

Overcoming Sexual Sin

by Jason Robinson

Jason Robinson's sermon addresses the pervasive issue of sexual sin in the church and emphasizes the need for a return to Scripture and authenticity in the Christian community.

Duration: 1:45:50

Scripture: Proverbs 4:23, Jeremiah 6:16, Matthew 6:33, John 14:21, John 16:25, John 16:27, 1 Timothy 2:9

Topics: "Sexual Sin"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being in harmony with one another in the church. He explains that when believers are in symphony with each other, they can ask Jesus for anything in his name and he will answer. The speaker shares his personal testimony of growing up in a wicked environment and how he was transformed when he came to Christ. He also highlights the need for Christians to return to the old paths and not be swayed by new teachings or solutions.

Transcript

And like we said last night, there's a lot of people that are really good at working on the problem, diagnosing the problem. But the solutions, the majority of the time, are some new thing, some new angle, you know, some new truth that hasn't been seen for the last 2,000 years, and it's been hid from Christians, and now it's here to set you free. And the prophet Isaiah is saying, let's go back to the old paths.

Where is the good way? And if we do that, he says, we'll find rest for our souls. And, you know, there's thousands of Christian books, and psychology books, and philosophy books, and all these libraries of books, and seminars, and I mean, I know it sounds simplistic, but the answer to all of our problems is in the Scriptures. And if we just rid ourselves from all the people that try to explain them away, and try to twist them, and just go like a child, just childlike faith to the Scripture, and just read it and believe it, we can be set free.

And so we're looking this weekend at the Church, and what it is, and what it needs to be, and it's very important that we see that there is a church of those that have come out of the world, and they've set a direction, kind of like a boat at a dock, and it's deciding to go to the Bahamas, and it goes on its course. And there are specific churches that, in a city like this, that may feel led to reach out to the inner city. There may be churches that feel led to reach out to college students, or let's say there was a Hasidic Jewish community in the area, and the church wanted to reach out to them.

There are different courses you could go as a church, as far as outreach, as far as style of worship, depending on the culture in your area. And so what happens is God raises up a core in a church, and that core has the vision and the direction that God is leading them to go. And if there was a church, let's say, that wanted to reach Hasidic Jews, and they wanted to dress like Hasidic Jews and sing Messianic Jewish songs, I wouldn't go to that church and try to change the direction of it.

If I didn't feel led to go that direction, I would find a church that wasn't doing that. So every church should have a core that understands the direction that they're trying to go, the way that God's leading them to reach people for Christ, and the way that God's leading them to worship Him in spirit and in truth. And that core, it's understood who that core is, the leadership and those that are committed, those that God has birthed a daily relationship with, these people and their lives are revolving around each other, they're loving one another.

There's symphony there. The scripture that a lot of people use, if we ask anything, if any of us agree on earth as touching anything, and we ask Jesus, He'll do it. A lot of people like to quote that verse, and it's good, but the word there, agree, if any two of you shall agree, that word is symphonyo in the Greek, from which we get our word symphony.

And what he's saying there is if any of you are in symphony with each other, then if you ask Jesus something in His name, He'll do it. But if you're not in symphony, He's not going to answer it. And so the church is like a symphony.

You have the brass section over here, and the cellos and the violins, and you have the drums back here, and there's a director, and he is able to guide all of those people to be in harmony with each other. All of those instruments are tuned in with each other, and it sounds beautiful, but if there was no director, if they were tuned to different keys, if they were playing at different tempos, it would just be chaos. And unfortunately, that's the way many churches are.

There isn't a leader, or the leader is inadequate. They're tuned to different things, and it plays, and it's just not a beautiful thing. So in a church, those that are in symphony with each other are the core.

That's, in essence, the local body. Now, there's going to be some that the core is inviting and ministering to. They're totally welcome to come.

They're totally welcome to visit, kick the tires, see if this is something that, a direction that they want to go, a lifestyle that they want to live. There are obviously times when the church gets together, and they have people come and visit. This isn't some exclusive club with a secret handshake, and you have to know the password to get in, nothing like that.

That's cultic and dangerous. But the point is, the church is catered to Christ, not to visitors. They're welcome to come, but it's not going to be designed in such a way as to make them feel comfortable.

The songs and the length of the service and style of everything is not catered to seekers. It's catered to the direction that the core feels Christ is going to be pleased with. They're in symphony with each other, and they're going this direction.

Those that desire to go that direction are welcome to get on board, but not change the course that the church is feeling led to go by Christ. It's really important, as we're looking at this, it's really important to see the danger of what Francis Schaeffer called religious social pressure. See, a lot of churches become

clubs, and they become places where there's a lot of pressure.

We talked today about all of the different cliques, and with each clique has its clothing and has its music and has its hobbies. Unfortunately, a lot of people come to Christ, and they leave that, and then they join the church, and the church is the same thing. I have many friends that have come out of the Amish and Mennonite churches, and if you join, say, a Mennonite church, some of them you have to agree to a book, a literal, what they would call a standard book, where they would have all kinds of things.

You have to have a black car and no chrome on the car. If the car you bought had chrome on it, you would spray paint it, and so those are called black bumper churches, because it's pride to have chrome, so they spray paint the front of their cars black, and you have to agree to wear all these things, and you have to agree to not do this and not do that, and it's legalism, and it's death, and they'll have in the book, you're not allowed to go to Six Flags, and so the teenagers will go the next year to Geauga Lake or Cedar Point, and so they have to add that in the next year, and you're not allowed to go to Cedar Point either. Yeah, it's like another amusement park.

It's just not called Six Flags, so they went to it, because it didn't say we couldn't go there, and then they have to add that, so the book gets thicker each year, and that's an extreme, okay, and most people see through that, and they say that's death, but most churches, many, many churches are like that. Maybe they don't have a book. It's hidden.

It's an invisible book, and if you come to this church, you will eventually conform to the norm, and it could be as liberal as anything you can imagine, as loose as anything you can imagine, but it's still, there's a pressure there. A lot of emerging churches emphasize social programs and reaching out and helping the poor. There's a lot of emphasis on helping the poor, helping the widows, and helping the environment.

We've got to offset the carbon print that we put on the environment, and we've got to ride bicycles, and we've got to use certain types of foods and not buy clothes from Wal-Mart because people in China are having to make them, and so you go to that church, and you're slowly having to conform to that, and if you don't, there's a pressure put on you, and that's just as legalistic, and we need to see this. That's just as legalistic as the Amish because you're conforming to something, and there's a pressure put on you, and you won't be received, and what happens in these settings is you begin to despise people that don't live the way you live, and so here on this side, you have very conservative people, and she doesn't dress the way I think she should dress, and he doesn't do the things I think he should do, and he does other things I think he shouldn't do, and he's worldly, and you begin to despise other Christians, and you have the same legalism on this side with worldly or liberal Christianity, and he's legalistic, and he says you shouldn't do this and that, and in our church, we do this, and this is why we have all of the division in the body of Christ in America is social pressure, and we need to allow in churches people to be totally free to be who they are in Christ, who God has made them, and that's going to look different for each one of us. I had this conversion band once, and the back seat, if you press this button, it would, you know, motorized bed, it would fold down into a bed, and if you press the button again, it would fold back up into a seat, and that button, that switch broke, and I had my mechanic guy look at it, and he couldn't fix the switch, and he's like, but yeah, if you want, I can put it back up into a seat so it stays at least that way, and I said yeah, and so he took the switch out, and he took these two wires and just held them together, and as he held them together, it pushed back up into a seat, and I was like, wow, I didn't understand, how does it know to do that, and he said, oh, it's just programmed to do two things.

You hold the wire together, and it goes up, and you hold the wire together, and it goes back down, and that's the way we are. Each one of us is wired to do something, and when the power of the Holy Spirit comes in us, we're going to do what we were wired to do, and what I'm wired to do is going to look different than what you're wired to do, and I have to receive you when you get filled with the Spirit, and what you're doing is different than mine, what I'm doing. You have to receive me, but what happens when people are insecure, birds of a feather flock together, so they can't receive people that are different than themselves, so they just have to start flocking together with people that are like them, and well, we should have a church, and we don't agree with how these people are, and the people over here, yeah, we don't agree with how they are, so we should have a church, and then you have all these churches with all of these different gifts, and you have a church full of a bunch of people that are hands, there's just a bunch of hands in the church, and they don't like the feet guys, so they started their own church, but they're not expressing Christ, they're just a bunch of hands, and then the feet church is over there, and they're despising the hands, and they're a bunch of feet, and God is wanting to bring together a body where there's no social pressure, there's no underlining pressure to conform.

The epitome of this is the Amish, where all of the men have black pants and white shirts, and all the women have black dresses, and they all look the same. Okay, that's cookie cutter, obviously that's wrong, but you come into a lot of Evangelical churches, and you know, suddenly you leave this, and you come over here, and all of the women have pants, and they don't have dresses, and all of the men wear certain types of shirts, and certain types of clothes, and it's the same thing, just re-wrapped, it's conformity. God wants diversity in the body, because that's what's going to exercise your love, when you're having to love somebody that's different than you.

And humans, their natural way of thinking, we naturally don't like people that are different than us. So, when you're in a third grade, and the kid from China moves in, you make fun of him, oh, you know, and you make faces, and he's Chinese, you know, because we're so insecure, he's different than me, I must be mean to him. But that's the way we are.

Spiritually, now we're saved, and oh, that guy's different. You know, I don't want to be around him. And God is bringing together a body of people that are totally different, and they're allowed to be different, and nobody's being despised, and they're all loving one another.

And it's a place where you can be real. This is who I am. I'm not saying I'm perfected yet.

I want to be perfected. This is me. I'm not going to try to act in such a way to where you're going to accept me.

I'm going to be real. And as you see me being real, you're going to help me become like Christ. And I'm not talking about, you know, a lot of churches say, you know, we're just being real, you know, we're just being real, and I want to go to a church where nobody judges me, you know, and like one guy said, okay, we'll just go to a bar, you know.

I mean, nobody will judge you in a bar. I'm not talking about being real as to justify sin and just stay real and stay defeated. I'm talking about being real with the goal of changing, with the goal of shedding your sin.

So not putting up, you know, the word hypocrite in the Greek, it's actor. The actors in the first century, they would walk around with the face mask, you know, they would hold up in front of their face, and during the

play they would have this face, and as soon as the play was over they'd put the mask down. And a hypocrite is not someone that tries to do right and fails periodically.

A hypocrite is someone that acts like they're doing right and isn't doing right. They're trying to put forth this image that they're walking in victory, but they're not. And we need to be real with each other.

When you see me and you say, how are you doing, and I just had a bad day, I don't want to say, fine, yeah, I'm doing great, brother, amen. No, I want to say, I had a sucky day today, you know, I'm pretty discouraged right now. So we can help each other, you see, we can be real with each other.

How are you doing? I'm pretty depressed, I got mad at work, and on top of that I have bills due at the end of the week. Oh, okay. See, real, not, yeah, good, yeah, it's good, pretty day, huh? Pretty good day.

Forget that. Let's be real for the purpose of overcoming sin. And so all that to say, bringing all that into the context here of this topic of lust, I talk to, and counsel many people all over the country, and in the last month or so, I can't even begin to tell you how many, the last, well, the last four years, how many times I have had people send me text messages, emails, phone calls, you know, I'm falling into sin, I'm falling into pornography, you know, I made out with my girlfriend, and, you know, we had sex before marriage, or how many people that I knew were wholehearted for Jesus, were loving Jesus, and cheated on their wives, and got divorced, and it's just growing more and more and more.

People that, when I first came to Christ, were my mentors falling into adultery, and it's just such a huge problem in Christianity, and at least the circles that I've been in, very, very little is said about it, and yet, there's so much in the Bible about it, and I think you'll be shocked how many verses are, you know, focused on this, and it's just all over the Scriptures, and, you know, when I grew up, my parents weren't Christians, and didn't know God, and my dad, you know, had no problem with me as a four or five-year-old sitting with him while he watched, you know, pornographic movies. I mean, I grew up in the, you know, age of where it was okay for me to cuss, and it was okay for me to, you know, pretty much do whatever I wanted to do, and watch wicked movies and everything. I mean, I grew up in a very wicked atmosphere, and, you know, by the time I was twelve, I had eyes just full of adultery, and lust, and girlfriends, and, you know, just given to sexual immorality, and my whole childhood, my whole, all of my teenage years, and then I come to Christ, and start going to a church, and I have all of this monster that's been created before salvation, okay, behind me, and now I come to a church, and, you know, I see verses that obviously it's not good to have sex before marriage, and things like that, but I don't remember ever hearing a message about overcoming lust.

I don't ever remember hearing a message about it being a sin, you know, to watch pornography, or masturbation, or anything like that. I mean, I heard lots of messages about topics that weren't helping me with any of those things. They were high and lofty, you know, things, but I didn't care about any of that.

I wanted, you know, victory over sin, and so I went through this cycle as a nineteen, twenty, twenty-one year old, twenty-two year old, twenty-three year old, of, you know, repenting and feeling horrible, like I'm a total loser, I'm just horrible, and then, God help me, help me, help me, and then, two months goes by, boom, fall again, um, and just, I'm just a total idiot, and then, three months later, and that was my cycle, and just thinking, I must be a freak or something here, because, like, nobody else is struggling with this. I mean, everybody's just, I see them in church, how you doing? Awesome brother, I'm doing great, how are you? Well, I just got done struggling with lust over there, and I feel like an idiot right now. You know, but nobody's telling me that they're defeated, so I must just be a sexual freak or something here, because I'm

the only one doing this, and so that's how I lived, and there was no teaching, no practical teaching, well then, make a long story short, it comes out a few years later that one of the pastors in my church was committing adultery, you know, with another sister in the church in that time period there, and um, so that's one of the reasons that it, you know, dawned on me, well of course they weren't going to teach on that, because they were struggling with it too, you know, and defeated, and hiding it, and hypocrisy, and a lot of pastors won't teach on this.

One man did a survey, I forget what the story was, they had a big pastors conference, and thousands of pastors came to this hotel, and I think the hotel monitored, 80% of them ordered pornography the nights that they were at the hotel, you know, so a lot of times these things aren't taught on, because the people teaching them don't have victory themselves, and when they are taught on, it's so vague, and it's not really, you know, helpful, so what happens is that the standard of scripture is lowered, the call to holiness is lowered in an attempt to justify sin, and so a lot of churches don't teach on women dressing modestly, because the leaders in the church have eyes full of adultery, and they have women up on stage leading worship, and very sensual clothing, and there's just kind of a general spirit of lust in the church, and it becomes normal, and you know, in my case, I was 19, I'm coming to church, and there's immodesty, and I'm like, hey, I have to deal with this all week long, I mean, I'd like to sit here and sing, my Jesus I love thee, and not have to worry about, you know, looking down at the girl in front of me, because she's dressed immodestly, I mean, can I at least have a place here where I can focus and worship Christ, and there was an insensitivity to young men, you know, in the body that I went to when I first got saved, and I want to clarify this, because there's, you know, a lot of misconceptions out there about holiness and separation, and you know, obedience is not legalism. Okay? Many people have come out of dead traditional churches, and they've come out of churches that were guilt-driven, and I understand that there's a death in that, and we don't want to go back to the law, but when somebody emphasizes obedience to Jesus, we have to separate that from legalism. Legalism is where I take God's heart and His teachings, and then I add to them, and the Pharisees added to the teachings of the Old Covenant, and then they despise people for not teaching the things, or not obeying the things that they added to.

So God says in the Old Testament, you know, keep the Sabbath. Don't work on the Sabbath. Don't lift a burden on the Sabbath.

So the Pharisees somehow take that teaching, and they come to conclusions that God didn't come to. For instance, we need to have certain sandals. We need to have Sabbath sandals.

They only weigh six ounces. If they weigh seven ounces, it's too heavy. You're lifting a burden on the Sabbath.

So we have all of these things that men come up with. They add to God's teaching, and that's legalism. Anytime I try to find my acceptance with God based upon some external thing that I'm doing, based upon something that I've come up with, like I believe that you should get up at five in the morning and read the Bible, and if I don't get up at five in the morning and read the Bible, then God doesn't accept me.

Or if I do get up at five in the morning and read the Bible, but I know you don't, then I write you off and don't accept you. That's legalism. But obeying the teachings of Scripture in a childlike way, that's just obedience.

A lot of times people want to call obedience legalism because it's a cop-out because they're not obeying. It's a nice way to say, well, that's just legalism. That is a way of justifying our sin.

For example, in this context here, what we're talking about lust, a lot of times nowadays, I think we talked about this last time I was here, you'll hear phrases like God's love is unconditional. God loves us unconditionally. No matter what happens, God loves you, God loves you.

And so what happens is we concoct theologies based upon our morality. So if I'm defeated by sin, my morality will dictate my theology. An extreme example of this would be churches nowadays that are homosexual churches.

So somebody is giving into homosexuality, something clearly taught on in the New Testament, to be a sin. They're giving into it. And so they either have to quit the sin or they have to change the Scripture to justify the sin.

And so their morality, or in this case the lack of morality, dictates their theology. And many people are defeated by sin, so they want to take this whole, you know, God is like a coin and there's the love of God and the fear of God, and they want to take this whole side of the coin and cast it off and focus on the love of God to the destruction of the fear of God. And so a lot of times that's caused by a lack of morality.

And so I want to feel accepted no matter what I do. I want to feel loved no matter what I do. So I gravitate to a theology that is conducive to that.

And so in my case, when I was 19, 20, 21, I went to a church that taught once saved, always saved. No matter what you do, you can go out and kill somebody, you'll still go to heaven because salvation is eternal. They'll say it's eternal life, you're going to heaven no matter what.

And what that produced in me as a young 19, 20, 20-year-old kid that was struggling with hormones and lusted, what that did is it took away the fear of God in my life. And at that moment of temptation at 2 in the morning when I was fighting and fighting and finally it's just like, I'm going to die. Don't do something here.

The thought would come in, well, you're going to heaven anyways. And God loves you anyways, so why don't you just do it and just ask me to forgive you after you do it. And I'm here to say, whenever you're standing at that moment and you think in your mind, I'll just do it and then ask God to forgive me after I do it.

At that very moment, you're standing on the precipice of hell itself. That is a lie from the pit of hell. That is the lie all the way in Genesis chapter 3. The devil talking to Eve and minimizing and downplaying the severity of sin.

You're not going to die. You're not going to die. Romans 8 says, if you live after the flesh, you will die.

And it's not talking about physical death. How many of us have sinned after salvation? We didn't just drop dead after we sinned. It's talking about eternal death, separation.

And so at that moment of temptation when I'm going to die and my passion's in lust and should I give in, should I give in? The Bible says, by the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil. Okay? So there's these two sides to this coin. Okay? The fear of the Lord, men depart from evil.

By mercy and truth, iniquity is purged. But if we're feeding on this one side in an imbalanced way, when we're faced with temptation, we'll be more prone to give in. And let's look real quick here at this before we get into the topic.

John chapter 16. John chapter 16, verse 25. These things have I spoken unto you in Proverbs, but the time comes when I shall no more speak unto you in Proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father.

At that day you shall ask Him my name, and I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you. For the Father himself loves you because you have loved me. And I believe that I come out from Him.

So when somebody teaches you that God loves you unconditionally, it's just not something that Jesus taught. Because notice here in verse 27. The Father himself loves you.

Why? Because you've loved me. Look over at chapter 14 there in John. John chapter 14, verse 21.

He that has my commandments and keeps them, he it is that loves me. And he that loves me shall be loved of my Father. And I will love him and will manifest myself to him.

So if I read the Scriptures and I have Christ's commands and I keep them or obey them, that is what manifests that I love him. You know, I can tell my wife, I love you, I love you, I love you, and then cheat on her. And she's not going to care if I say I love you.

My actions manifest if I love her or not. And he's saying that our obedience to him manifests our love for him. And then notice here, it says, and he that loves me, it says, and he that loves me shall be loved of my Father.

See the condition there, you see. When I see what Christ teaches and then obey, I'm showing through my obedience that I love him. Okay? And this is not work salvation.

Okay? It's a love relationship. I'm not working with my marriage when I decide not to cheat on my wife. That's not works.

It's love. I love her and therefore, I don't want to cheat on her. And I love Jesus, therefore, I don't want to cheat on him with the world.

And whenever I do cheat on him with the world, at that moment, my love grew cold. And that's why I cheated on with the world. So I manifest my love for Jesus through obedience to his word.

And when I love him, the Father loves me. There's a condition there. So we need to be very careful to not be influenced by Dr. Phil and Oprah Winfrey and a lot of the psychology that has crept into Christianity and all these phrases that people say in Christian books that people read and they sound good.

You know, there's a novel that was going around about nine months ago and a lot of people that I knew were reading this novel and it was a really good story but there's these phrases in this novel that are just not in the Bible. They're good. They sound good.

But they're just, they're anti what Jesus is saying. They're going against what he's saying. Look at chapter 15.

I mean, it's really simple if we have childlike faith and just believe it for what it says. Verse 9, John 15, 9. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Continue in my love.

If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love. So if this cup is God's love, and say I were to take this, whose water is this? Are you drinking it still? If I were to take this pick and put it in that cup, that

pick is now in that cup. And if I said to that pick, stay in that cup.

Jesus is saying, if you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love. But if you don't keep my commandments, you're still going to be in there anyways. Is that what he's saying? No.

So when I disobey Christ, am I still in his love? No. I mean, my three-year-old son could understand this. And let's keep reading here.

Verse 10. If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things have I spoken to you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

So he's not saying this to be some drag. He's saying, look, I want you to have joy. I want you to have peace.

I want you to be fulfilled. That's why I'm telling you to obey me. Not because I'm a boring, you know, ascetic god that wants you to live like a monk.

No, I want you to be happy. I want you to have peace and joy. I tell my son, don't touch a hot stove because I love my son.

I tell my son, don't run around in the street when cars are coming down the road. Why? Because I'm mean and I don't want him to run around in the street? No, because I love him and I don't want him to get by a car and die. And so God is saying, keep my commandments so that your joy may be full.

Verse 12. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Verse 14. You are my friends if you do whatsoever I command you. See the condition there? Like, it's so simple.

You're my friends if you do what I command you. And we need to remember this as we approach this subject of lust. Okay? Because this subject of lust, this is, you'll see it as the top sins in all the lists of sins in Scripture.

Because it's the ultimate test of your love for Christ. It's the ultimate thing of, you're going to love me, the Creator, or are you going to love what I've created? That was, that was the test in the Garden of Eden. Okay? God created this fruit, but said don't touch it.

You're going to love what I created? It looks good? It feels good? It's going to make me wise? You're going to, do you want fellowship with me, he's saying? Or do you want to eat that? And they chose the created over the Creator. And that's the same thing today when we get into this topic of lust. And so we need to approach this topic with a proper understanding of the fear of God and the love of God.

Because if we only have a one-sided God, when we're tempted to lust, we'll give in. Because hey, God loves me anyways. Real quick, look at Psalm chapter 2. Psalm chapter 2, verse 12.

Kiss the son, lest he be angry with you, and you perish from the way. When his wrath is kindled, but a little, blessed are they that put their trust in him. See the condition there.

God's saying, kiss the son, or he'll be angry. Chapter 7, real quick. Verse 11.

Chapter 7, verse 11. God judges the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day. And notice here, you'll hear sayings that sound good, and they're partly true, but not fully true.

God loves everybody. But right here, it says also, he's angry with the wicked every day. See, we need to have a proper fear of God when we're approaching this topic of overcoming sin.

When I'm wicked, when I give in to my sins, I'm wicked, and God is angry with me. Because he is a God of love, he's angry with me. This isn't some Old Testament view of God that suddenly God doesn't get angry with sin anymore.

Because he is a God of love, he does get angry when people go against him. Look at chapter 11, real quick. Verse 5, the Lord tries the righteous, but the wicked and him that loves violence, his soul hates.

You mean God hates people's soul? I thought God loved everybody. It's what it says. If I love violence, God hates my soul.

Because God loves people, and I'm going against him. And the Lord hates it. You know, he hates violence.

So it's very important to understand this love of God aspect. Look real quick, last verse in this topic. We'll get into the last.

Look at Jude. Jude, right before Revelation. And let's look at verse 20.

But you, beloved, building yourselves up in the most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Keep yourselves in the love of God. What does that mean? Okay, I got the cup again.

I'm in the love of God. Here's the love of God, and I'm in it. Whose responsibility is it for me to keep myself in God's love? Anyone? Mine.

He says you keep yourself in the love of God. He doesn't say God's love is unconditional. He says you keep yourself in the love of God.

God's love is there, but I have to keep myself in it. And so what that means is, it's like a circle on the ground. When I walk outside of that circle, I'm not in that love anymore.

I have to repent to 180 degrees. I have to change my mind. I have to change my direction and get back into God's love.

And God's love, as we saw in John, is obeying his commandments. If you obey my commandments, you will abide in my love. So that circle, what keeps me in that circle is obedience.

And when we look at this topic of lust, we need to see that the consequences are eternal. This isn't something that you should try to fight, but God still loves you, brother, and you're still going to go to heaven when you die. This is a very serious topic.

Because it could cause us, if we continue to give in, to rebel against God, rebel against God, it could cause our hearts to become hard, and then we drift out of God's love. And here, let's look at the first verse

in Matthew chapter 5, a very common verse that a lot of us have seen before. The whole Sermon on the Mount, Jesus has this theme.

In the Old Testament, it said, don't do this. But I say, don't even do this. So here's the standard in the Old Testament.

Don't kill. But I say, don't even get angry. The standard is now raised.

It's even higher. And what he's doing, he's going to the heart of the matter. See, if you can overcome anger, then you're not going to kill somebody.

How are you going to kill somebody just being all nice to them? So if we want to prevent people from killing people, let's go to the heart of the matter, which is anger. The Old Testament said this about divorce. I say this.

The Old Testament said this. It's all throughout the Sermon on the Mount. And we get to Matthew chapter 5, and look at verse 27.

You have heard that it was said of old, You shall not commit adultery. But I say unto you, Whosoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you.

For it is more profitable for you that one of your members should perish than that your whole body should be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. For it is more profitable for you that one of your members should perish than that your whole body should be cast into hell.

Now, let me ask you a question. Is this legalism? No. It's a loving God teaching us that I love you, I want you to be pure, so that when you come together with your wife, you'll have a pure relationship, that your heart will be towards her, your heart will be towards your husband, and your heart will be towards me also.

And that there's nothing that perverts that pureness. But he's also saying that if you do give in to impurity and give in and you get defeated by it, you don't repent from it, you will eventually be cast into hell. And so what American Christianity has done with this teaching, many have said, well, this isn't for Christians because Christians are eternally secure.

But if you read verse 1, he spoke this to his disciples, people that were following him. And he's saying, look, you, disciples, those of you that are following me, this will send you to hell. I mean, think about this.

Have you ever heard a preacher say, if you lust with your eyes, you will go to hell? I mean, that's pretty blunt, you know, preaching. If you lust with your eyes, you will go to hell. But that's what Jesus is saying.

And we need to see this in a serious, sober way. And notice, just to be honest here, he says, if your eye is causing you to sin, pluck it out. Meaning, you have to take radical steps to cease from this sin.

Me, personally, I can't own a television. It's like putting a bottle of Jack Daniels in front of a raging alcoholic that's trying to quit. I mean, I can't sit there and flip through the channels and eight out of ten women are dressed in a seductive way and I can't see that again and again and again and again without it stirring up passion in me.

I don't judge other people. If they're able to do it, great. I'm not.

I can't do it. So that's like plucking my eye out. And notice he says, if your hand causes you to sin, okay, what does that mean? Think about it.

How does your hand cause you to sin? Men, cut it off. He's saying radically stop sinning. Because if you don't, it's better to go to heaven with one hand than to hell with two.

I got both of my hands, but I'm in hell. He's saying whatever it takes, whatever you have to get rid of in order to stop this sin, get rid of it. Because the consequences are eternal.

And so this is obedience. You see, it's a beautiful thing. It's not legalism.

It's obedience. He's saying love obeys. He's saying, do you want to show me how much you love me? Then obey me.

And so it's like, yeah, but I've got these passions in me. I've got these lusts in me and everything in my being wants to look at that girl. She's going down the street and I see the initial look and whoa, okay, there's a pretty girl and every part of my body is wanting to look again.

And at that moment, Jesus says, do you love me? And if I say, well, yeah, I love you, but just hold on, let me look again. That's sin. And notice about this verse.

Look at verse 27 or verse 28. If a man looks at a woman to lust, it doesn't say if he looks and lusts, okay? Because a lot of times you might look. Maybe you're at a red light and a car pulls up beside you and you see guys out of the corner of your eyes.

It's a blonde girl and you look to see if she's pretty and you may look over and it may be some biker guy. You're like, whoa. But, so you didn't lust, okay? But you looked with the intent to lust.

That's the sin, you see? Maybe you're sitting on your, maybe you're sitting on the front porch, she's jogging down the road, some girl's jogging down the road and you look to see if she's pretty, okay? That's, it's the intent, okay? And so it's, you know, kind of define this a little bit. Obviously we're going to notice if somebody's pretty. Obviously we're going to notice if somebody's got a beautiful body.

The initial look and noticing that isn't the sin, okay? Don't put yourself under this bondage of, oh my goodness, that girl was pretty. Oh God, I'm sorry. No, that's not a sin, okay? You can't, you can't help, you're wrapped in a body, okay? And your body has passions and lust in it and your body has things that it likes and some guys like women with long hair and some guys like women with short hair.

So what may be attractive for you isn't attractive to me. Different people are attracted to different things but in you is this desire for certain things that are appealing to you. And noticing that initially isn't a sin, okay? And where it becomes a sin is when you're wanting to lust.

You're wanting to look down at a girl's butt. You're wanting to look at a girl's breast. You're wanting to look and check this person out and you're looking.

And then Jesus is saying, if you want to stop adultery, where do you stop it? You stop it initially with the eyes, you see? I don't think, maybe somebody that's really perverted, but I don't think there's ever been anybody that committed adultery without foreseeing the person. So it starts with the eyes. So Jesus is

saying, let's lay the ax to the root.

And if we can get victory with our eyes, then we can overcome in this area of lust. So the first look isn't the sin, okay? Like one hillbilly Christian guy I knew said, well, that's why God gave you a neck, brother. So you look, and then the second look, you got to look away.

So you got that neck so you can look away. So don't put yourself under a bondage of feeling guilty because you think someone's pretty or cute or something. But realize that the sin is in the eyes.

And we'll look at a scripture here about that. Let's look at that real quick. Proverbs chapter six.

Proverbs chapter six, verse 32. Whosoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding. He who does so destroys his own soul.

Wounds and dishonor will he get, and a reproach will not be wiped away, for jealousy is a husband's fury. Therefore, he will not spare the day of vengeance. He will not accept no recompense, nor will he be appeased, though you give him many gifts.

So committing adultery destroys the soul, verse 32. It's very serious. And when you see people that I know that have committed adultery, that have given in to this sin, there's like a blackness about their eyes.

There's an emptiness there, a guilt. And it turns into what Peter calls eyes full of adultery. Let's look at that.

Second Peter. Second Peter chapter two, verse 14. Describing believers that have fallen away from the faith here in chapter two, people that are sitting in the meetings when they're having love feasts and such, he says in verse 13, and will receive the wage of unrighteousness as those who counted a pleasure to carouse in the daytime.

These are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deception while they feast with you, having eyes full of adultery. They cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have trained their heart in covetous practices.

They're accursed children. Their eyes are full of adultery. And we just need to be honest.

You know, like they say in AA, the first step is admitting you're an alcoholic. Let's take off the plastic fake Christian deal. Quit trying to seek honor from each other.

And be real. And say, I have eyes full of adultery. How do you know if you have eyes full of adultery? Well, if you walk in a room and look at a woman and then look down, that's the first thing you do.

You look at her and then you look at her butt. You look at her, you look at her breast. That's eyes full of adultery.

You walk in a room, you see four women, and you see which one is the prettiest. Some women usually have this, but this is more of a male type of thing, but not totally exclusive to males. But many, many men, when they see women, their eyes are full of adultery.

They're checking them out. As they're saying, hey, how you doing? They say, I've never studied it myself, but they say men think about sex every 14 seconds or something. Every seven seconds.

And women think about it twice a day. So, I mean, this is more of a male type of thing. It's not that women don't commit adultery, don't get me wrong, and that women don't struggle with it, but many, many men struggle with having eyes full of adultery.

And you can pick up on it. It says, they sit, in the King James, they sit at your love feasts, meaning after they would have the meeting in church, they would have a time of eating. And so here we are, after the meeting, we're eating, we're fellowshiping, and there's guys at the meal lusting after women in the church even.

And it's really serious. And so many, many sermons and books and stuff are written about a lot of sins that are external. A lot of people preach against, well, you shouldn't drink beer, and you shouldn't smoke, and you shouldn't listen to rock music, and all these things, and the body's a temple, and you shouldn't eat organic foods or you'll defile your body, and all this stuff.

But let's look at the Scripture as far as how this sin affects us. Let's look at Matthew chapter 15. Matthew 15, verse 15.

Peter answered and said to him, Explain the parable to us. And Jesus said, Are you so still without understanding? Do you not understand that whatever enters into a mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated, but those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man? For out of the heart proceeds evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.

So here's the Pharisees. They're all bogged down in all this religious stuff, and they notice Jesus wasn't washing his hands before he ate. And they would always wash their hands before they ate.

But they were filled with lust. They were filled with evil thoughts. They were filled with fornication.

But they were washing their hands before they ate. You see, that's what religion does. That's what legalism does.

It cleans the outside of the cup, but the inside is full of all wickedness. And so he says here, What defiles the man? And notice the first thing. What is the first thing on the list? Sexual immorality, evil thoughts, fornication, adultery.

It's the first on the list. And so we see here that the eyes is the first thing we want to, you know, lay the ax to the root of the tree. But then the next one is the mind.

Okay? As a man thinks, so is he. So I got to stop it in the mind. And like one man said, I can't stop a bird from flying over my head, but I can stop a bird from making a nest on my head.

And I can't stop a thought from coming into my head. And again, don't get bogged down with false guilt if a wicked thought comes into your head. You could be sitting here in a church meeting and some weird, wicked thought comes in your head about another sister in church.

You're like, Whoa, where did that come from? Now, it's like the bird flying over your head. Okay? Now, but you can stop it from staying and building a nest on top of your head. So the Bible says, casting down every evil imagination that exalts itself against Christ.

So the wicked thought comes through my mind on Jesus' name. Get out of here. Boom, you cast it down.

Okay? That is where it progresses to. It starts with the eyes, progresses into the mind. And as you give into those thoughts, there's a line there between the thought coming in and then you giving into that thought.

And then now you've crossed the line into sin. You see? Now you're thinking and dwelling on perverted thoughts, fantasies, visualizing things. That's sin.

And then it goes from the mind into action. And that's where he says, Notice, out of the heart come evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications. And the word fornication there is the word in the Greek, pornea.

Okay? From which obviously we get our word pornography. And it's kind of a word, it's a general word. God didn't want to be too specific with it.

He didn't want to say, It is sex before marriage. Sexual intercourse before marriage. Because if he said that, then people would say, Okay, but we can do other stuff, you know? He basically took this junk box and said, Anything that isn't God's heart, as far as purity and holiness, we're going to throw it in that pornea box.

Just sexual immorality. Anything that's sexual. Anything that you wouldn't do, that you're not supposed to do before you get married.

It's all in this box here. And as we see it, think on it, it comes out of our heart, and it goes into action. And we cross that line and begin to engage in sexual contact.

I mean, making out, whatever. I feel like an old guy here. I don't know what people call it nowadays.

Grinding or whatever. People begin to make out before they're married. That's sin.

And he says that defiles you. And that's what we need to focus on. Not whether we wash our hands before we eat.

Or wear some special type of clothing or something. Look at Mark chapter 7 real quick. Same parallel passage here.

Mark chapter 7 verse 20. And he said, What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of man, proceed, notice, evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, da da da da da.

And these defile a man. Notice at the top of the list. Evil thoughts, fornications, adulteries.

So do you think that this is an important subject to God? I mean, let's go through some scriptures here real quick. Look at 1 Corinthians. And these are different lists of sins in the scriptures.

And you're going to see a theme throughout all these lists. 1 Corinthians chapter 6. Verse 13. Foods for the stomach, and the stomach for foods.

But God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God both raised up the Lord, and will also raise us up by His power.

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? So shall I take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not. Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one with her? For the two, he says, shall become one flesh. But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.

Therefore, flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body. But he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, whom you have from the God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. How do you glorify God in your body? By not eating organic food and not smoking cigarettes? No.

By not committing sexual immorality. That's how you glorify God in your body. You see, again, God isn't some aesthetic God that, you know, is just trying to make your life miserable.

God wants us to have happy, vibrant relationships with our wives, sexual relationships. He's the one that made sex. It's enjoyable.

He wants married couples to enjoy sex. But he wants it to be in what the Bible calls the marriage bed, and he wants it to be pure. So supposing I got a lollipop, and I licked it and licked it and licked it and licked it, and then I, you know, wrapped it back up in a wrapper, and I said, hey, you want a lollipop? It's not going to be as good, you know.

He wants us to be virgins when we get married. And, you know, when each one of us is born, I like to look at it this way. It's like we have \$100, and that \$100 is a picture of our emotions, our romance, our intimacy, our body.

And as we meet some girl in the 12th, we're 12 years old, we meet some girl and we write her notes, and I love you and I love you too. I love you forever, you know, and I'm never going to leave you. We begin to, we spend a dollar on that girl of emotions and romance and stuff that was supposed to be for the one that we get married to.

And then a couple years later, we're freshmen in high school, we meet another girl, and maybe we kiss and make out a little bit, and I give her presents and this and that, and I spend \$10 on her, and I'm with her for a year. Then I'm with another girl, and I spend \$20 on her. We're really serious.

We were together for three years, all throughout high school. And maybe, you know, we even have sex now, and I spend \$20 on her, and I'm in college, and I meet another girl, and I spend \$20 on her. By the time I get married, I'm 24 years old, and I've spent 80% of this money, if you will, that God has given me for the purpose of my wife.

The love, the romance, the intimacy, the emotions, all of that has been spent on other women. And so now I get married, and I marry my wife, okay, and I say, Here, honey, \$20. And see, now our marriage is lacking 80%.

And so that's why we have one out of every two divorces in America the last, you know, 20 years, because a lot of people spend all of that stuff that was intended for marriage, they spend it on other people, and then their marriages are inadequate, and then they get a divorce, thinking that's the solution. And so the message is a message of love. It's not a message of, Here's a chocolate cake, but don't eat it, because I

mean.

That's not what he's saying. He's saying, I want you to eat the chocolate cake, but wait till after dinner, okay? Once you get married, you can have as much chocolate cake as you want. After you get married.

But before you get married, it's going to spoil your dinner. And God is saying, Wait to get married. Wait, it'll be worth it, and then you'll have that much more of a blessed marriage.

So we need to see, you know, that this defiles us. Notice here, we just read that in Chapter 6. He's talking about sexual immorality. Sexual immorality.

Verse 18, flee sexual immorality. Go down to Chapter 7. Now concerning the things which you wrote to me, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

So there's one of the solutions right there. You need to get married. I'm sorry, but it's real simple.

You have these passions in you, and you have these desires in you, and it's okay to fulfill those as long as you get married. And so if you're having these, I mean, some people are called to be celibate and eunuchs and such, and you'll know if you're one of those people. And you'll know if you're not.

And if you're struggling and struggling and defeated, and, man, you need to get married. It's that simple. That's what God showed me.

I looked at that, and I said, okay, I need to get married. And so notice this also. Verse 1, Now concerning the things which he wrote to me, it is good for a man not to touch a woman.

I want you guys to see that. It is good for a man not to touch a woman. That's a good standard to live by.

Come out of the culture of America. Come out of this sensual culture that we're in. Renew your mind and obey scripture.

Now, if you can't help from touching a specific woman, then you need to marry her is what he's saying in the next verse. Okay? But, you know, be very, very careful. I know people that committed adultery or fell into some sexual immorality, and it started with touching, you know.

Just a simple touch, and that stirred up just a strong passion in the person. And suddenly their passions are stirred up. So let's look at these lists real quick.

Romans chapter 1, and then we'll close. Romans chapter 1, verse 24. Therefore God gave them up to uncleanness.

Now, some would teach that this word uncleanness, and you have to study it out, could also mean masturbation. God gave them up to that. They were justifying that it was okay to do it.

Nowadays you have Christian pastors that say it's okay to do it. God gave them up to it. God allowed them to do it and justify it.

Notice it says in verse 24, In the lust of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions.

For even their women exchanged the natural use for that which is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the women, burned in their lusts one for another. Men with men committing what is shameful and receiving for themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind to do those things which are not fitting. Being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, and then he goes through the list of sins here. And notice what's right at the top.

Being filled with all, and I'm going to list a bunch of sins here, and right at the top is sexual immorality. See, and it's just all over the place. Look at Galatians chapter 5. Galatians chapter 5 verse 19.

Now the works of the flesh are evident. These are the works of the flesh. What are they? Adultery, fornication, masturbation.

It's right there at the top. Think about it. Like it's all the sins he could have listed, the first ones, sexual, sexual, sexual.

And then notice he says here in verse 21, Envy, murders, drunkenness, partying, and the like, which I told you beforehand, just as I've told you in time past, that they who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. This is a message that needs to be preached. If you practice such things, you're not going to inherit the kingdom of God.

And notice the word practice. It's habitual. You're caving in, you're caving in, you're caving in.

In the insinuation there is this is a practice of yours. It's not something you fall into. It's a practice.

It's something that you have given into and justified. If you live in these things, you're not going to inherit the kingdom of God. A couple more here along this thought process.

Ephesians chapter 5. Same type of list right here. Verse 2, And walk in love as Christ also loved us, and given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. But fornication and uncleanness and covetousness, let it not once be named among you as is fitting for saints, neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

For this you know, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no man deceive you with empty words. Don't let people deceive you with empty words.

If you do these things, he says, the wrath of God comes upon the world because of this. How much more is it going to come upon you? Don't let people deceive you. Don't let people water down the message of Scripture and say, it's okay, you're only human, God loves you, you know, just try harder.

No, this is serious. Because of these things, he says, you cannot inherit the kingdom of God. And notice again, at the top of the list, the first one, fornication.

Colossians chapter 3 and verse 5. Colossians 3.5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth, again, fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desires, covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, which you yourselves, you once walked in them when you lived in them. But now, put these off, and he goes on and lists some more sins.

But right at the top of the sin list is sexual sins. Fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire. So, this is a theme, you know.

If something is mentioned in the Scripture once, it's really important. But if it's mentioned over and over and over again, then it's really, really important. Look at 1 Thessalonians.

This is a really interesting verse, you know, when somebody is trying to find what God's will is. Maybe you're here today and you're just like, I want to know what God's will is for my life. Well, without sounding arrogant, I can tell you, I know what God's will is for your life.

You want to know what it is? 1 Thessalonians 4, verse 3. For this is the will of God. This is what God's will is for your life. Your sanctification, that you should abstain from sexual immorality.

That's what God's will is for your life. It is God's will for you to abstain from sexual immorality. Now, I don't know about you, but I kind of think in kind of a humor, I got this comedian mind, you know.

And I'm reading this verse and I'm like, God, you know, like, couldn't you put something more spiritual in there? You know, like, this is the will of God that you pray every day, 10 hours a day. Read the Bible, you know, and feed the poor, you know. You mean, this is what your will is for me? Like, I just need to abstain from sexual immorality? Okay, that's what your will is for my life.

Okay, I'll do it. But what he's saying, that's how important this is, you see. It's so important.

And many Christians have just kind of given in to defeat. And so, they've been defeated so many times that their morality dictates their doctrine and they twist Scripture and they just come with these carnal arguments of, well, we're all human, you know, and I'm just enjoying the beauty of God's creation, you know. I'm just admiring her.

I'm not lusting, I'm admiring. And they just lower the message of Scripture. Interesting verse here, look at 1 John.

1 John chapter 2 and verse 15. Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lusts of it, but he who does the will of God will live forever. All that is in the world, all the sins that are in the world, you could list a million of them, if you were to boil them down into the three root sins, okay, they are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

Those are the three root sins. There's one version, an English translation, that says it this way. All that is in the world, the lust for sex, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

And that's really good, I like that translation. It is a root, root, root sin to want to have sex outside of marriage. I mean, it's what our society revolves around.

I mean, you could buy a guitar tuner, and there's a pretty girl holding it. Or, you know, Tostitos chips. You pick a product and market it, and have a pretty girl hold it.

Billboards, and movies, and music, and just everything revolves around sex. It's just sex, sex, sex, everything. And we're bombarded with it everywhere we go.

We go to a store, we go down the road. There's a spirit of immorality, a demonic spirit of lust that is just constantly trying to get us to sin. And we need to see it for what it is.

And we need to see that that is the test of whether we love God or not. That's where the test is. Am I going to love the created thing? Notice, it says the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

What was Eve tempted with? She saw that the fruit was good. She knew it felt good. It looked good, it felt good, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes.

And it was desires to make one wise, the pride of life. Jesus, in Luke chapter 4, Satan comes to him after 40 days of fasting. He's about ready to die.

He says, turn this rock into a hamburger. What's that? The lust of the flesh. Then he shows him all the kingdoms of the world and says, you can have all this.

What's that? The lust of the eyes. And then he says, jump off this temple and then you'll float down and everybody will see you floating down. They'll be like, wow, this is the Messiah.

What's that? The pride of life. That is how Satan comes to us. He tempts us with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

And usually the lust of the flesh is sexual, sexual in nature. I want to talk a little bit about this word lust. The word lust is usually in the New Testament, it's actually a good word.

There's good lusts. You think of an athlete that practices and trains and everything. There's passions in him that want to excel.

But then there are sinful lusts. Look at 1 Peter 2. And he says in 1 Peter 2, verse 11, Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. So there are these lusts in our body and they're warring against our soul.

In Thessalonians, he says, I pray that your whole body, soul, and spirit be preserved blameless until the coming of Christ. So we have a body, we have a soul, and we have a spirit. And our soul is made up of three things.

Our mind, our will, and our emotions. And so your soul is what makes you different than every other person in the world. Your soul is who you are.

And your soul can either give in to the dictates of your flesh or of the spirit. And therein lies the test of whether you love Christ or not. Whether you want to live for him or not.

What are you going to give in to? The flesh or the spirit? We will always have a flesh that is pulling us. Pulling us towards sin. And that's what that word lust is there.

Where it talks about fleshly lusts. Let's look over at chapter 4 there in 1 Peter. Chapter 4, verse 1. Therefore, since Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind.

For he who has suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin. That we should no longer live in the rest of our time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles when we walked in lewdness, lust, drunkenness, reverence, which is partying, drinking parties, abominable idolatries.

And notice in verse 4. In regard of these, they, talking about the lost, think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation. They speak evil of you. What's that guy doing, man? He used to party with us all the time.

Why doesn't he party with us anymore? I don't get it. He's strange. Why doesn't he get a girlfriend? They think it's weird.

But notice in that verse there, it talks about these lusts. And we need to see that the initial tug isn't the sin. You're not going to be able to stop the tug, but if you give in to the tug, that's when you've crossed the line.

So, let's look at Proverbs chapter 6 real quick. We'll wrap this up. Proverbs chapter 6, verse 20.

I want to take this all now and come to a solution. Okay, Jason, I'm a loser. I've got eyes full of adultery.

I struggle with lust. What do I do? What's the solution? Okay, Proverbs chapter 6, verse 20. My son, keep your father's command and do not forsake the law of your mother.

Bind them continually upon your heart. Tie them around your neck. When you roam, they will lead you.

When you sleep, they will keep you. And when you awake, they will speak with you. For the commandment is a lamp and the law a light.

Reproofs of instruction are the ways of life. To keep you from the evil woman, from the flattering tongue of the seductress. Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her allure you with her eyelids.

For by means of a harlot, a man is reduced to a crust of bread. And an adulteress will prey upon his precious life. Can a man take fire into his bosom and his clothes not be burned? Can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be seared? So is he who goes into his neighbor's wife.

Whosoever touches her shall not be innocent. But notice here in the first verses, he's saying, to get into my word and meditate on my word and listen to my word and obey my word. Why? This is how the Bible is so practical.

To keep you from all these sins that we just talked about. This is how you can have victory over your lusts. You know, David said, Thy word, O Lord, have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against you.

When the devil came to Jesus and tempted him, what did Jesus do? He fought back with the word of God. He quoted scripture back to Satan. We need to be constantly reminded in the day and age when everyone in our culture and many even in Christianity are saying, It's okay.

You're only human. It's okay to have sex before marriage. It's okay to look.

You're just admiring, you know, there's such a justification. And there's pornography everywhere at the click of a finger. There's so much temptation.

We need to constantly read the scriptures and remind ourselves of these. Look, look at chapter seven. It's the Bible is so practical.

It's so pertinent for today. Chapter seven, verse one. My son, keep my words and treasure my commands with you.

Keep my commands and live. And my law is an apple of your eye. Bind them on your fingers.

Write them on the tablet of your heart. Say to wisdom, you are my sister and call understanding your nearest kin for that. They may keep you from the immoral woman from the seductress who flatters with her words.

For at the window of my house, I look through a lattice and saw among the simple. I perceived among youth a young man devoid of understanding passing along the streets near her corner. And he took the path to her house.

And then the twilight in the evening in the black of the dark night. And there was a woman that met him. And with the attire of a harlot and a crafty heart, she was loud and rebellious.

Her feet would not stay at her house. At times she was outside in the open square lurking at every corner. So she caught him and kissed him.

And with an impotent face, she said unto him, I've made peace offerings with me. Today I've paid my vows. So I came out to meet you diligently to seek your face.

And I found you. I have spread my bed with tapestry, colored coverings with Egyptian linen. I have perfumed my bed with mirth and aloe and cinnamon.

Come, let us take our fill of the love until the morning. Let us delight ourselves with love. For my husband is not home.

He's gone on a long journey. And he has taken a bag of money with him. And he will come home at the appointed day.

And with her enticing speech, she causes him to yield. With her flattering lips, she seduces him. Immediately he went after her as an ox goes to the slaughter as a fool to the correction of the stock.

To the arrow struck his liver. And as a bird hastens to the snare. And he did not know it would cost his life.

I mean, this is where the rubber meets the road. I mean, verse 24. Now, listen, my children, pay attention to the words of my mouth.

Do not let your heart turn aside from her to her ways. Do not stray into her paths. For she has cast down many wounded.

And she had and all who were slain by her were strong men. Her house is the way to hell. Descending into the chambers of death.

So, this is, you know, there's so many things for sake of time, we can't. But there's so many things in here that we can glean from. And that the scripture is so practical, you know, it's so real.

It's not unrealistic. He's saying, look, this is what's going to happen. This is what you're going to be tempted with.

And maybe you're not going to be tempted with it physically. Maybe this woman is a website that pops up. Bing, you know.

And, you know, that's how she's causing you to come in. Maybe it's, you know, at a coffee shop and a pretty girl walks by. You know, maybe it's not outright fornication physical.

Okay. That's where it usually ends. But it starts.

We need to get it where it starts. And that's with the eyes full of adultery. So the solution to all this is real simple.

Look at 2 Timothy. 2 Timothy chapter 2 verse 22. Flee also youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace.

And notice with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. There's your church right there. With those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Don't pursue these things with half-hearted deadwood people that, you know, just kind of think you're cool. And, you know, yeah. Pursue these things with those that call on the Lord of a pure heart and flee fornication.

And that word flee, it's the same word when Joseph, the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife. And she grabs him and she's wanting to sleep with him. And he just bolted and he left his clothes with him.

And she's standing there holding his clothes and he's running around the house, you know. And she yells rape, you know, and accuses him and he goes to jail. But he knew he did not trust himself to be alone with this woman.

And he had to get out of Dodge. And he fled the situation. And we need to flee youthful lusts.

You know, we need to make practical decisions to not put ourselves in situations where we can fall, you know, into sin. Here's another solution, Romans chapter 6. Romans chapter 6 verse 12. Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts.

And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace. And verse 14 is maybe, outside of some salvation verses, maybe the most powerful verse in the whole Bible.

Sin will not have dominion over you if you're under grace. Therein lies the message of the new covenant. God is giving his children grace.

And grace is not unmerited favor. A lot of people say it's unmerited favor. No.

Grace is God giving you the power to do his will. So he's not saying, don't do this, don't do that, don't do this, don't do that. And if you don't do all these things, then you can go to heaven.

That's not what he's saying. He's saying, yeah, all these things are sin. Don't do them.

And by the way, I'll come in you and I'll give you the ability to not give in to all these sins. It's like the battery in the Energizer bunny. As soon as you take that battery out, the bunny stops.

As soon as you put the battery back in, it goes. Grace is like that battery. As long as I'm under grace, I can overcome any sin.

You have never sinned one time being under the grace of God. It's never God's will for you to sin. Jesus said, be perfect as your father in heaven is perfect.

He didn't say, well, try to be perfect, but if you don't, it's okay. You're just a sinner. You're just human.

No. This is carnal Christianity thinking. Well, we're all just sinners, and we'll just park in Romans chapter seven.

And the things I don't want to do, I do. And the things I do, I don't want to do. I'm just a sinner.

I'll go to heaven, though. No. It's the message of victory, chapter six, verse 14.

If you are walking under God's power, he will give you supernatural ability to overcome sin. Anytime we sin, it's because we have wandered out from underneath that umbrella of grace. Or maybe God has pushed us out because he says that he resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.

So maybe I'm doing really good. I'm overcoming sin. I'm fighting the devil, the world, my lusts.

And I'm doing good. I'm reading my Bible. And then I get proud.

I make a critical statement about somebody. I judge somebody. And God says, son, you better humble yourself.

And I don't listen. And I start thinking that I'm somebody, and I start maybe despising another Christian. And then God pushes me out of that umbrella and says, well, you're going to have to learn this lesson.

And then, boom, I fall into sin. Whoa, where did that come from? I mean, I was doing so good. And I just totally fell.

And God says, I told you, you've got to resist pride. Pride is the sin that causes us to be pushed out of God's grace. And as long as we're outside of God's grace, we will sin.

The second that I am not walking under the grace of God, I am capable of the most wicked sin. You look at movies like Schindler's List and you see what the Nazis did to the Jews and taking their skin and making lampshades out of it. And you look at that and you're like, wow, that's so horrible.

I would never do that. Yes, you would. The very fact that we are here tonight on a Saturday night reading the Bible, I mean, that's the grace of God, at least for me.

I mean, I'd be out smoking pot if it wasn't for the grace of God on a Saturday night. I'd be at a strip club or something partying. It's the grace of God that we're even here now.

And so that needs to cause us to fear pride like we would fear AIDS if I had a big six-inch needle up here and it had AIDS on it. You'd be like, okay, stay away. Pride is way more dangerous than a disease because it causes us to walk outside of God's grace.

As soon as we get outside of God's grace, we no longer have the ability to overcome sin. So the main solution, you go to God and you say, God, I can't stop lusting. I can't stop pornography.

I can't stop masturbation. I struggle with my girlfriend. We try to be pure.

We try to be pure and we keep falling. God, I can't do it. Okay.

And God says in this beautiful verse in Hebrews, he says, let us come boldly before the throne of grace. This God of the universe lets me come boldly before him and say, I need grace to help me in my time of need. This is my time of need right now.

I'm getting tempted. Give me grace. And then all of a sudden, wow, I don't want to do it anymore.

And then a day goes by and God, wow, I don't want to do it. And then all of a sudden, two weeks go by. Wow, I'm doing really good.

And only when I get lifted in pride do I fall back into these sins. And so the solution is to stay humble and broken before God. Whenever I see a young brother start to get unbroken, it's just like, oh, brother, here we go.

And then two weeks later, boom, the guy falls. And it's not shocking anymore. Romans chapter 12 says that we are to present our body, a living sacrifice to God, holy and acceptable.

So go to God. The solution is go to God and say, God, I have eyes full of adultery. This table here is like an altar.

They used to have to sacrifice the bodies of animals on altar in the Old Testament. Now we are to be the sacrifice, our body, he says. Go to God in prayer and say, God, I have eyes full of adultery.

My eyes cannot cease from sin. Here, take my eyes. My mind is perverted.

I've watched so much pornography. I've given in to so much sexual immorality. My mind is perverted.

Here, take my mind. Take my hands. Take my body and present it to God.

Here, take it. Give me a new heart. Give me new eyes.

God can give you new eyes to where you can see a beautiful girl and just look at her and you're not thinking sexual anymore. Jesus, I'm sure the devil had the prettiest girls in the world happen to travel to Israel when Jesus was alive. He was probably constantly getting bombarded with babes.

He was somehow able to look at them and see them and not lust. Jesus had a flesh. He didn't have a halo around him when he was walking down here.

He was 100% God, but he was 100% man. He looked with pure eyes and a pure mind and a pure heart, and we can overcome as he overcame. If we go to him in prayer and ask him, give me the grace to do this.

Give me the grace to do this. One final verse, James 1. We looked earlier at Galatians, and it says the flesh wars against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. There's this war going on, and then he says there, he says, so if you walk in the spirit, you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Make sure that the spirit you're walking in during the course of a day is the spirit of God. You get in a bad spirit, and you'll begin to give into the flesh again. But here, James 1, final verse, verse 14.

This is the solution. Let's see here. Verse 13, let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God.

For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he himself tempt any man. But everyone is tempted when he is drawn away from his own desires and enticed. Then when the desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and sin, when it is fully grown, brings forth death.

Do not err, my beloved brethren. So here's the process. The temptation comes, and that's like, you know, an egg.

And when I give into that temptation, that's when it conceives. So the solution is don't get discouraged with the temptation. The temptation isn't the sin.

Jesus was tempted in all points like we were, Hebrews says. Jesus could have sinned. He had a body.

He could have sinned, and yet he didn't. He was tempted. Now, the temptation isn't the sin.

A lot of times people get discouraged because they're tempted. Man, I'm such a loser, you know, and that girl's over there. But did you give in? No.

Well, it's okay. Like, you were tempted. As long as it didn't conceive, you're fine.

So don't get bogged down, you know, and get all this false guilt heaped upon you because you have been tempted. And the verse I wanted to see here is in chapter 1 there in verse 21. This is the main solution.

Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your soul. God wants us to take his word and engraft it into our soul, and that's how we'll be saved. Like, you take two trees and you engraft them.

So we take these scriptures that we just looked at and we engraft them into us. We hide his word in our heart that we won't sin against him, and then by his grace we'll get victory. So I was just thinking maybe we could have a time here of just quiet meditation and prayer and just be honest before God.

You've seen the severity of this. You see how serious of an issue this is. Just seek God for victory.

The greater context here, we're talking about the church being a pure and holy people. If you have fallen into this sin 10 million times, there's still hope. I guarantee you you haven't fallen into it as much as I have in the past, growing up, my life, where I'm coming from, the things that I've experienced.

If God can give me victory, he can give anybody victory. I guarantee it. There's hope.

It's a message of hope. It's a message. God is a God of second chances.

And just go to him and ask for his mercy, and we'll just have a time of quietness and we'll close in a song.

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