

Dealing With Lust

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of dealing with lust as a Christian, recognizing it as a universal problem that requires a practical strategy to overcome, and the need for accountability and deliverance in the battle against lust.

Duration: 47:09

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 13:4, 1 Peter 2:11

Topics: "Overcoming Temptation", "Spiritual Purity"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the struggle of a married man who is studying for the ministry and battling with lustful desires. The man feels isolated and unable to find someone to confide in. The speaker suggests several strategies to overcome these temptations, including engaging in physical exercise, finding legitimate enjoyments in life, and using diversionary tactics when faced with temptation. The speaker also shares a story about a man who resisted the temptation of a prostitute by chopping wood instead. The overall message emphasizes the importance of finding practical ways to resist lustful desires and remain faithful to God.

Transcript

2 Timothy chapter 2 You think of people lusting after food, lusting after money, but this morning we're more, because of, you know, our limitations, wanting to deal mainly with lust in the area of sex. All over the world I've taken surveys on how often in church meetings young people and adults have ever had a single message, strong biblical message on the subject of sex. And surely within the church, with just a few exceptions, it must be one of the most neglected subjects.

And I believe one of the reasons, I'm sure there are many reasons, but one of the reasons many people get in trouble in this area, in their life, either earlier or later on, is because when they were young they had no biblical teaching on the subject. I'm sure there are many other factors. And I'd like us this morning just to look at some of the verses, and Lord willing I hope to follow up on that a bit on Friday morning.

Because it's not just a matter of knowing some of the principles we learned about yesterday, but it's important to have a practical strategy to overcome, to stand against the fiery dart of discouragement. And often people, Christians, get discouraged, especially when they get knocked down in the sexual area. That seems to be one of the biggest causes of discouragement.

I know a young man, outstanding man, that really believed that he must have greater victory in this area, and went into a weekend of prayer and fasting, this is 25 years ago, to get that victory on one weekend. And when he didn't get it, he somehow decided that Christianity wasn't valid. Talk about trying to put God in a closet.

He has been an agnostic. Very wealthy person now. Been an agnostic for 25 years.

Talk about fiery darts. 2 Timothy 2:22 Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. There is one of the clear-cut challenges concerning lust.

The Apostle Paul writing to young Timothy. I think we need to make it clear, of course, that lust is not just for the youth. Some of the people that I am and have been counseling in this area are hardly young people.

In fact, youthful lusts have a way of clinging to people right into old age. A lot of the pornography is purchased by men, some of it by women, in their 40s, 50s, 60s. A lot of young people are not that interested in pornography.

There are plenty of exceptions. So here is a challenge from Paul to Timothy. When you think of this being written 2,000 years ago, it certainly is something to meditate on.

Especially when people like Hugh Hefner and the whole new morality which represents a lot of old immorality, have challenged the Church and tried to say that the Church was totally out of date when it comes to sexual morality. They've been doing that for decades. There are some very good books written about that.

Well, that may be true in some churches, but it's certainly not true when it comes to the Word of God. I think many of you have heard me in even large public meetings mentioning how there are at least 500 verses on the subject of sex in the Bible. Why are Christians so silent about sex? Why are we often so silent about sex, even in O.M.? It's interesting.

How are we going to study the Word of God and not speak on this subject? I think one of the most important verses that helps us maintain balance, and I have the ability to get stuck on one verse and start talking about all kinds of things, but I would like to try to move on and look at a number of verses that will help us in laying a biblical foundation for our thinking. Hebrews 13:4 Hebrews 13:4 Here we see the beauty of marriage in comparison with the ugliness of fornication that will bring the judgment of God. In other translations it comes out even stronger that marriage is honorable.

Nothing wrong with marriage. I remember witnessing in the bus station, I believe it was in Chicago, shortly after I met the woman who became my wife. She would pray for me and I would go off and talk to someone.

I remember going off to talk to a priest. We got into quite a discussion. A Roman Catholic priest, I'm sure not all priests believe this today, but he believed it was better to be celibate and fall into an occasional fornication than to be married and live in perpetual sin.

That was his understanding of marriage. I think it's important to understand that traditionally the Roman Church, and not exclusively the Roman Church, had a very, very secondary view of marriage. I don't think

also it's just a rumor or a joke that in many, many places the Roman Catholic Church, because of unreality in this area, we have the same thing in Protestant churches, had enormous amounts of immorality.

When I did a research paper on South America, many of the books I read were written by Roman Catholics. They weren't just Protestants throwing stones. It was just acknowledged that there were whole cemeteries of children that had been born in relationships between priests and nuns.

If God leads a person into singleness, that's one thing. If a person does that out of the law and gets into something that he or she doesn't have the gift for, then you are going to see some very, very ugly things. And I prefer not to mention some of the things that I've seen and have been shared with me in counseling sessions.

We do get people, because of incest in their childhood, there's a lot being talked about now on television and in newspapers about sexual abuse. It's a huge problem in our society. Whole books about it.

But because of a lot of sexual abuse, a lot of things that have happened to people in their childhood, there are many who have deep scars concerning this whole thing of sex. It's quite common for people to be afraid of marriage, afraid of a sexual relationship. I don't think there's some simplistic answer we can throw out.

For example, to a woman who was raped 15 times before she was 15 years of age, she is going to have some heavy struggles. And if she marries, she is going to need a very sensitive, careful, loving, balanced husband. There is a shortage in that market at present.

But may the Lord raise up more. And therefore, even people who have been wounded and hurt in these things have an opportunity and possibility for happy and wholesome marriage. Let marriage be held in honor.

It's not second rate. Any more than being single is second rate. And let the marriage bed.

That's rather blunt, isn't it? Let the marriage bed. The Bible talking about beds. Be undefiled.

For fornicators and adulterers, God will judge. I'm hoping that as a result of sharing some of these verses with you, you may get a desire to, maybe even using your concordance, make a little bit of a Bible study on this subject. 1 Peter 2.11. I hope you, I know you're not avid note takers.

This is supposed to be a study program. But I hope you'll at least write the references down and mark them in your Bible. I'd love to take a survey sometime on what time people get up and what they do between the time they get up and they get here at 8 o'clock.

But I don't think I have the motivation for it at present. 1 Peter 2.11. This is a very strong verse that has helped me many, many times in this battle against lust. I might just say there is some degree of difference between lust and infatuation.

Exactly where you cross the line from infatuation into lust I'm sure is difficult to say. But I don't think you should think of a little bit of infatuation, especially as a single person. Married people must be more disciplined, this is my view, about infatuation than single people.

I mean, any infatuation that comes near my mind, and it does, I have to deal with immediately. Because I am already married, there is no possibility that this infatuation is the beginning of the real pilgrimage. For

me, you see, isn't it very fortunate, those of you who are single, you can have a little infatuation and you can check that out to see if there's anything in that.

But it's quite normal to be infatuated. Again, those of you who don't know English as your first language will probably rush to the dictionary and find out what this word infatuation means. What a great language barrier we have, especially when we start talking about sex.

Infatuation, however, even for single people, can easily lead to lust. If some infatuation for a person comes into your mind, you're sort of wrestling with that, probably trying to cast it on the Lord. But if you allow that to turn into lust, so that you may start undressing that person in your mind or visualizing something that's not from God in your mind, then you're in lust.

There's no question about it. You've crossed the line. But here's another verse that's really helped me.

1 Peter 2.11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts. Now, we know this is a new American standard, still perhaps a little old-fashioned in some of the language, which wage war against the soul. I should have brought my living translation with me.

I know they're all living. But does anyone have a living Bible? Could read that. Anyone? What about the New International? Could you read that verse? That seems to be the most popular one.

Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from sinful desires, perhaps more easily understood than fleshly lusts. I think it very clearly indicates that the battle against lust is going to be total war. One of the reasons, miraculously, I think I am still surviving in this battle, that was certainly my greatest struggle as a teenager.

Maybe I wasn't even fully aware of what my greatest struggle was, but at least from my viewpoint, I believe one of the reasons that in a sense I'm still running the race is because I recognized as a young person of 18 or 19 that this particular struggle in my life would make me or break me. And if you study history, you'll see that many men and women who have been greatly used of God by His sovereign mercy have had enormous struggles in this area. I can tell you many OM leaders, I know more about the men than the women, have had enormous struggles in this area.

People that you would not suspect. Everybody knows George Herbert is struggling in this area. He's got such a big mouth and he goes around speaking about these things.

But some of the phlegmatic characters that are helping to lead this work and you think they're guys that have it all together have actually had more struggles at times than I have. If that's possible. I can assure you it is possible.

But there's a verse that has helped many of us to realize it's going to be a battle. Now let me emphasize something to me that is so important. We all acknowledge that in this world we are not going to be perfect, right? Someone gets up and says, I believe I am now perfect.

We're perfect in Christ. I'm not talking about our position in Christ. I'm talking about the practical walk.

If somebody gets up and announces that, he's going to get shot down. We're going to say, heresy, right? On the other hand, we're not willing to carry this little bit of philosophy to its rightful conclusion that we are therefore all sinning. And we'll continue to sin until we die.

That doesn't sound right. That doesn't sound right. And if you say something along that line, someone will jump on you with a real holiness message or give you a riles book on holiness or a Wilkerson leaflet or a deliverance book.

And I think there's a lot of conflict because a lot of things we say give the idea that really as Christians we're not going to sin. Someone will immediately say, we don't have to sin. I agree 100%.

We don't have to sin. There is provision for holiness. And that is our goal.

But if that just crosses the line a little bit, it becomes heresy. And I just believe that many people are discouraged today because they wanted sort of a one-shot, instant deliverance in the area of lust. They certainly wanted to get it totally under control by the end of the year program.

And when it didn't come, or when in fact the battles became greater, it's quite normal for your battle in this area to become greater when you leave O.M. than when you're in it. Every movement has its positive and its negatives. One of the negatives about O.M. in some ways is that there's bound to be group pressure.

There's bound to be a little extra pressure. Living with six other women, I don't live with six other women, but some of you are, there's bound to be extra pressure in a community where there's discipline, there's got to be some policies, there's got to be a few basic rules and regulations, than when you move out, live in the center of a huge city, totally on your own, with no one looking over you, no one even caring about you that much. You are entering a completely different world.

And I don't think this should cause us necessarily to think that being on O.M. is unreality. There are elements of unreality in whatever environment you choose. And to learn to accept the positives and the negatives of that environment, make the best of that, strengthen yourself in preparation for more difficult environments.

I believe, for example, some of these pastors who have been knocked out through immorality have a much more difficult environment than I do. Pastors, in their particular situations, are vulnerable. They're often not immediately responsible to anybody on a day-by-day basis, if it's a relatively medium-sized church.

The elders in the church are all off working. The pastor basically has a lot of freedom. Now, there are churches that I believe are operating more on a team basis, with a higher degree of accountability.

And I think that is going to save us a lot of difficulties. There's far more accountability, even among leaders in O.M., than you may see on the surface, because a lot is done on the telephone. A lot is done quietly behind the scenes.

I don't think we put big banners outside our doors. Sexual counseling going on at this time. Please pray.

It happens often in the course of events. But what I want to stress here is that in this battle against lust, the more deliverance you can experience, the better. And I certainly, as a young Christian, prayed that God would deliver me.

And I went forward and recommitted my life. And I went through what I felt was the crucifying with Christ experience and the fullness of the Holy Spirit. And I wanted all that I could get, whatever there was a strong message given.

But I also discovered, perhaps the hard way, through some failure, especially with my eyes and pornographic magazines as a young Christian, that I could not trust myself. No matter what blessing, what deliverance, leading souls to Christ, having people tell me I was a spiritual teenager anointed of God, I learned quickly not to trust myself. And set up some basic rules even in terms of counseling women and relationships with women long before I even started to read much about that.

Though I think I must have learned some of my basic strategy from Billy Graham, who was always quite conservative in his relationship with other women, largely because the press in those days was trying to push Billy Graham into the arms of some nice looking chick and get a picture of him for one of the scandal magazines. And they never managed to do that. That was about the time when in California there was a gang operating who would send women to the homes of pastors.

These women would seduce the pastors. Their co-worker would get pictures of them and put them in bed with the pastor. This is 30 years ago in case you think all this kind of thing going on is all new.

And they would blackmail those pastors. And they had a number of pastors who paid up big money before someone had the courage to go to the police and this particular racket, that's what it was, a racket was supposedly brought to an end. That is a true story.

It's also a true story that one of the first Christian leaders I related to only in acquaintance when I first came to Europe ended up raping one third of the women in his Bible school. He was a leading radio speaker, a leading literature distributor, a very famous man in his own country. He wasn't international.

Eventually arrested by the police in his country for raping, it was a very small Bible school, and committing moral sin with about one third of the women in that Bible school. I had to counsel one of those women. He was in prison.

I met that man when he came out of prison. That is not an exaggeration. Perhaps it was because of the in-depth counseling I got involved with as a very young Christian that I became maybe overly aware that Satan as a roaring lion seeketh whom he may devour.

Don't be naive in this area. Don't, young women, think because he's a man of God he could never do anything. Or because she is a woman of God she could never do anything.

A young man wrote to me from the United States. A leading preacher came through. He went to counseling with this preacher, a man preacher, a famous man, and that man seduced him in the counseling session into a homosexual relationship.

He wrote to me and he said, what should I do about this? I said, you must go to your school officials about such a thing. And fortunately that man was caught. These things are not new.

They're as old as any passage you want to pull out of the Old Testament. So when Peter writes, beloved, I urge you, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. And I would just like to put an urgent plea to any of you that may be fooling around with pornography.

In the smallest way, Christians often have more difficulty, Christian men, with pornography than unconverted people. Because unconverted people often are sleeping around. Now with AIDS, they have different ways of doing it.

But it's still immorality. It's still giving themselves over to lust. Whereas it is quite normal for Christian young men to have quite a lot repressed.

You know that word? In other words, these emotions are there, these temptations come, and you repress them. You don't run out and get drunk and find yourself a woman. And psychiatrists back in the 60s were telling young men to do that.

They were counseling neurotics. It was quite a normal, acceptable counseling method. A neurotic young man, he's uptight.

Some of you have seen some of this come out in Woody Allen films. And they'd say, look, you need to go out and just get yourself a woman or get a prostitute and get some release and learn to deal with guilt. Young people back then, and still there's a camp that teaches this, were taught no matter what, you must not feel guilty.

It's the guilt that's causing you all the trouble. It's not sleeping around. It's not doing this or doing that.

But it's guilt. And of course, they would even recommend pornography for therapy combined with masturbation. And I would challenge you to take 1 Peter 2, 11.

And I would urge you to abstain from fleshly lust. Abstain from any kind of lust through the use of pornographic literature. Even that which people in the world say is art.

Of course, if you're in the battle and you don't feel you should look at mild pornography, which is sort of above the waist pornography, you'll be laughed at. I mean, if you think there's anything wrong with page 3, I mean, you'll just be laughed at. You're not a real man.

You're just having a hang-up. What are you, perverted? What do you want? Page 8? And this is where we have to stand on what we believe. The Word of God says think on that which is pure, that which is lovely.

We know there's nothing wrong with the breasts of a woman. It says in the Word of God, this is always a good verse to take these characters to, be now satisfied with the breasts of the wife of thy youth. You can say, look man, I'm pro-breast, but this is somebody else's wife.

This is not for me. But this is somebody else's wife. This is not for me.

These women who make these pictures and do these photos are often married women. So in that case, they belong to someone else. It's not that this is wrong, but it's all that's involved with it.

Who that person is. By the way, some of the strongest opposition to pornography has come from women. And it's come from the women's rights movement.

They went all through London one time putting stickers on some of these pornographic ads, on the tubes. None of you have ever noticed them, of course. Pornographic ads on the nudes are semi-pornographic.

This photo is degrading to womanhood. I felt like saying, praise the Lord. There's a woman who's got some courage to speak out.

And it's unfortunate now that the whole male pornographic industry is growing, which is a lot of male magazines which are especially used by homosexual people, but in some cases by women as well. Let's

go to another verse. In fact, let's take a few minutes to make a little comparison between Joseph and David.

Jump back in your Bible to, I was going to say, Joseph chapter 39, but I believe it's Genesis chapter 39. Genesis 39, the story of Joseph and this difficult temptation that he faced. We don't have time to read the whole passage, but he was there in Egypt and his master went away and Joseph was left in the home with his wife.

I can imagine that she must have been a very attractive woman. He said to Joseph, after telling him about her husband going away, verse 6, so he left everything he owned in Joseph's charge and within there he did not concern himself with anything except the food which he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.

If any of you are handsome, I never had this difficulty myself to any great degree, you will probably have extra difficulty. I've never been able to figure out, as a man, exactly what this is all about, and how women decide who is handsome and not handsome. And I'm sure some of you will be running to look up that word in the dictionary as well.

There was a pop song that came out some time ago. It said, if you marry a beautiful woman, it is hard. Terrible song, really.

The man who played it, the disc jockey, didn't like it, but he played it anyway and it went quite high on the charts. But if you are an attractive and beautiful woman, it can be very, very hard. Sometimes in our culture, the woman who does not feel she's attractive, she feels that she is really going to have it hard, when in fact that can, in God's providence, be a blessing.

Because a woman who has a lot of men chasing her and paying her favors, not easy, not so easy for them to find Jesus. In the midst of all that acceptance and attention, when they are young, how many young women even neared in the church do we see go right off the rails because they are so attractive and every other character in the church is chasing her. Maybe that never happened in your church.

So Joseph is a good example, a good challenge for every one of us. It came about after these events that his master's wife looked with desire, a woman lusting after a man. Looked with desire at Joseph and she said, very blunt, lie with me.

Now this does not mean they were going to go down to the local beach as you did in the age of romance, or at least I did, and lie on the beach holding hands with your girlfriend. This is, she is saying, please come and have a sexual relationship with me. Very blunt book, the Bible really.

And he refused and said to his master's wife, behold, with me, here my master does not concern himself with anything in the house and he has put all that he owns in my charge. There is no one greater in this house than I. He has withheld nothing from me except you because you are my wife. You are his wife.

Thank you very much. I was just testing you. That's what Wayne always says.

How then could I do this great evil and sin against God? And it came about as she spoke to Joseph day after day. Can you imagine yourself in this situation? I don't even try to imagine it. I find it too difficult.

Day after day she pursued him. He did not listen to her. To lie beside her or be with her.

Now it happened one day that he went into the house to do his work and none of the men of the household were there inside. She caught him. Can you believe this? She caught him by his garment saying, lie with me.

And he left his garment in her hand and fled and went outside. When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, had fled outside, she called to the men of the household and said, see he has brought in a Hebrew to us to make sport of us. He came into me to lie with me and I screamed.

What a story. What a card. What a trick.

And because of her lies he ended up in prison. Now let me just throw something else in here. The whole tunnel of lust is a dead end downward pull.

One of the ways, I've got about 15 reasons that I've been armed with since I was a teenager, why I'm not going to get involved with another woman. I have one reason. I have 15 approximately.

And one of the things, by the way, some time ago my daughter came to me. You may envisage this later in life. My daughter came to me on the Australia trip.

She looked me in the eye with all these things happening in the United States with Christian leaders and she said, Dad, I want to know if you have been absolutely faithful to Mother for these 28 years. So I am so, so happy that I could say yes. I mean just the pain and the embarrassment of answering that question or lying, which is worse, is worth all the running away that I've done and staying away I've done from other women over the years.

And I just think God's way is best. And for 10 minutes or even 10 days of so-called release or satisfaction or whatever it may be classified as, you reap, you often reap a harvest of guilt, a harvest of confusion in your mind. And just as in this case, even when Joseph stood, even when Joseph stood, the very fact that he was in the home, which he couldn't avoid seemingly, in the home with this wicked woman, you know, caused an awful lot of grief to his life.

Now a great story of Joseph we pointed out the other morning is how God overruled all this. Now Joseph seemingly had to be in this woman's home. Generally speaking, we men don't have to be in the homes of such women.

I remember one of our men going door to door in a country in Europe and the woman showed a lot of interest in the books. Come in! Books! Woo! And he went in like a buffoon. Oh boy, all alone.

And she tried to seduce him right on the spot. Fortunately, according to what he told me, he got out of there without difficulty. And another case of a very naive young man was the streets of Brussels.

And he met a man and the man was so interested in the books and so interested in Jesus. Oh, come to my flat! I want to hear more! And this young, naive, however, left his partner and went off to the flat and the man put his arm around him and said, Oh, tell me about Jesus. And tried to seduce the young man on the spot.

Amazing! You're just out in evangelism. You're not obeying God. And suddenly, you know, things are happening that could spoil your whole day.

To say the least, spoil your whole life. So there's a lesson from Joseph. But we might want to compare this with 2 Samuel, is it chapter 10? Let's see if we can find David.

11. 2 Samuel 11. If Joseph is the example of the man who said no, then David is the example of the man who said yes.

Yes to that awesome temptation. This beautiful woman was apparently washing on the roof. I think there's a great lesson that David really wasn't in God's place when he was up on that roof.

And remember, this was pre-binocular days. I'll never forget speaking at the Urbana Convention back in '68. And a young man rushing up to me after the message almost in tears sharing how he had been caught in his hometown, little southern, nice puritanical hometown.

He had been caught peeping on his girlfriend. You might say, how can people get into that? It just seems so bizarre. Yet it is incredibly common for young men, adolescents, to go through a period of peeping, of doing anything to get a view of a woman, perhaps less now in the age of pornography.

I don't know of this generation. But this man was caught. He lied about the car.

And he actually had run out of his hometown and escaped the police and the father and ran into the Urbana Convention and then snuck into me and this message on spiritual schizophrenia that I gave. And that brought such a response, led to the book *Hunger for Reality* and the 17,000 personal letters, many of them from spiritual schizophrenics, all over the world. David was up there peeping around, looking around.

Maybe he wasn't. Maybe he was up there having his quiet time and she just happened to pop out on the other roof. But from that point on, David played the fool.

And surely, every one of us can learn from this. I remember Bill Graham speaking about this. I remember Alan Lopat speaking about this.

Praise God for men. Long before I ever came on the scene. Stephen Olphers.

Many others who have spoken out against the sins of impurity and warned us not to go the way of David. We know that this immorality led to David attempting, even eventually, murdering Uriah. Let's look at verse 13.

We're short of time. Now, David called him and he ate and drank before him and he made him drunk. So, David was into deception and in the evening he went out to lie on his bed with his Lord's servant, but he did not go down to his own house.

Now, here is a soldier so disciplined that he didn't even sleep with his own wife. I'm sure we could find a message there. But that, of course, eventually led to them being able to convict David.

We know what happened over in chapter 12 when Nathan gave his little story about this bad guy and David said, this man is guilty. And then Nathan said, Thou art the man. Of course, that brought David to his knees.

I used to say to people on the ship when I was leading that ministry, I said, you know, if you come to us and confess immorality, you know, in most cases you're not going to be asked to leave the ship. You're going to be given a second chance. We're going to pray.

There's going to be repentance and we're going to press on. But it's going to be difficult, more difficult for you if we catch you. In other words, you're deceiving.

You're deceiving the leaders. You're living in immorality. We've had, by the way, immorality on our ships.

Not much as far as we know. And I remember especially a long-term counseling experience with a man with a homosexual problem. And he was walking in the light, but then he decided to go back into darkness.

We had forgiven him. We had allowed him to stay in the ministry. He was under a disciplined program.

And then he went into darkness and he started doing things behind our back. And then some brother came to us as leaders and said, you know, this man has just tried to seduce us. So we caught him and then we felt we had to remove him from the ministry.

We did reinstate him a year or two later. OM has basically a very forgiving, compassionate policy toward people who are in moral sin. I feel that more than ever because characters like me are much older now than the average OM-er.

I personally feel that people are less reticent to share about these problems than they used to be. They can't overcome the age gap. Plus, characters like me are a lot busier than we used to be.

I'm not saying people have to come to me, but I believe that people have been in immorality in the work of God, they need to get that sorted out with a leader in confidence. We seldom ever make something like this public. How sad to get a letter as I got just last week from another couple who committed fornication during their time on Operation Mobilization.

And have lived in continual guilt. I can't even add more to that because it just wouldn't be wise. How much better to stay out of it in the first place.

There are many other verses I wanted to share. Many in the New Testament, many in the Old Testament, touching on almost every subject you can think of. Even such things as sexual difficulty with animals.

Maybe you think it's only, you know, this generation that talks about these things. Just read the book of Leviticus. This was condemned.

This has become increasingly common in some parts of the world. I remember speaking, just touching. I've never done anything more than touch on this subject.

And a missionary came up to me after the meeting in India. I thought he was going to really rebuke me because some of the old-timers, they don't like it, getting into any details like the Bible does. And he came up to me, he said, I am amazed that you have touched on this subject because in our missionary compound we are having our young men getting involved with the animals on the compound.

You may be horrified by this. Good! I hope you are. Billy Graham said 30 years ago, our women today have lost the ability to brush.

But we're living in a world that is fallen, that is sinful. And I don't want to go in any further detail. Just to simply say, all these different things that people are into today, all the kind of new morality, the life swapping, the throwing the keys in the ring and going to bed with whoever picks up your keys, all this is

old immorality.

It's not new. And we can see it condemned and spoken again throughout the Word of God. We may ask, of course, can Christians ever get in these things? The Corinthian epistles indicate that men were sleeping and having sexual relationships with their mother-in-laws.

It can happen to the people of God. It does happen to the people of God. And that's why we need a strategy for standing against lust.

What are just a few things in closing you can make sure you're doing to stand against the fiery darts of lust? Number one, intensive meditation and memorization of the Word of God. That is so helpful in renewing your thoughts, in giving you verses to stand by when temptation comes to you. Number two, walk in the light.

Have at least one person that you're walking in the light with, you're praying with. I know it's hard to talk about sex. You think it's easy for me to stand here and talk about this? I don't even speak on this subject more than two or three times a year.

I have people almost begging me to speak on this subject. I've delegated the speaking on this subject in the summer conference for years delegated it to others. But as long as I have the Word of God, I see that a lot of people don't have the gift to speak on this subject.

I don't think anybody can just get up and start speaking about perversion, homosexuality, lust, and all these things. I believe that God has to give some training and God has to give some giftedness. No matter what I speak on, I always feel it can be done much better.

But I believe we need to walk in the light, to have someone we can share with. One man from a European country. I don't know the money this man has spent on long-distance calls.

He has no one he can talk to. He is absolute porno hog beyond anything I've ever known. He's a married man.

He's studying for the ministry. He went to one minister and the minister treated him like he was some kind of a scab out of a circus. When he's a person with sincere love for the Lord, he wants to serve the Lord, but just as an alcoholic, if he gets near this stuff, he just can't resist it.

And I just believe though your problem may not be to that degree, maybe more, it's good to have someone you're walking in the light with, praying with, someone you can phone. We had a network for a while in the early days of OM. Of different men, mainly men, I'm sure women maybe had their own, people who had struggles in this line.

We would call one another. We had codes to find out how we were doing in this area. You'd go to somebody and you'd fellowship and you'd say, how you doing in battle zone number one? We'd know what we were talking about.

And he'd either say good or bad or he'd say let's go pray and unload his struggles. Many, many people have found freedom and greater victory because they learn to share. The Word of God says confess your faults one to another, pray for one another that you may be healed.

Number three, have a definite physical exercise. We have energy. We have hostility.

We have emotion. And if we have no strong work program where we can exercise, burn some of this up, there's no total answer. None of this is a total answer.

It's all part of the big answer. I remember the story in one of Norman Vincent Peale's books. I don't agree with all of his books and it may have been a similar book.

A man had phoned up and arranged for the best looking prostitute in his town to go to bed with him. He knew it was wrong. That morning when he was to go with this woman he got up, he was a married man and he chopped wood.

For two or more hours he chopped wood, he was sweating, he was exhausted and when he was finished chopping all that wood he picked the phone up, called the woman and he said, finished, I don't want to see you. And I am convinced that a strong physical exercise program can be a help. Number four, have legitimate things in life that you enjoy.

Have legitimate things in life that you enjoy so that you can have diversionary tactics. If I'm in an airport and I feel a porno is coming at me, I'm alone, I try sometimes a diversionary tactic. I go for ice cream.

Ice cream is 100% legitimate. You eat it up. Of course I know if you're a glutton then that's a sin as well.

That's my major problem. But I believe any practical diversionary tactics when you're really under attack. Maybe you're tempted to go see a real wild blue movie, something really bad.

Maybe you should see a good movie instead. Maybe with someone else. It's good to get away, it's good to get with someone who preferably is stronger than yourself when you're especially under attack.

All the other biblical principles we talk about, the crucified life, the spirit-filled life, discipline, denying self, learning how to say no. All these things are part and parcel of developing a strategy against lust. And we'll pick up a little more on this Friday morning.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you that your word is very clear on this issue. And we want to be in obedience to what Paul said.

We want to flee youthful lust which war against the soul, whether it comes through a magazine or a picture, whether it comes alive, or whether it's fantasy in our own mind as we just lie in our bed and manufacture our own little movies. We want to be men and women of purity. We want crucified minds.

We want disciplined and dedicated bodies. And we thank you more than anything else that when we fail in this area, when we sin, that you love us and you accept us and you cleanse us and you renew us. Deliver us, Lord, from any kind of false perfectionism on one hand or licentiousness on the other hand, that we may find a balance of disciplined holiness in our lives and that we would know what it is to worship you in spirit and in truth and live in purity and honesty, reality, and integrity all the days of our life in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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