirty world in which we find ourselves living and I believe with all my heart that apart from a radical and consistent embrace of the cross of Jesus Christ and the power of the cross and of the Holy Spirit working in our lives, these addictions will stalk men and women all the way through to the grave.

They're as real as that. You know, sexual impurity is not a new thing. It's as old as the fall of man.

And history itself, of course, is replete with it on occasions in manner that's all too graphic. But having said all of that, I can't help but think back to the days of my youth, which in one sense is a long time ago, but in the broad sense of history is not very long ago. But in this period of time, from my youth to this present day, how this world has changed and how so much has changed in this very area, in particular, the availability of sexual immorality and material filled with images that play right into the hand of this sexual impurity and lusting.

You know, having said that, I'm not for a minute suggesting that when I was young, everything was spotlessly clean. Of course, it wasn't. I've already said that sin goes back all the way to the beginning.

And as a matter of fact, just to reinforce that, I'm saddened that I have to say this, but you know, I was introduced to sexual impurity by an elder in the assembly that I attended. And there's a lot more I could say about that. But what a terrible thing when that should happen.

And it happened to me. And there you are. But you know, in those days, we didn't have all the technology, we didn't have cell phones and the material that's so readily available, even to our youngest in our society.

I don't think I'm wrong to say that, you know, in those days in high school and so on, if one of the boys just happened to find a piece of paper with some pornography on it, sort of blowing in the street in the wind, that was considered a great fine, because otherwise we had these stores around town, which would have been called the dirty bookstores. But, you know, only certain people would go near those stores. So there wasn't this availability that there is today.

But that doesn't mean that society was any cleaner, sexually or spiritually, it's just the availability we have today. And I don't think I need to say any more about that, because it's also obvious. But I will say this, that

those who are caught, truly caught in the demonic web of sexual immorality, they're caught by that one who goes about, according to scripture, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, seeking how he can ruin our lives, seeing how he can ruin your spiritual testimony, seeing how he can take you out as a Christian man or a Christian woman, in whatever way he can.

And there are many who are so caught that I have to say this, they often need the power of the Holy Spirit in a very real way to enable them to break free. Again, much more could be said about this, and I'm trying to be as quick as I can now. But the fact is, let me say this, whatever you do, if you're professing to be a Christian man or a Christian woman, make sure that you do not warm yourself by the world's fires.

And they're seductive, they're enticing, and we require that power of God to maintain a position of purity. In fact, you know, Jesus said this, and it was in a context of having spoken about sexual immorality. I'm thinking of some verses in Matthew chapter 5, and he basically said this, if your eye is the problem, pluck it out.

If your hand is the problem, cut it off. This was our radical Savior, our radical Jesus, informing his people that they need to be radical, and you and I need to be radical in this area. Whatever you do, don't go warming yourself by the world's fire.

Don't go standing on the edge of the cliff of immorality, trying to convince yourself that you're okay, that this is not going to bother you. Imagining, well, I can handle this, you can't handle it, none of us can at all. We must withdraw.

It puts me in mind of a man who, he didn't pluck his eye out or cut his hand off, but he got his television set and he brought it out and he put it in the driveway, and he was a farmer, and he brought out a sledgehammer, and he smashed it to pieces in the driveway. Now, I'm not saying that everyone has to do the same thing, of course, but I'm standing behind Jesus, though, and Jesus said you've got to do something very radical if you want to be free in these areas, because the powers, the seduction of them, the bondage of them is so great. If you really want to be a vessel clean and meet for the master's use, you have to become radical in this area.

He is the one who provides the fundamental cleansing, but it's my responsibility and yours to make sure that we stand separately, that we discipline ourselves to stand apart and determine that we are not going to go that way at all. You know, perhaps I can just introduce another area as well, because not only is the world a dirty place, but as we think even of our Christian assemblies with the Christian brethren, we need to be very, very careful that we don't give an occasion to the enemy and so on, and over these many years that I've been involved in Christian churches and assemblies, I've seen things that I've recognized immediately to be concerning, and one of these areas is men who are just too comfortable with women, and who sometimes I've seen completely inappropriate embracing or selective embracing as well, and so on. And today, of course, we've got the whole area of the social media and communicating.

I'm not standing here or sitting here trying to administer some kind of legal way you live, but I am here as a messenger of the Word of God, and I believe I'm telling you the truth today. If you want to be a clean man or a clean woman, a godly man or a godly woman, you need to be very reckless in the way that you respond to these areas. You've got to be very radical if you really mean business.

It's so easy to just go with the flow. It's on the Broadway where everyone goes with the flow, but there's a narrow gate through which we must pass, and there's a narrow way that we must walk as we walk this

way, which is called the way of holiness. Amen.

And, you know, it was Paul who would say on another occasion, it's good for a man not to touch a woman. I'll leave it for you to understand how God would have that applied to you in your life. One of my dearest friends who's gone to heaven now, a man who lived before God an exemplary life, he was one of the leaders in a church where I was, and he would not permit himself to be alone with a woman.

You can say, well, that's another kind of bondage. No, you'll find that Billy Graham and his team, just to mention some others, early in the days when they discovered that God had called them to a unique ministry, which of course he most certainly did. But they sat together, and they made a covenant together, and they listed several issues that they would maintain as the moral basis for all of their activities as Christian men and as Christian ministers.

You know, I read in the chapter 50, verse 7, Wonderful. He set his face as a flint, like an adamant stone, like steel. This is how we must be before God, free in our spirits before God, but in our behavior in the world, we must be resolute.

We must be undaunted in our commitment to purity and to holiness, and we must be consistent in it. This is not just once in a moment or here or there, but consistently, and we must be immovable, refusing to be moved. We must pursue holiness, pursue it.

And the end of all of that, as I've mentioned already, Paul says, Then and only then will you be a vessel unto honor in the great household of God, and we can approach him with clean hands and a pure heart. That's the only way we can come into his presence and be ready for his use. I'm closing with one other thought here.

In Ephesians, chapter 5 and verse 15, Paul writes, See then that you walk circumspectly, and not as fools, but wise. You know, in England, and in the part of England where I lived, in Liverpool, which is typical of other cities, I'm sure, our little house had a little tiny backyard. And, you know, we call a garden a yard here, but no, this was just stone ground, like big slabs of stone.

That was our backyard, and the toilet at the end of this little place, that was another story. But the walls that divided the houses were made of bricks, and they were about seven or eight feet tall. And because there was always the concern that someone would climb over the wall and thief or break into the property, so it was not uncommon at all for people to get glass bottles and break them.

So we had little pieces of glass, and then the men of the house would put a thick layer of mortar all along the top of the wall, or cement, and then they would place all these pieces of glass, so they're sticking up all along the wall everywhere. So it would make it very difficult to climb onto that wall, to climb over. And someone asked the question about the verse I've just read to you from Ephesians, and said, what does that word circumspectly mean? Because it's a strange word, what does it mean? And the person in our church gave a very interesting and very appropriate response to it.

He said, well, you know how we put the glass and the cement on the walls around our backyards? And this person said, well, yes. He said, well, tell me, he said, have you ever seen a cat walking along those walls? And of course, the cat's not just got two feet to worry about, it's got four. But as the cat walks along the wall, it would never put its foot on the glass, but it would walk and find a place between them all with all of its four paws.

As it walked along, and this man said, that's what it means to walk circumspectly. You walk very deliberately, very carefully. You can't be casual.

You can't be flippant. And that's the way you're to live your life. Paul said, see then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.

Amen. May the Lord make you thoroughly clean. And may the Lord enable you to walk circumspectly and to live a clean life, a holy life in this dirty world for Jesus' sake.

Amen. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/B1hKcrnV24I.mp4>
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