

Sexual Immorality and Pornography

by Tim Conway

The sermon emphasizes the importance of addressing sexual sin and the need for Christians to put sin to death and live according to the Spirit.

Duration: 42:23

Scripture: Matthew 5:28, Matthew 13:44, Romans 6:14, Romans 8:13, Galatians 5:19, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8, 1 Peter 2:11

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Sexual Purity"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the spiritual warfare new Christians face, particularly in battling against the passions of the flesh, focusing on the destructive nature of sexual sin and the need for believers to abstain from it. The speaker highlights the importance of controlling one's body in holiness, honoring God, and avoiding sexual immorality, as it is a serious battle that can lead to soul destruction and separation from God. The message stresses the significance of genuine faith that actively fights against lust and immorality, reflecting a true intimacy with Christ and a transformed life.

Transcript

Over the last four years or so, we've seen a number of young people, same age as you folks that are visiting with us tonight. A lot of people say God has been doing things among the 18 to 30 year olds across the country it seems, and it's been no different here in San Antonio. We have seen the Lord working.

One of the things that has become apparent to me, that some of these new converts, some of these new Christians, they're all of a sudden coming into a measure of spiritual warfare that I think when they were first saved, they never anticipated. And I've heard veteran Christians talk about the fact that they came into the kingdom and they just thought it was going to be eternal fillings of the Spirit and joy and flowery beds of ease. The Christian life is a battle.

And the text, the springboard text that we've been dealing with for probably the last two months or so, comes out of 1 Peter chapter 2 verse 11. And I want to hit that text just as we get started this evening. 1 Peter 2 verse 11.

Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles, reading from the ESV, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh which wage war against your soul. There are passions of the flesh that wage war. That means there are passions that would seek to wage war and destroy your soul.

We have dealt with pride, we have dealt with worldliness, and tonight we are going to start probably three messages, this being the first, on sexual sin. Now I'll tell you this, the very nature of the subject that I want to start dealing with tonight, I don't know the background of the visitors. I know what you folks are accustomed to hearing that are part of the church.

I don't have any intention tonight to try to awe you with provocative language. But I want to tell you this, I want to be just dead honest with you. And to do that, I don't know.

I don't know what churches you guys go to, I don't know what kind of pastors you have. But sexual sin is a real deal. Sexual immorality, sexual temptation, it is huge in our day.

And it's not a subject that we want to stay quiet about. It wages war. In fact, among young people, this one takes people down.

These passions wage war against your soul, and they mean to undo you. They mean, I know I'm personifying them, I'm making them out like an enemy that actually has arms and legs and thinks. But that's the way the Bible says, that's the way the Bible speaks about them.

That's the way Peter's speaking about it. It is actually a passion, I realize these are passions that are within us. But they seek to destroy, they are against your soul.

They do battle against your soul. Something that wars against your soul means to destroy your soul. These are soul destroying passions.

And if they get you, you die. You die in your sin, you go to hell. That's just as real as that scripture.

Now we're going to look at a number of these. So I want to speak honestly to you tonight. Not graphically, but honestly.

And so, our series comes from this text in 1 Peter 2.11. The verses I want to deal with most specifically tonight come from 1 Thessalonians 4. So if you would turn there, and I just want these verses here to speak to us. 1 Thessalonians 4, I'm going to read verses 3-8. For this is the will of God, your sanctification.

The sanctification specifically that he's speaking about, the will of God specifically that he's speaking about, is that you abstain from sexual immorality. That each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor. Not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God.

That no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter because the Lord is an avenger of all these things. As we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you, for God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore, whoever disregards this, disregards not man, but God who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

Now you can see it. The words I want to deal with tonight are found right there at the beginning of verse 5. Not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God. Passion of lust.

Peter says, passions of the flesh wage war against us. Here's one of these passions of the flesh. The passion of lust.

Now just these verses, verses 3-8. I want you to help me define what passion of the lust, what is the passion of lust based on these verses. Tell me, as we seek to establish a definition, you tell me what is

true of the passion of lust based on these verses.

Lust. What's true of sexual lust? The passion of lust based on, what's Paul saying here? What's he telling the Thessalonians? What's true of it? If we're seeking a definition, uncontrol. There's a thing.

See he sets this passion of lust, which he accuses the Gentiles of being guilty of, over against control. So it's losing control in a sexual way. Basically control has the idea of keeping myself within bounds.

Keeping myself constrained. Keeping myself from overstepping. Or he actually uses the word transgress.

To transgress means to step over. There's a boundary there. Control keeps me within the boundary.

I lose control. I go out of it. What else does it tell us? You don't know God.

Let me tell you. This world gone crazy after sex. This is one of the key characteristics of the lost world.

This is an evidence you don't know God. Now listen, if that surprises you, it should not if you know your Bibles. Again, Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter 6 and verse 9. He says don't be deceived.

And the first thing he deals with fornicators, adulterers, sexual immoral, homosexuals, impure. They do not inherit the kingdom of heaven. And you know why he says don't be deceived? We've got spiritual people running all over the place that think, well I go to church, I own a Bible.

And all the time that Bible they own is telling them, if you're involved in sexual immorality, you will not inherit the kingdom of heaven. What else does it tell us is true about the passion of lust? It's being out of control. It's a disregard of God.

Can I tell you what the real issue is? Those who are given to the passion of lust have no regard for God. That's basically it. What's something else that's true there? The Lord will avenge.

Anything else? Defraud a brother. Definitely a sin against others. Let me tell you two words that nobody's thrown out yet.

Holiness and honor. And the passion of lust is contrary to both. Honor.

When a young man, young woman, doesn't matter if they're young or older, but I'll tell you this. When sexual passions are given over to, it is a complete dishonoring. It's no regard, as we've already heard, there's no regard for God, but there is total dishonor.

Listen ladies, you know what a man is saying to you, who wants to have sex with you, but does not want to marry you? He's saying, I want to use your body for my own gratification, but I don't want you. I don't want all of you. I don't want a commitment with you.

I just want to gratify myself with you. It's not really you I want. And you can't get around that reality.

A man who will not make a covenant commitment to you, but wants pleasure with you. He doesn't love you. He dishonors you.

His motives are totally impure and dishonorable. He doesn't really want you. He will tell you he does, but then ladies, you dishonor yourselves.

Because you're willing to give him your body, for the sake of that pleasure, in the hopes of satisfying your own emotional desires. Your own desire to be loved. Your own desire for affection.

And you just cheapen that whole thing. And the thing is, he'll tell you anything that he thinks you want to hear, to get you to where you're going to be willing to go that way. It's totally dishonorable.

It's totally the opposite of holiness. Holiness is a people set apart. It is God setting apart a people.

Jesus setting apart a people. A people of His own, who are dedicated to good, and to good works, to purity, to being set apart for Him. So it's dishonorable.

It is a disregard for God. I'll tell you, this is right where it's at. People who give way to their sexual lusts, they totally disregard God.

And you know, don't think, well there is such a prevalent thinking, well the Lord knows I love her. Or the Lord knows we're in love. The Lord knows we mean to get married.

Have you never read Ephesians chapter 5, or Colossians chapter 3? It says, for these things the wrath of God is coming. This is not a thing He's pleased with. He designed marriage to be a picture of His Son, and His Son's relationship to the church.

And when you defile it, it is such a thing that brings wrath from Him, that He will destroy you. That's why Paul is saying, He is an avenger. What does avenger mean? It means He's going to bring punishment.

He does not take kindly to it. He does not say, well I understand ladies, that you're seeking affection. Or, I understand men, you just need an outlet.

That's not what He says. It's a lack of control. It's a disregard for God.

It is a dishonoring of our bodies. Brethren, it's a serious thing. It is a serious thing.

And I'll tell you this, it is not just the act. Now hear me very well, and listen, I want you all to hear me. Because what I'm about to say, some of you are no doubt going to misunderstand, and misinterpret.

But I want to show you, that what I'm saying, comes straight from the Bible. Jesus said it. So I don't want anybody going out here today, and saying, well I don't believe what that guy believes.

I don't know why we came to this study. Because I, look, I'm not here to set any agenda of my own. I want you to hear what the Lord says.

The Lord says in Matthew chapter 5, and if you have your Bibles, you should look at this. This is serious stuff. Matthew chapter 5, verse 28.

You see brethren, when I say that this is a disregard for God, and Paul says, people who are given to these passions like this, know not God. He's not just saying, well, you see the Gentiles don't know God, and this characterizes their life, and so when you do this, you're just acting like them. He's saying, if you do this, and you're given to this, you are one of them.

That's why he's saying, God is an avenger. He's coming for you. This is serious.

And Jesus says, it's not only the act. Now listen to this. Matthew 5, verse 28.

I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent, has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Okay. So what? Everybody does that.

I mean, I talk to all these professing Christians around me, and I know they struggle with it, and so we all struggle with it. After all, wretched man that I am, and the things I want to do, I just can't find myself doing them, and the evil I don't want to do, is what I find myself doing, and I look around, and I see all these folks around me, and they struggle with the same thing, so certainly it must be okay with all of us. Have you never read, Jesus said, few there be that find it, the broad way, is the religious way.

Just because you may sit in a church, where you've got a bunch of other people, that fail and fall to the same thing, doesn't make you safe. You're only safe, when you're in a category, where Jesus says you're safe. And Jesus does not say, if that's true in your life, you're safe.

Listen, numbers don't bring safety. Truth brings safety. What God says in His word, is where you want to stand.

You'll easily go to hell, with the crowd, if you think numbers bring safety. Jesus said, many are going to say to me, in that day, Lord, Lord, and He's going to say, I never knew you. So don't trust in the numbers, when Jesus Himself says many.

The crowds folks, in that day, are going to find out, Jesus never knew them. Listen, let me tell you this, where you are, with sexual passions, has literally, everything to say, about whether your Christianity, is true or not. Jesus says, you've committed adultery, in your heart, if you've only had lustful thoughts, lustful intents.

Now listen to what He says right after. He's talking about a man, using his eyes, to look at a woman, and lust, and then He says immediately, if your right eye, causes you to sin, tear it out, and throw it away, for it is better, that you lose one of your members, than that your whole body, be thrown into hell. Let me tell you what Jesus is saying, and you can't twist these words, to mean anything else.

If you are involved, in sexual sin, internet pornography, illicit, sexual immorality, Jesus says, you cut it off, or you will go to hell. This is life and death. You say, wait a second, what is this? I thought we were saved by faith.

Oh, you better believe we are. But if your faith, is such a faith, that does not produce, the kind of hand cutting off, eye gouging out, foot cutting off, Christianity, then it is not a faith that will save you. No way, no how.

That's what Jesus is saying in all this. Listen to this. If your right eye causes you to sin, and tear it out and throw it away, it is better for you, that you lose one of your members, than that your whole body be thrown into hell.

If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. And of course, He is speaking illustratively here. He is saying, that thing in your life, that causes you to stumble, you need to get rid of it.

Forsake it, repent of it, cut it off, no matter how radical it is, you need to get rid of it. And if your faith is not capable of that, it is not a faith that is going to save you. Listen, have you never read, James says, the demons believe, but they are not saved.

Faith, that does not produce, an all out battle, against sexual immorality, is a faith that will not save you. And I have that on the authority, of the Word of God. Like I say, I have not come here tonight, to set forth my own opinions in this matter.

This is exactly what Jesus says. Jesus says, heaven and hell are at stake. Listen, if you have got the kind of faith, that allows you to go on, looking at internet pornography, being involved in masturbation, and all sorts of sexually illicit things.

We have got any young men, and young ladies here, living in sexual immorality, and you are claiming to be a Christian. You need to go back to the beginning. You need to start all over.

You need to repent from the beginning. You need to turn from it. You need to cry out to Christ, to save you from your wickedness, save you from your sin, save you.

Heaven and hell are at stake. Isn't that exactly, what Peter is telling us? These things, wage war, against the soul. Heaven and hell, are at stake.

And unless your faith, is able to take you through this battle, and battle, saving faith, is sin killing faith. Saving faith, is lust killing faith. Saving faith, is warring faith.

Make no mistake about it. Let's not mince words. This is what scripture says.

These things, wage war, against your soul. In other words, if you cave to them, if you give place to them, if you don't fight, gouge out, cut off, do battle, all out battle, not in your own power. If, by the Spirit, you put to death, the deeds of the body, you will live.

That comes right out of Romans 8.13. Life and death, you will live, if by the Spirit, you put these to death. I want to be honest with you. I don't want there to be anybody here, any young people here, any older people here.

You're involved, in sexual immorality. And it may just be up here. Your mind, is full of perversity.

You think, sexually illicit, profane thoughts, unholy thoughts. Your eyes are where they ought not to be, all the time. You have struggles, and you can't overcome.

Listen, Jesus says, or Paul said this, Romans 6.14, He said, Sin, shall not have, dominion over you. If you're, under grace, not under the law. If you've truly been saved, by grace, sin, will no longer have, dominion.

Let me tell you this, Sinners, I mean wicked ones, full of all sorts of sexual immorality, all sorts of perversity, they can come to Christ, and find, full and abundant, pardon. It is called justification. The sinner, comes, with a horrible, guilty record.

And God, washes that record clean, by faith. But let me tell you something, if your idea about being saved, stops there, you've got it wrong. Because wherever God comes in, and justifies a guilty sinner, pardons them, by the blood of Christ, and the work of atonement, that Christ did on that cross.

He will also, break the dominion of sin. This is the greatest, outward manifestation, to whether you've truly been justified. Here's the thing, I can't see your spiritual record.

I don't know if it's clean. You don't see mine. I don't know if you're forgiven.

It's not stamped on my forehead, or on yours. See, this is what the Bible says. Don't, be, deceived.

Many, are deceived. What are they deceived about? Oh, you've got people all over the place. Well, I believe, I said the sinner's prayer, I walked the aisle, I went to the altar, I had that experience at camp one time, I did this, I did that, I read my Bible, I went to church.

And the Bible, the whole time is saying, if your life is not radically transformed, where the power of sin is broken, don't be deceived. The reality, of a clean record, is not there, if there is not indication of a transformed heart. Unless, your approach, to sex, has at some point become radically changed, unless your uncleanness, and impurity, at some point, I mean practically speaking, has not radically been altered, and the power of sin broken, don't be deceived.

Don't, look, the legal reckoning, has not taken place, unless practically, your life has been transformed, by the power of God. It's so evident in Scripture. Listen to this, Romans 8.13 says this, If you live, according to the flesh, you, will, die.

You say, what's it mean to live according to the flesh? Well, in Galatians 5.19 Paul says, the works of the flesh are evident. What's the first one in the list? Sexual immorality. What's the second one? Impurity.

Third one, sensuality. I mean, the first three, hit right at the heart of this. And he says this, If you live according to that, you will die.

But somebody's gonna come along and say, yeah, but I was saved by faith. What are you saying? Now, if I fall into the sexual sin, I lose my salvation? No, that's not what I'm saying at all. I'm saying your salvation was never real in the beginning.

I'm saying it wasn't true. I'm saying whatever you thought it was, it was not biblical salvation. Listen, many people come to Jesus on judgment day and say, Lord, Lord, didn't we do this? Didn't we do that? And he says, I never knew you.

You workers of lawlessness. Or workers of iniquity. You see, if the power of lawlessness and the power of iniquity was never broken in your life, it's the greatest testimony.

Jesus never knew you. If you live according to the flesh, you will die. But, if by the Spirit, oh, not in your own strength, but in the power of the cross, the power of the Spirit of God, unleashed by faith in Christ, if by that supernatural transforming, regenerating, bringing from death to life kind of power, if by that power you put these things to death, listen, I'm not saying this, I'm not saying the first day you truly believe that there is never a struggle, never a temptation, and never a battle.

Listen, when it says they wage war against you, what it means is from the first day to the last on this earth. You are in all out battle against it. You are gouging, you are killing, you are waging war, you are putting to death by the power of the Spirit.

It's all out battle. Look, some people misunderstand and they say, oh, so when you become a Christian, basically, sin no longer has dominion, in other words, it all just stops. No, when it says it doesn't have dominion, it means it won't dominate you.

It doesn't mean it won't wage war against you and you'll have to fight for everything you're worth in the power of the Spirit. No, it'll be all out. Will we fall? There'll be days you'll fall, but it's war and you will gain ground, you may come upon the battlefield and you may fall, but you're going to take the field, you're going to move forward, you're going to advance.

That sin cannot dominate you. You will move forward. There's no such thing as saving faith, true faith, God-given faith, real get-me-to-heaven faith that does not wage all-out battle against the passion of lust.

And listen, in the power of the cross there is power to overcome. There is. It is not a hopeless battle, but if you're in chains, you've just never been able to break away.

No matter what has happened, you just find yourself a slave. Slaves of sin are not slaves of Christ. Call upon the Lord while He may be found.

There is power there. There is sin-killing power to be cured. Folks, what I'm saying is this, this battle is not optional.

And there are a lot of folks today, you know what? There's a lot of folks today that basically think this, well hey, all I've got to do is believe, and I'm in. As far as my sanctification, well that's kind of optional. You know, the more good I do, the more reward I'll get.

But after all, I was saved by faith. So yeah, I'm still sleeping with my boyfriend, but you can't judge me, judge not, unless you be judged. Oh no, Jesus can judge you.

And God is the avenger, and He will avenge against you. And when He says that those that are given to the passions of lust know not God, when Jesus says it's better you gouge out an eye than you land yourself in hell, they can say that. They are in the place to judge that.

And that's exactly what they say. You don't want to play games here. You don't want to play any games.

This battle is not optional. Listen, mark it down. There is no faith that saves from God's wrath, if it does not save you from the power of sexual immorality.

Mark it down. The sexually immoral know not God. Listen.

Listen to me very carefully here. Because this is the heart of the matter. The sexually immoral know not God.

That's what Paul said there in 1 Thessalonians 4. Did he not? Did you guys see that? They know not God. You say, well I know about God. No, that's not what it says.

It doesn't say that they don't know about God. It says they don't know God. There is a big difference.

Jesus said in Matthew 7, when they said, Lord, Lord, Lord, Lord, He said, I never knew you. Jesus knew all about them. Because He calls them Wallace.

He knew all about them. He didn't know them. You say, what's the difference? Oh, to know about somebody is to know facts.

To know in the Biblical sense Adam knew Eve and she conceived. Very intimate. When Jesus knows somebody remember Ephesians 5 when He knows somebody that's His bride.

That's His church. That's His body. Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church.

He knows the church intimately. They know not God. It means they have no intimacy.

They disregard Him. They dishonor Him. They don't know Him.

Those of you that know your Bibles in Matthew 13 verse 44 you know what you have a picture of there? A man who's walking through a field and he finds a treasure that is so valuable that he goes and he sells all that he has that he might have that treasure. Can I tell you what this knowing is all about? It's when a man comes to know that he has discovered a treasure that is worth more than anything else. And he doesn't disregard it.

He knows. He's convinced. I want this more than anything else.

You see when a guy comes along and he's willing to dishonor a young lady disregard God he has never found it's one of the greatest indications he's never found Christ to be more valuable than anything else. You know what happens to a person who finds Christ and knows I mean he sees and knows what he's found for real. He will go and sell all including his sexual immorality.

He will say I want that more than I want that girl. I want that more than sexual pleasure. I want that.

Listen, just mark this down. There is a big difference between the passion of lust and sexual desire. Sexual desire channeled into the marriage bed is honorable.

We're talking about that which is immoral. And a man will set aside all that disregards Christ when he finds Christ to be more beautiful. Listen, this is the heart of the matter.

When a man or a woman when they find Christ when they see in Him glory and beauty, when they say yes, I want that more than anything else and I don't want to do anything that grieves Him. I don't want to do anything that separates yes, I have sexual desire but my desire for Him is more. And so I'm going to stay controlled.

Lord, help me to stay controlled. I don't want to dishonor You. And I don't want to do anything that breaks my fellowship with You.

I have found You to be altogether lovely. And my heart wants You. It yearns for You.

It calls to You. I want to go hard after God. I want to find You.

I want to meet with You. I want to live my life for You. I want... You are my all.

And I am willing to sell all to have You. When it says they know not God, it means they've never come there. If your Christianity has not made you fall in love with Jesus Christ, you don't know Him and He doesn't know you.

That doesn't mean things are hopeless. That just means what you have is not the real thing. All.

When a man finds Christ to be the treasure of all treasures, he will not hold on to anything else. Listen, when somebody falls in love with Christ, the fear of hell is a very real fear and Jesus appeals to it. It's better for you to amputate than to wind up in hell.

But when you come to know Christ and know Him intimately and to fall in love with Him, the greatest grief is not the terror of hell. The greatest grief becomes offending the one you love. Falling out of fellowship with Christ.

Having Him withdraw. Having Him not smile on you anymore. Offending Him.

Oh brethren, how many of us once God saved us, we stumbled into some sexual immorality and the greatest grief was not oh no, now I'm going to go to hell. The tears ran because we knew we offended the Lord. After everything He's done for us on that cross, after everything He's endured, the Son of God was acquainted with grief and affliction on my behalf.

And here I went and did this. We hang our head in sorrow because of His great love for us and the fact that we would count His love as such a cheap thing and do this. Oh if you know Christ, I mean if you deeply know Christ, you know God, you love God, you have found the glory of God just shines in the face of Jesus Christ.

And you have once looked at that and said yes, yes, that's what I want. It's not a light manner to sit down in front of a computer and masturbate in front of pornography. It's hard for a man to do that when he's thinking how can I go into the secret place tonight and commune with Christ? He won't be there after I've done this.

It doesn't become a light manner. I'm telling you this is the real deal. And if the faith you have doesn't produce this, it's not worth having.

It isn't. It's all out battle. All out battle.

Because of the one we love. All out battle. Because we no longer disregard God, we have regard for Him.

We have regard for His laws. We have regard for the way He's made us. We have regard for sex.

It's good within the confines of the marriage bed. And outside of that, it's defiled. Totally perversion of how God designed it to be.

Well, this is our first visit to this subject. I think this is the heart of the matter.

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