

# PURITY

WINNING THE BATTLE  
IN A PERVERSE WORLD

JIM BERG

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# SESSION 1

## Biblical Morality, Part 1

How can we safeguard our families in a culture that constantly streams immorality to us through movies, music, and immodest dress? How can we teach modesty and purity to our children? How can we overcome the pull of pornography and immorality ourselves? How can we become men of moral courage who win the respect of our families and have an impact upon a corrupt world? How can we understand and minister to the homosexual and to the sexually addicted? These are questions for us to consider in these sessions together.

Though this seminar is not rated PG-13, it is strongly recommended that a father give some “parental guidance” in these areas as is appropriate for his son’s maturity level beginning in his early teen years. These principles should equip father and son to have some serious discussions regarding purity and godliness.

### Sex is God’s Idea

1. Through the years, some have had the wrong idea. Ruth Smythers who was the wife of Reverend L. D. Smythers wrote a treatise in 1894 entitled, ***Instruction and Advice for the Young Bride on the Conduct and Procedure of the Intimate and Personal Relationships of the Marriage State for the Greater Spiritual Sanctity of This Blessed Sacrament and the Glory of God.***<sup>1</sup>

*To the sensitive young woman who has had the benefits of proper upbringing, the wedding day is ironically, both the happiest and the most terrifying day of her life. On the positive side, there is the wedding itself, in which the bride is the central attraction in a beautiful and inspiring ceremony, symbolizing her triumph in securing a male to provide for all her needs for the rest of her life. On the negative side, there is the wedding night, during which the bride must “pay the piper,” so to speak, by facing for the first time the terrible experience of sex.*

*At this point, dear reader, let me concede one shocking truth. Some young women actually anticipate the wedding night ordeal with curiosity and pleasure! Beware such an attitude! A selfish and sensual husband can easily take advantage of such a bride. One cardinal rule of marriage must never be forgotten: GIVE LITTLE, GIVE SELDOM, AND ABOVE ALL, GIVE GRUDGINGLY. Otherwise what could have been a proper marriage could become an orgy of sexual lust.*

*On the other hand, the bride’s terror need not be extreme. While sex is at best revolting and at worst rather painful, it has to be endured, and has been by women since the beginning of time, and is compensated for by the monogamous home and by the children produced through it.*

Perhaps this article is fictitious, but even if it is not authentic, there have been times in history when this has been the view.

2. More recently, the world has been infected with Hugh Hefner’s Playboy philosophy of “sexual pleasure for the sake of pleasure.” He set out to create an ethic that would permit recreational sex—sex as a form of “play” (hence, *Playboy*); sex as a form of entertainment.
3. Rising above both of these perversions of sex—grudging sex within marriage and recreational sex with a “playmate”—is the wonderful biblical truth of a joyful celebration of unity and an exhilarating experience of pleasure within the covenant of marriage. Notice God’s viewpoint in Proverbs 5:15-19.

*Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. [Should] thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets? Let them be only thine own, and not strangers’ with thee. Let thy fountain be blessed; and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.*

<sup>1</sup> Ruth Smythers, “Instruction and Advice for the Young Bride,” *The Madison Institute Newsletter*, Fall 1894, copyright 1894 by The Madison Institute (New York: Spiritual Guidance Press).

In addition, God has written an entire book celebrating the delight and fulfillment of marital love and sexual expression in the Song of Solomon. Clearly God is very positive about marital sex.

4. By the way, notice how God talks about sex in both the Song of Solomon and in this passage in Proverbs 5. He does so in such a way—through beautiful yet veiled poetic expression—that He protects the discreteness and honor of married sex. There is nothing crass, vulgar, defiling, or crude in God’s narratives about sex. He does not avoid the topic but rather deals with it with dignity and restraint. We as believers must take our cue from God for our speech as well.
5. God’s intention, according to Proverbs 5, is that every married couple experience really good sex—and not just on their honeymoon or on special weekends together. His command according to 1 Corinthians 7 is that their sexual experience be ongoing throughout their entire marriage and that they refrain from it only under special circumstances.

## Our Pornographic Culture

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1. Maggie Gallagher in her book *Enemies of Eros* says,

*A pornographic culture is not one in which pornographic materials are published and distributed. A pornographic culture is one which accepts the ideas about sex on which pornography is based.*<sup>2</sup>

2. Any honest person can look around him and see that something is drastically wrong with the moral behavior of our world.

*Eighty-one percent of Americans believe the country’s moral values are getting worse—a record high in an annual Gallup Values and Beliefs Survey.*<sup>3</sup>

*By 12th grade, more than 60 percent of teenagers have had sex at least once, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Eighty-four out of every 1,000 girls 15-19 will become pregnant. The CDC estimates that 19 million cases of sexually transmitted diseases occur each year. Almost half the cases occur in people ages 15-24.*<sup>4</sup>

*Pornography is the No. 1 Internet industry.*<sup>5</sup>

*A comprehensive two-year study by Alexa Research, a leading Web intelligence and traffic-measurement service, revealed “sex” was the most popular term for which people searched. According to their online searching habits, people wanted “sex” more than they wanted “games,” “music,” “travel,” “jokes,” “cars,” “jobs,” “weather,” and “health” combined.*<sup>6</sup>

3. Any honest person looking inside himself can also see that he has been corrupted more than he would like to admit by the increasingly prevalent wickedness around him.

Only by returning to God’s Word and to God Himself can we hope to reclaim the joy and fulfillment which God intended for man when He created him a sexual being. We, therefore, must look biblically at sex and honestly consider the lifestyle implications for us from the truths of scripture.

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2 Maggie Gallagher, *Enemies of Eros: How the Sexual Revolution is Killing Families, Marriage, and Sex and What We Can Do About It* (Chicago: Bonus Books, 1989), p. 252 as quoted in Robert H. Bork, *Slouching Toward Gomorrah* (New York: Regan Books, 1996), 139.

3 *World Magazine*, June 10, 2006, p. 73.

4 *Ibid.* p. 28.

5 Rebecca Haeglin, *Home Invasion: Protecting Your Family In a Culture That’s Gone Stark Raving Mad* (Nashville: Nelson Current, 2005), 4 (quoting the Internet Filter Review).

6 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

## The Sexual Revolution

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1. When viewing historically the philosophies that prepared the stage of Western civilization for the moral decline, several broad movements come to mind. Certainly the reaction of romanticism to rationalism produced many themes that resonated in the counter-cultural movements of the Sixties.

Fueled by the Romantic assumption of “autonomous individualism” and by Darwinism, Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood and an early advocate of birth control, was one of the early architects of the sexual revolution and wrote several books as early as 1927 outlining her worldview. Nancy Pearcey summarized Sanger’s influence this way.<sup>7</sup>

*Sanger was a committed Darwinist, a champion of Social Darwinism and eugenics, which was very much in vogue in the early part of the twentieth century. Her goal was to construct a “scientific” approach to sexuality based squarely on Darwinism.*

*Sanger portrayed the drama of history as a struggle to free our bodies and minds from the constraints of morality—what she called the “cruel morality of self-denial and sin.” She touted sexual liberation as “the only method” to find “inner peace and security and beauty.” She even offered it as the way to overcome social ills: “Remove the constraints and prohibitions which now hinder the release of the inner energies [her euphemism for sexual energies], [and] most of the larger evils of society will perish.”*

*Finally, Sanger offered this sweeping messianic promise: “Through sex, mankind will attain the great spiritual illumination which will transform the world, and light up the only path to an earthly paradise.”*

*[Sanger believed] it is Christianity, with its repressive morality, that prevents people from finding their true sexual identity, which is the core of their being—and this in turn causes all sorts of other dysfunctions. Sanger condemned “the ‘moralists’ who preach abstinence, self-denial, and repression.”*

2. One of the best portraits of the counter-cultural revolution of the 1960’s comes from Charles A. Reich in 1970. He wrote a manifesto for the movement and called it *The Greening of America*<sup>8</sup>. The blurb on the front cover reads,

*There is a revolution coming. It will not be like revolutions of the past. It will originate with the individual and the culture, and it will change the political structure only as its final act. It will not require violence to succeed, and it cannot be successfully resisted by violence. This is the revolution of the new generation.*

3. Reich’s observations and predictions were right on target. But while there is much to be gained by studying our history, the Bible gives us an even more seminal understanding of the forces at work.

- a. Ephesians 2:2

*Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world [the spirit of this age], according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now [energizes] the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our [lifestyle] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature children of wrath, even as others.*

- b. Ephesians 4:17-19

*This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness [hardness] of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto [sensuality], to work [every kind of impurity] with greediness.*

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<sup>7</sup> Nancy R. Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2004), 143-144.

<sup>8</sup> Charles A. Reich, *The Greening of America* (New York: Bantam Books, 1970).

## The Path of Moral Disintegration

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**Step 1 is Unbelief**—the rejection of what is known to be true about God.

*When they knew God, they glorified him not as God (Romans 1:21).*

*(NASV) For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie. (Romans 1:25).*

*They did not like to retain God in their knowledge (Romans 1:28).*

Immorality can thrive only in a spiritual vacuum. That is true for the culture as well as for individuals that make up the culture. Bible reading and prayer had to be removed from public discourse before sensuality could flourish. The neglect of those spiritual disciplines is a precursor for personal moral failure as well. Step 1 is unbelief—not “retaining God in their knowledge.”

**Step 2 is Discontent**—the inherent dissatisfaction with life when God is not in the picture

*Neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations (1:21).*

They imagined that they needed something other than God to bring satisfaction. We will look at this in more detail when we look at Solomon’s experiences.

**Step 3 is Impurity**—they turned to unlawful—and eventually, unnatural—sexual practices to make them feel energized and alive.

*God also gave them up to [impurity] through the lusts of their own hearts (1:24).*

*God gave them up unto vile affections [degrading passions] (1:26).*

*God gave them over to a [depraved] mind, to do those things which are not [fitting] (1:28).*

Sex naturally makes a man feel more “alive and real and fulfilled” than just about any other human experience. That feeling of being “alive and real and fulfilled” holds unusual power and appeal to a man who is “alienated from the life of God”—whether he be lost or a believer out of fellowship with God.

Without a continual dose of the “life of God,” every man is a sucker for anything that makes him feel “alive and real and fulfilled.” Illicit sex is even more tantalizing because it injects even more energy and adrenaline into the equation through the pursuit, the secrecy, and the conquest. The combination is a powerful stimulant that seems almost overpowering because of what it offers.

This is an important concept to understand because the appeal of sex is not just the physical pleasure and release, but an experience that initially makes a man feel “alive and real and fulfilled.” Coupled with a satisfying relationship with the Creator and with a spiritually-minded spouse, it delivers a “foretaste of glory divine” that brings an exhilarating satisfaction and joy. Removed from that context, it breeds a fiery appetite that destroys the vessel in which it burns.

The result of this decline in Romans 1 from unbelief to discontent to impurity is a culture that is . . .

*filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, [and] maliciousness, [it will be] full of envy, murder, [strife], deceit, [malice]; [they will be] [gossips], backbiters, haters of God, [insolent], proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenantbreakers [untrustworthy], without natural affection, implacable, [and] unmerciful. (Romans 1:29-31)*

We are there.

# The Ethics of the New Morality

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- **Morality** – a code of conduct that *describes* what is right and wrong
- **Ethic** – a foundational value that *determines* what is right and wrong

When God was rejected the culture experimented with several other ethics. And it is here that we must look into the mirror and ask ourselves, do we see anything of our own likeness in these counterfeit ethics which drive our culture today.

Remember that in Romans 1 the decline started when they rejected God and exchanged what they knew about God for a lie. You and I can do the same today. Bondage always starts with a lie.

There are many flavors to the lie. When a large group of people believe the same lie, that society changes. This is how we got where we are. Let's look at several flavors of the prevailing lies that form the ethics of the current culture.

## 1. **Pleasure Ethic** – “It is right if it feels good.”

- **Pleasure** is regarded as the highest value.

A man living by the Pleasure Ethic does not see God in the picture at all. He just knows it feels good, and since being “authentic”—true to himself—is the Holy Grail, he indulges. He becomes no better than an animal living by its natural instincts. An animal breeds whenever it is in heat and does so with no shame—even in public. It is the ethic of raw hedonism.

- “How can anything be wrong that feels so good?”
- “Didn’t God make me to experience these pleasures? This is only natural. I cannot deny what I feel and what I am, can I?”
- “God wouldn’t give me these desires and then forbid me from experiencing them, would He?”

Pleasure as the defining ethic is promoted by an entertainment-driven culture that encourages self-indulgence, excess, chaos, sensuality, and partying.<sup>9</sup> The “how can it be wrong when it feels so right” ethic has been the ruling principle since the start of The Sexual Revolution.

God clearly spells out the ethic of the world in 1 Peter 4:3.

*(NASV) For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries.*

## 2. **Affection Ethic** – “It is right if we both love each other.”

- **Romantic love** is regarded as the highest value.

This ethic is a refined extension of the previous one. The Pleasure Ethic can be downright animalistic. This one seems far nobler because ostensibly the motive is nobler.

- “How can anyone deny us this expression of what we feel so strongly for each other? That wouldn’t be right. We have to be true to ourselves and to each other, and we are in love.”

## 3. **Consensus Ethic** – “It is right if we agree.”

- **The will of the group** is regarded as the highest value.

This ethic relies upon the collective conscience of the group to determine what is right and wrong. It can be expressed informally by an unmarried couple who has decided to live together or by the formal vote of a nation to permit abortion. This is the ethic underlying the practice of “hooking up,” prostitution, abortion, peer-pressure, and postmodernism.

- “We are consenting adults, so this is ok.”
- “We all voted on it, and since it is now law, it is permissible.”
- “Everybody is doing it, so what’s wrong with it?”

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<sup>9</sup> Don’t underestimate the power of electronic-gaming, sports, television programming, music, movies, advertising, and the internet as primary means of creating pleasure-oriented, self-indulgent Christians today.

#### 4. The Ethic of the Bible – “It is right because God said it.”

- *God and, therefore, what He says* is regarded as the highest value.

A tragic thing happened in the early part of the twentieth century. American civilization had had a semblance of morality that was based upon a biblical ethic coming out of the Protestant Reformation. Our country’s founding fathers operated from a belief that all of life must be rooted in what God has said.

Subsequent generations followed their morality, but eventually lost the biblical ethic behind the morality. In the 1960’s a generation came along that challenged the morality, and the culture had no defense against the new morality being promoted. The biblical ethic had been lost or rejected.

This can happen in our homes and churches. We can attempt to hang on to a morality—a code of conduct—that we believe is right, but unless we can and do articulate the biblical ethic behind it, the next generation will throw off moral standards and establish a morality more in line with any one of the popular ethics around them.

### Check Your Commitment

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So, are you committed to a biblical ethic that says, “Whatever the Bible says is so.” Is God’s Word your final authority?

Do you believe that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is [therefore] profitable for doctrine?” Does your heart affirm, “If God said it, that settles it; I believe it and will obey it”? Or do you see your own rationalization in the cultural ethics we have just surveyed?

And then furthermore, do you know what God said? How attentively do you listen to preaching? How regularly do you study the Bible for yourself? How often and enthusiastically do you teach it to your children? Can you really say that you have a biblical ethic—a biblical foundation for what you say is right and wrong?

This is where we must start. There must be a commitment to a biblical ethic: “It is right because God said it.” Will you say at the start of this conference, “If God shows me that something is right or wrong from His Word in this conference, I will embrace what God says as my ethic and with God’s help will obey it?”

We do not just need more information for us to consider. We need more commitment to whatever God says. We must reassert the ethics of the Bible and reestablish a biblical morality upon what the Bible says.



# SESSION 2

## Biblical Morality, Part 2

In this session we want to discover the biblical view of sex from God's own words. From them we can determine some basic principles that should guide our thinking on this topic. Remember again, that we must be committed to the belief that God's Word is the final authority. We must affirm that, "Whatever the Bible says is so." "If God said it, that settles it; I believe it and will obey it."

### Sex has Parameters

1. The main principle is that **biblically moral sex is an exclusive activity between one man and one woman within the covenant of marriage.**

- a. Exodus 20:14

*Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

- b. In Matthew 19:4-6 Jesus restates God's intentions about marriage from Genesis 2:24.

*Have you not read, that [God] which made them at the beginning made them male and female [a heterosexual pair], and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife [monogamous pair]: and they [two] shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more [two], but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder [permanent pair].*

- c. Hebrews 13:4

*(KJV) Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*

*(NASV) Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*

- d. 1 Corinthians 6:13-20

*(NASV) Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, "The two shall be one flesh." But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.*

Any sexual activity outside of marriage is immoral and is a desecration of the temple. It prostitutes the Christian's body (i.e., perverts the use God intended).

2. Allowance for sexual activity outside of marriage is a characteristic of false teaching (2 Peter 2:10, 18-22; Jude 4, 7-8).

### Sex is a Package

1. Sex is not a single action of intercourse. It is rather a package of behaviors that was designed by God to culminate in intercourse. Jesus clearly taught in Matthew 5:27-28 that even sexually-oriented thoughts about woman are immoral outside of marriage.

*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you. That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

2. Since all sexual stimulation is designed by God to prepare the minds and bodies of the married couple for the act of intercourse, any bodily movement, speech, fantasizing, touching, kissing, fondling, reading, and viewing which is sexually stimulating to those outside of the marriage covenant is unrighteous.

The main principle from this teaching of Jesus is that if you cannot righteously have intercourse with that person—real or imaginary—because he or she is not your heterosexual, monogamous spouse, you have no business starting the process—even in your mind.

God's standard is simple: "no fornication" and "no lust."

3. 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

*Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from [sexual immorality]: That every one of you should know how to possess his [body] in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of [passion], even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no man [transgress] and [wrong] his brother in any matter<sup>10</sup>: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us to [impurity], but [to sanctification]. He therefore that [disregards this, disregards] not man, but God who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit.*

4. Everyone must be pure. Purity for singles means *abstinence* from any part of the package. Purity for married couples is *faithfulness*—(i.e., abstinence from any part of the package with anyone except your spouse).

## The Implications for Speech

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1. Since God intended sexual expression to be reserved for a man and a woman in marriage, He forbids speech laced with sexual overtones outside the marriage context. Even inside marriage, it must reflect the dignity with which God bestows sexual relations. It must not be crude and insensitive.

2. Ephesians 5:1-12

*Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. But [immorality], and all [impurity], or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as [is proper] for saints; [Let there be no] filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor [twisted joking], which are not [fitting]: but rather [let there be] giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no [immoral, nor impure] person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (for the fruit of the Spirit is [seen] in all [sorts of] goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is [disgraceful] even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.*

3. Consider also God's example of how He speaks of excretory and menstrual functions in the Bible. When necessary to do so, He speaks of them with the same discretion with which He speaks of sexual matters. They all speak of nakedness in some manner, and the same standard of privacy and dignity applies to them all.

- a. Deuteronomy 23:12-14 (excretory instructions for Israel in the wilderness)

*(NASV) Ye shall also have a place outside the camp and go out there, and ye shall have a spade among your tools, and it shall be when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it and shall turn to cover up your excrement. Since the Lord your God walks in the midst of your camp to deliver you and to defeat your enemies before you, therefore your camp must be holy; and He must not see anything indecent among you or He will turn away from you.*

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<sup>10</sup> By illicitly taking another man's wife or daughter. Here the immorality is seen, not only as an offence against God and the woman, but also to the male authority in her life.

- b. By using crude language ourselves or participating in crude practical jokes, and allowing these in our homes, we are desensitizing ourselves and our families to the dignity and discretion God expects us to have with matters of nakedness.

## Notes

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### **The Implications for Entertainment Choices<sup>13</sup>**

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1. It should be clear that since God reserves the entire “sexual package” for marriage, nakedness and sexual activities would not be appropriate for entertainment. The performers are reduced to harlotry (sexual activity-for-pay), and the viewers to voyeurs (people who gain pleasure from watching the sexual activities of others)—both immoral practices.

Watching someone else involved in sexual activity violates the most basic law of biblical sexual morality which is that it must be an exclusive activity between one man and one woman within the covenant of marriage (Proverbs 5:15-19). Sex is not a spectator sport.

<sup>13</sup> See a list of helpful resources on the topic of entertainment Appendix D at the end of this syllabus.

## 2. Wayne Wilson comments,<sup>14</sup>

*Actors and actresses should not be undressed for us or simulate sexual activity. It is immodest, indecent, and impure. Period. How can sexual activity outside of marriage be black-and-white, all-or-nothing in life but in entertainment suddenly be considered shades of gray?*

*[Wilson continues.] First Timothy 5:2 says to treat “older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.” As a Christian man, this is my duty of love to women. Young women are to be treated as sisters, in all purity. From this I have developed what I call the ‘sister test’ in evaluating entertainment. This simple test has me ask myself, Would I approve if my sister were asked to behave or expose herself in any way that undermined her purity? No! I would not approve. And I am duty-bound, by the law of love, to extend that same disapproval of such requests to all young women.*

*There are those who claim that seeing shameful things in films does not affect them. They claim that their liberty in Christ gives them the freedom to enjoy these things. I say they have missed their highest Christian duty: the love they owe to others. They have an obligation to preserve the purity of the performers, and it really doesn’t matter if the performers care or not. As Christians, we have a kingdom-duty to be salt and light so these performers will know someone cares about them enough to refuse to watch their degradation.<sup>15</sup>*

*If the millions of Christians who currently see movies with nudity and sex scenes would stop tomorrow, Hollywood would change. The change would not be complete, but it would be substantial.*

*As a Christian, you must think about what is going on when you watch these shameless entertainments. You pay your money and a young woman is undressed for you. Perhaps she is handled by a man she hardly knows. Vulgar references are made in her presence—and you have paid for it all. Don’t you owe her more than that? Whose side are you on? Should we side with the slimy ‘artist’ or with the struggling actress trying to hang on to a shred of dignity? [He refers to the testimony of an actress he has quoted earlier.] Let the law of love decide.<sup>16</sup>*

## 3. To “be ravished with a strange woman (i.e., to be sexually stimulated by a woman that is not your wife)” brings an increasing bondage to sexual lust. Proverbs 5:20-23 says,

*And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman [someone who is not your wife], and embrace the bosom of a stranger?[Jesus forbids this even in the heart.] For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings. His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be [bound] with the cords of his sins. He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.*

## The Implications for Dating Standards for Singles<sup>17</sup>

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1. The usual question is, “How far can we go physically in expressing our affection for each other?” Jesus teaches in Matthew 5:27-28 that you cannot “go” even in your mind. While institutions and parents may have policies against certain types of physical contact, God’s simple policy is “no lust”—a much higher standard than any human authority can legislate.
2. You cannot merely map out morality in terms of activity (kissing, touching, dressing or undressing, caressing, intercourse, etc.) or body parts (hands, hair, lips, or genitalia) because a look or a word can be as erotic as a touch. That does not negate the usefulness of policies that deal with external activities; it merely acknowledges their limitations. Applying good sense to the biblical ethic should make for some very practical moral policies.

*You may be wondering, ‘What constitutes fornication or adultery? How far can I go with a person before we have sinned?’ Let me give you a common-sense guideline: anything you can’t do with another person in front of your wife is adultery; anything you can’t do with your girlfriend in the middle of church is off-limits.<sup>18</sup>*

<sup>14</sup> Wayne A. Wilson, *Worldly Amusements* (Enumclaw, WA: WinePress Publishing, 1999), 104.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

<sup>17</sup> For helpful information on Christian dating and standards read *Holding Hands—Holding Hearts: Recovering a Biblical View of Christian Dating* by Richard D. Phillips and Sharon L. Phillips (Phillipsburg, NJ: Puritan and Reformed Publishing, 2006 (184 pages).

<sup>18</sup> Joe Dallas, *The Game Plan* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2005), 52.

3. Because of the law of diminishing returns (i.e., pleasurable stimulation over time will require increasing levels of stimulation to maintain the previous level of pleasure), physical contact can become so commonplace that it is no longer sexually stimulating, nor is the conscience pricked. The question then is not, “Does this activity bother me?” but rather “Does it bother God that I am engaged in an activity that is part of the sexual package He intended only for a married couple to enjoy?”
4. That does not make a brief hug after a time of separation immoral—but it can be; it does not make holding hands on a special occasion immoral—but it can be. Always God’s law of “no lust” must be obeyed.

## The Implications for Masturbation

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1. As we have seen, sex was designed by God to be an activity between a married man and woman. It is not a solo activity. Masturbation usually isolates a man from others because of the resulting guilt, whereas sex was designed to bring him together with his spouse.  
  
For **singles**, masturbation is very poor preparation for marriage because it does not require self-restraint and attention to another. It is pure self-gratification. A major indicator of biblical masculinity is being able to live a life of delayed gratification. It is Proverbs’ fool that is ruled by his desires.  
  
Within **marriage** it is generally an indication of sexual laziness. Rather than go to the trouble of developing a responsive relationship with his wife, he just practices solo sex. He is short-circuiting God’s requirement that he learn to sacrificially love his wife. He never has to “grow up” spiritually and relationally.
2. Masturbation requires mental fantasizing (which Jesus forbids in Matthew 5:28).
3. Masturbation should not be made into a bigger issue than it really is, but neither should it be treated as if it had no moral implications. It is a violation of God’s intended purposes for sex.

## The Implications for Homosexuality

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Since sex was designed by God to be an activity between a married man and woman, it excludes both by design and by command any sexual activity with the same sex.

1. Leviticus 18:22-23

*(NASV) You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination. Also you shall not have intercourse with any animal to be defiled with it, nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it; it is a perversion.*

2. Romans 1:26-27

*(NASV) For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.*

3. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

*(NASV) Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate [the passive homosexual partner], nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.*

## Check Your Moral Compass

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If your hiking compass needle doesn’t point to true North, all your readings will be wrong. If your moral compass doesn’t point to the truth that **biblically moral sex—the entire package—is an exclusive activity between one man and one woman within the covenant of marriage**, all your “standards” will be wrong. You must make sure your moral compass points to true North.

# SESSION 3

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## Why Sex Didn't Satisfy Solomon, Part 1

### Why a Harem Isn't Enough—Even a Virtual One

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*Also, I collected for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I provided for myself male and female singers and the pleasures of men—many concubines. . . . All that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor. Thus I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun. (Ecclesiastes 2:8, 10-11 ESV)*

*But king Solomon loved many [foreign] women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; Of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, nether shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. (1 Kings 11:1-3)*

Solomon was obsessed with women. Certainly some of his wives were political marriages, but most merely fed his addiction to sexual pleasure. The results were predictable, since a man must turn away from God to have sex on his own terms.

*For the flesh [wars] against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. (Galatians 5:17)*

When a man turns away from God, no amount of sexual experience with real or virtual people will satisfy. The size of the harem does not determine the degree of satisfaction.

But even if you have the biblical ethics right—and you must get the ethic right—you cannot have satisfying sex—even with your wife—without knowing the secret Solomon learned and revealed in the book of Ecclesiastes.

### Secrets of the Good Life<sup>19</sup>

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1. The Literary Form of Ecclesiastes – cultural apologetic
2. The Metaphors of Ecclesiastes – goads and nails

- a. Goads: the disturbing reflections about life that lead to the conclusion “What’s the point?”

*The fool lives only for the moment. He refuses to think about the solemn truths which come to everybody's mind from time to time, and makes short-term pleasure his single reason for living. The wise man, however, observes life carefully. He thinks about what he sees and experiences. He asks questions and tries to come to logical conclusions.*

*The serious-minded person is a better citizen than the man who lives only for momentary thrills. But in some ways he also suffers more, for he squarely faces painful truths about life and reflects upon the meaning of pain, death, and eternity. These serious thoughts serve as goads in life.*

*The goads Solomon includes in Ecclesiastes are the recollections, the concerns, the serious thoughts, and the guilt feelings which arise in the consciousness of one who is willing to face things as they are. Their stings are painful, and do not in themselves provide the answer to man's need. But they bring to light a person's sinfulness and helplessness, and thereby may get him started in the right direction.<sup>20</sup>*

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<sup>19</sup> Check out the 13-part audio series entitled, “Secrets of the Good Life: Studies in Ecclesiastes,” available as free downloads for the audio tab on [www.JimBerg.com](http://www.JimBerg.com). A syllabus for the series is available for download as well.

<sup>20</sup> Richard W. DeHaan, *The Art of Staying Off Dead-End Streets* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1974), 9, 12.

b. Nails: the statements of biblical revelation that provoke dependency in the man who is in touch with the reality of being on a fallen planet

*The 'nails' of Ecclesiastes are the statements of truth that are like the stakes of the tent assembler, anchoring a Bedouin tent against the desert winds. The 'nails' of Ecclesiastes anchor the soul against the winds of adversity and trouble. While goods are the honest reflections that produce despair when God is not in the picture, nails are the statements of biblical revelation that provoke dependency in the man who is in touch with the reality of living on a fallen planet. Note carefully the 'nail' of Ecclesiastes 2:24-26.*

*There is no good [inherent] in man that he should be able to eat, drink, or get satisfaction from his work. Even this [i.e., this ability to have satisfaction], I realized, was from the hand of God.*

**Apart from Him, who can eat and who can have enjoyment?**

*For to the man who pleases Him, He gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy; but to the sinner [i.e., the one living life his own way] He gives the work of gathering and heaping up in order to give it to the one who pleases God. This is vanity and a chasing after wind.<sup>21</sup>*

### 3. The Equation of Enjoyment

"We all learned in elementary school that anything multiplied by zero still equals zero. The equation looks like this.

The Multiplicand							
50	X	0	=	0			
(God-given Gifts of Life)		(God-given Satisfaction)		(Joy and Peace)			

"The message is pretty straightforward. We often labor to pile up possessions, positions, and pleasures on the multiplicand side, and God in His common grace may allow us to accumulate much on that side of the equation. Solomon could testify to having all that he could wish on his multiplicand side.

"He learned, however, that none of those gifts automatically produced joy and peace because God was the "Multiplier"—the one who gave ability to be satisfied with the gifts. If God chose to withhold satisfaction, there would be no joy no matter how many accumulated items were on the multiplicand side.

"On the other hand, suppose that a man had almost nothing—little wealth and failing health—and yet had great joy. The reason for that joy is that his "Equation of Enjoyment" looks like this.

The Multiplicand							
5	X	250	=	1250!			
(God-given Gifts of Life)		(God-given Satisfaction)		(Joy and Peace)			

"Solomon speaks directly to this at the end of chapter 5, when he says that he has seen something very thrilling.

*Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labor, **this is the gift of God** (v. 19).*

"Don't miss the "nail" here! Riches are a gift from God, but so is the "power" to enjoy them and the ability to "rejoice" in them. If God grants riches but withholds "rejoicing," riches will bring no satisfaction. Solomon puts God center-stage and spotlights Him as the most important component of life. He is first! The lesson is clear."<sup>22</sup>

Walter Kaiser in his commentary on Ecclesiastes states, "*The purpose of life cannot be found in any of the good things found in the world. All the things we call the "goods" of life—health, riches, possessions, position, sensual pleasures, honors, and prestige—slip through man's hands unless they are received as a gift from God and until God gives man the ability to enjoy them and obtain satisfaction from them.*"<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Jim Berg, *Created for His Glory* (Greenville: Bob Jones University Press, 2002), 279. The Scripture quote is a translation by Walter C. Kaiser Jr. in his book *Ecclesiastes: Total Life* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1979), 43.

<sup>22</sup> Berg, 279-280.

<sup>23</sup> Kaiser, 59.

a. Psalm 4:7

*Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.*

b. Haggai 1:6-7

*Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways.*

c. Proverbs 14:11-14

*The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish. There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness. The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself [i.e., with the results of his ways].*

d. Psalm 127:1

*Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.*

e. John 15:4-5

*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

4. One final word from Walter Kaiser.

*[The] capacity to enjoy, no matter how great or how small, is a gift from God. It is much better to receive wealth as a gift from God, along with the God-given ability to enjoy it, than to see wealth as an end in itself. . . . How sad that men can spend all their days working and sweating to receive the enjoyment that God offers as a gift if men will seek it in the manner that He, in His excellent and beautiful plan, has chosen to give it. Happiness, enjoyment, pleasure, and a knowledge of how the whole substance of life is integrated into a meaningful pattern in the plan of God are all linked in the living God.<sup>24</sup>*

## The Message of Ecclesiastes

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***Life is supposed to taste like cardboard if you insist on eating the box.***

Satisfaction cannot be found in any part of the creation; it is found only in intimate relationship with the Creator Himself. Lust demands from another creature what only the Creator can deliver.

Sexual immorality is not merely about the misuse of sex; it is about a person mishandling *life*. This is even more evident in sexual addictions.

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.



# SESSION 4

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## Why Sex Didn't Satisfy Solomon, Part 2

### I'm Bored!

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Richard Winter notes,

*Boredom is a chronic symptom of a pleasure-obsessed age. When pleasure becomes one's number one priority, the result, ironically, is boredom. The ceaseless attempt to rekindle pleasure in the face of boredom can lead to moral degeneration. Yet even innocent pleasures can, if we let them, lead us away from God. Like all of God's material gifts, pleasure requires good stewardship.*

#### **The Law of Diminishing Returns**

*A satisfied soul loathes the honey-comb,' observes Solomon, 'but to a hungry soul every bitter things is sweet' (Prov. 27:7). In other words, pleasant sensations when they are overdone lose their appeal, while desire can make even bad things seem attractive. 'Have you found honey? Eat only as much as you need, lest you be filled with it and vomit' (Prov. 25:16). These Scriptures suggest that there is a law of diminishing returns when it comes to pleasure. The more we seek pleasure for its own sake, the less we will have.*

*That pleasure operates under the law of diminishing returns can have catastrophic moral consequences for those who insist on indulging themselves with no restraint. What once gives pleasure will soon fail to satisfy. The experience must become more and more extreme to yield the desired sensation. . . .*

*Consumers of pornography, for example, soon tire of naked pictures; they want to see sex, then perverted sex. Since it is the breaking of taboos that gives them their thrill, they keep stepping over the line, and the line keeps moving: to sadistic sexual violence, then child pornography. Those who are jaded at this level sometimes take the next step of acting out their fantasies in real life.<sup>25</sup>*

### What is Boredom?

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1. "Think of the synonyms for boring. Consider them slowly. Let them sink into your mind. Feel them. Apathy, drab, dull, colorless, humdrum, insipid, interminable, irksome, lifeless, lethargic, monotonous, mundane, repetitious, routine, stale, stodgy, tedious, tiresome, uninteresting, vapid, wearisome. Bore-ing, as teenagers would say with a tone of disgust. We speak of being "bored to death," "out of my mind with boredom," "bored to tears" and "bored beyond belief." It is obviously a distressing, uncomfortable state of mind, from which we desire to escape: an experience of there being nothing that we desire to do. Even more distressing is that we have an active desire not to do the things that are available."<sup>26</sup>
2. Boredom is "low-grade despair."
  - a. "**Extreme Everything**—As despair becomes more prevalent, we can also expect all of the possible anesthetics for the pain of emptiness to increase as well. We will see a rise in extreme drug therapies. Television and movie content will feature increasingly extreme programming in the name of "reality shows." We will see extreme sports and adventures rise to unprecedented heights as people rebel against the limitations placed upon them by their own bodies and by nature itself and as they seek some new means to experience a rush. Increasingly kinky sexual exploits both inside and outside of marriage will hold out a promise of extreme pleasure for deadened souls but will leave the participants only more deeply mired in their despair."<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> "Boredom and the Law of Diminishing Returns" by Gene Edward Veith, *TableTalk*, (November 1995, Volume 19, Number 11), 8-9.

<sup>26</sup> Richard Winter, *Still Bored in a Culture of Entertainment* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 14.

<sup>27</sup> Berg, 12.

- b. Boredom incites in a man a desire to experience something that will make him feel “alive and real and fulfilled.” The more potently the experience makes him feel “alive and real and fulfilled,” the greater its pull and addictive potential. Ironically, the more high-powered the experience, the greater will be the crash into despair when the experience doesn’t ultimately deliver.
  - c. A man’s problem with sexual satisfaction in his marriage is not caused, as the world would have us believe, by his own small genitals, his wife’s small breasts, or his small budget which keeps them from an exotic vacation together. His wife doesn’t need enhancement surgery, and he doesn’t need enhancement pills. **His satisfaction is small and his lusts are large because his life-giving relationship with his Creator is small.**
3. Despair is the inevitable result of life without light.
- a. It is the result of living without a sense of transcendence—something which cannot be experienced without spending much time in the world to come. It is living without “life”—the result of being “alienated from the life of God.”
  - b. Ephesians 4:17-19
 

*This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness [hardness] of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto [sensuality], to work [every kind of impurity] with greediness.*
  - c. Despair (life without light) is also the reason behind the restlessness that causes a man to leave many good things behind.
    - 1) His marriage and family
    - 2) His sound doctrinal moorings and those who taught him
    - 3) His “high standards” and conservative positions

It isn’t always that the forms, traditions, standards, and doctrines he has been taught are wrong or unhelpful, but they are just as unsatisfying to a man without a vibrant relationship with God as the experiences of the world are to the man who is walking without a vibrant relationship with God.
  - d. “The bottom line truth is that *life is not supposed to work without God at the center*. Those who try to do so—even Christians—can maintain only an artificial façade of hope and satisfaction. The grim reality is that the emptiness of life without God at the center pushes itself to the consciousness once again when the music stops, the drugs wear off, the eroticism fails, the fashions grow old, the relationships disappoint, the accomplishments fade, and the thrills subside. They are left to themselves, and the emptiness for most people is too much. Instead of crying out to God for light, however, they dive back into their activities, mainlining the anesthesia of their endless pursuits to dull the pain of their empty souls. Such is the picture of man without God at the center—even believing man who isn’t seeing God in new and fresh illuminated truths through the Spirit of God.”<sup>28</sup>

## The Solution: Float a Bigger Boat

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1. A man with a canoe-size soul is easily tossed and capsized by the waves of sensuality around him, while the man with an aircraft carrier-size soul plows through the waves of a sensual culture with little effect. Big boats withstand big waves.
 

Temporarily we might need to put some outrigger pontoons on the canoe to keep it from capsizing, but the ultimate solution is to “float a bigger boat.” The pontoons of accountability and “promise-keeping” will not do long-term.

<sup>28</sup> Berg, 8.

The combination of spiritual deadness/darkness and growing lusts is lethal. A man pursuing his lusts finds them increasingly enflamed while at the same time he is more distant from God and consequently more powerless to resist the lure of sexual temptation. In effect, he is in a shrinking boat as the waves grow bigger. He must return to God in repentance and dependence. Though the lusts seem overwhelming, there is always a “way to escape” provided by a gracious God who welcomes the returning sinner.

2. The “Super-Nail” of Ecclesiastes (12:13-14)

*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

3. This is the “super-nail” that staked down a seventeen-year-old young man’s moral tent during a storm of seduction in Genesis 39:7-10.

*And it came to pass after these things, that his master’s wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master’s wife, Behold my master [knoweth] not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness [against Potiphar], and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.*

Here is a profound fear of the Lord coupled with practical good sense—Run! Flee!

4. How do you build a bigger boat—increase the tonnage of your soul? **You must know God!**

Let’s face it, however, if you are engulfed in lust you search for God like a rapist looks for a policeman. Yet coming to God is the only help and hope. To know God, you must return to Him in repentance. Listen to His invitation to you in Isaiah 55:1-3. Though you may not be seeking Him at this moment, He is seeking you.

*Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live.*

Repentance means coming out from hiding and coming clean with God and with others and being willing to pay the price of whatever chastening God will impose to wean you away from a self-centered life. It means an intention to become a “giver” instead of a “taker.”

The sooner you return, the sooner the law of sowing and reaping can work for you instead of against you. The sooner you return, the sooner you can enjoy the fellowship with the Father again. The sooner you return, the sooner you can begin to know God—the only solution to the emptiness and despair. Here are His words to you from Isaiah 55:6-7.

*Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

He then calls you to renew your mind—rejecting your own way of thinking about life and making God’s thoughts your pattern (55:8-11).

*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord, For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*

Notice the result of returning to the Lord and letting His Word do its great work in you (55:12-13)!

*For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree.*

## Resources for knowing God

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Berg, Jim, *God is More Than Enough* Series (6 messages on the nature of God).  
Available from the BJU Campus Store (1.800.252.1927)

Berg, Jim, *Created for His Glory*. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 2002.

DeHaan, Dan. *The God You Can Know*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1982.

Packer, J.I. *Knowing God*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1973.

Tozer, A. W., *The Pursuit of God*. Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1993.

\_\_\_\_\_, *The Knowledge of the Holy*. New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, 1961.

\_\_\_\_\_, *The Attributes of God*. Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1997.

# STABILIZING TRUTHS FOR NOISY SOULS:

## The Knowledge of God<sup>29</sup>

### **God is always good—always! That means...**

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- a. He will always meet my genuine needs—always!
  - Philippians 4:13, 19; Matthew 6:31-33
- b. He will always forgive my sin—always!
  - I John 1:9; Psalm 51; Isaiah 66:2b
- c. He is always up to something good in my life—always!
  - Jeremiah 29:11; Romans 8:26-34
- d. He will always love me personally—always!
  - Romans 8:35-39; Jeremiah 31:3; John 17:23
- e. He will always give me the grace I need—always!
  - II Corinthians 9:8; I Corinthians 15:10; II Corinthians 12:9-10

### **God is always great—always! That means...**

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- a. He is always in control of all things—always!
  - Psalm 103:19; Isaiah 14:27; 46:9-10
- b. He is always present with me—always!
  - Psalm 139:7-12; Isaiah 41:10; Jeremiah 23:24
- c. He is always the same—always!
  - Malachi 3:6a; Hebrews 1:10-12
- d. He is always trustworthy—always!
  - II Timothy 2:13; Psalm 36:5; Numbers 23:19; Deuteronomy 7:9; 31:8
- e. He is always wise in what He does—always!
  - Romans 11:33; Colossians 2:3; Revelation 15:3-4

Labor, labor, labor to **know** these truths—look up the above verses and find other verses that teach these truths. **Memorize** these truths and verses that support them (Psalm 119:9-11).

**Meditate upon** these truths (1 Timothy 4:15-16). **Fellowship with others about** these truths (1 John 1:3). **Test every stray thought of your heart by** these truths (II Corinthians 10:3-5).

**Don't despise preaching about** these truths (2 Timothy 4:2-4).

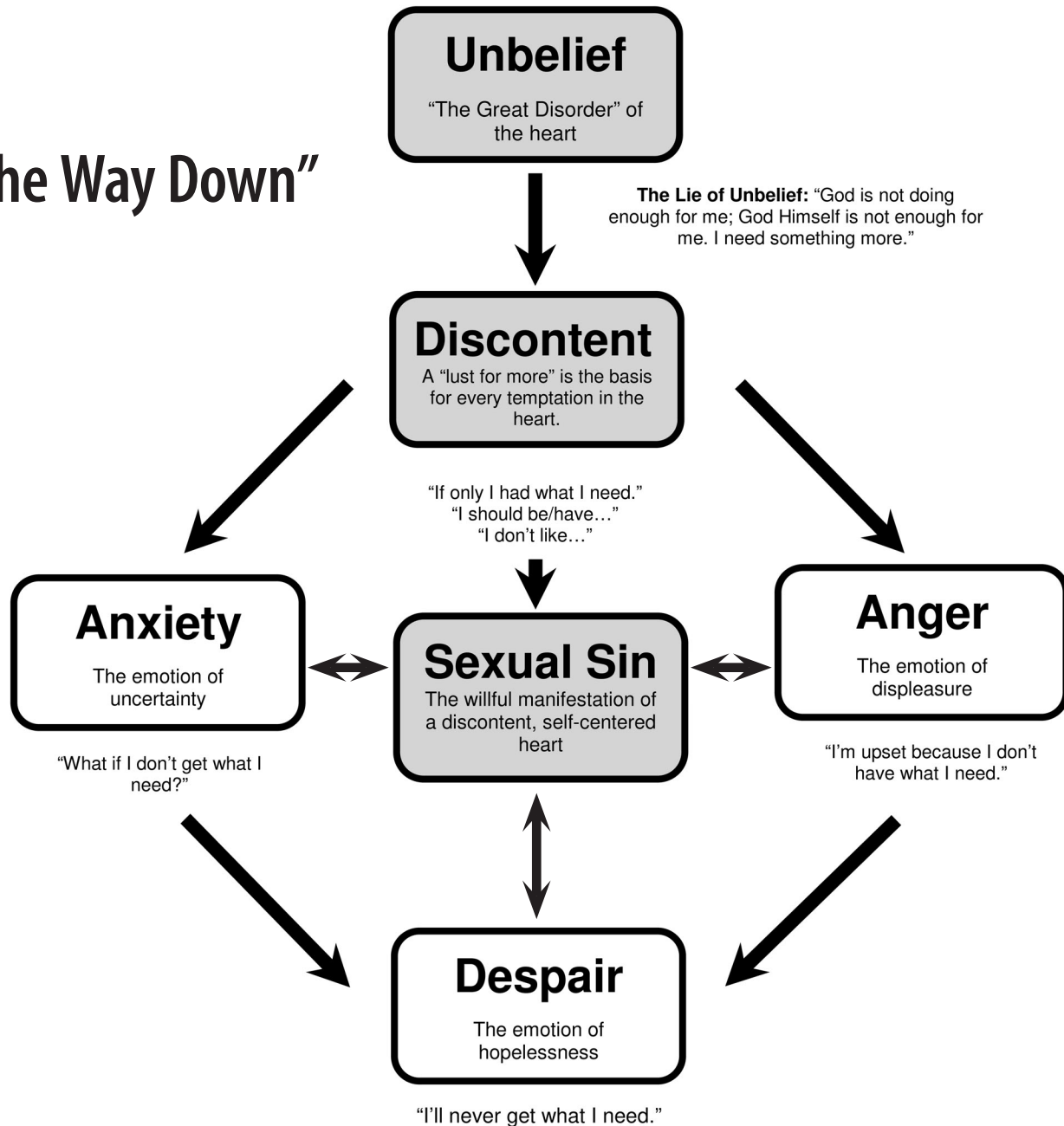
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<sup>29</sup> Jim Berg, *Taking Time to Quiet Your Soul* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 2005), 4-5. A PDF file with these statements formatted for use as a Bible bookmark is available as a free download at [www.QuietingANoisySoul.com](http://www.QuietingANoisySoul.com), the website for this counseling program. Specifically, go to <http://www.quietinganoisysoul.com/downloads/memory-cards.pdf>.

# SESSION 5

## The Anatomy of Lust<sup>30</sup>

“The Way Down”



30 Chart modified from *Taking Time to Quiet Your Soul*, page 8.

## The Donut Hole is the Problem

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No man can have lasting victory over sexual sin who is not willing to see the self-centeredness that lies at the core of his problem. This pride is the central problem; everything else—including sexual sin—is a symptom.

A man who lives in a fantasy world is accustomed to having his own way; everything and everyone is exactly as he wants it in his dream world driven by his “pleasure ethic.”

He is filled with his own importance. He is becoming a “taker” instead of a “giver.” He takes on the character of Satan himself—a deceiver and a destroyer (John 8:44).

The Law of Diminishing Returns, however, means he must seek an increase in variety, frequency, or intensity to keep up the same amount of stimulation to make him feel “alive and real and fulfilled.”

He moves from nude pictures to movies and video cam sessions of sexual acts to acting out his fantasies in some way—exposing himself, taking indecent liberties in a crowd, becoming a peeping Tom, having an affair at work or church, seeking out a prostitute, engaging in phone sex or internet chat room relationships, cross-dressing, victimizing children or women.

He becomes very ritualistic in his pursuit of stimulating experiences. He may save the best movie clip, the best website, or the best fantasy until last to string out his excitement as long as possible and build it to its highest peak before finishing off his ritual with masturbation.

Eventually, he loses all sense of reality in his frantic pursuit of his desires. Like the ignorant ox in Proverbs 7, he goes to the slaughter unaware of what is happening. Only one thing matters—getting the next stimulating experience in his journey to self-gratification.

Though afterwards he may look at what he has done as repulsive and surprisingly daring, while he is in the pursuit of it, he is intoxicated with desire and is aware of nothing else except his pursuit.

Depending upon his personality, he shuts down and retreats to himself or shuts out others with his controlling anger and manipulation so that he has to maintain only one world—his fantasy world. He becomes defensive, unapproachable, and paranoid. He desperately needs correction, but since the slightest displeasure annoys him, he reacts with anger and manipulation to anyone reproving him.

He shifts the blame for negative experiences in his life onto others. “My wife isn’t meeting my needs.” “I’m going through a rough time and deserve a little bit of fun.” “This isn’t a big problem; I can quit anytime.” “I’ve tried getting out of this bondage, but God didn’t help me. I’ll just have to live this way.”

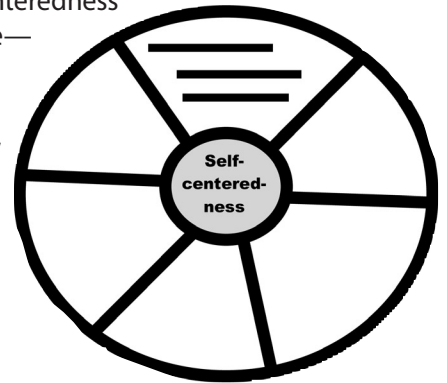
In the meantime, routine tasks—paying bills, washing the car, playing with the kids, talking with and helping his wife, etc.—become extremely burdensome. He is on the last leg of the James 1 LSD road (Lust-Sin-Death). He is killing peace, hope, usefulness, relationships, fellowship with God, his conscience, his work record, and his soul.

Proverbs 5:22

*His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be [bound] with the cords of his sins. He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.*

Proverbs 7:22-23

*He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.*



## The Donut Ring Has Problems Too

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No man can have lasting victory over sexual sin who is not willing to address the self-centeredness that permeates the rest of his life as well. He must look at how self-centeredness reigns in . . .

1. His work relationships and ambitions (temper, drivenness, laziness, etc.)
2. His financial desires and goals (greediness, materialism, gambling, indulgent spending, etc.)

3. His parenting style (controlling, distant, demanding, angry, lazy, inconsistent, etc.)
4. His church and ministry involvement (pushy, cocky, praise-seeking, uninvolved, lazy, etc.)
5. His sports and hobby activities (obsession, intemperate, critical, boastful, etc.)
6. His entertainment choices and use of leisure time (addicted, wasteful, sensuous, etc.)
7. His sexual relationship with his own wife (disinterested, insensitive, demanding, unloving, unhelpful, etc.)
8. His personal fellowship with his master, Jesus Christ (non-existent, legalistic, lazy, distant, etc.)

God is not interested in helping a man overcome only the area of self-centeredness that is most disturbing to the man right now. God wants to address the man's life at its self-centered core and in every other area of life infected with his self-centeredness.

## The Anatomy of a Lust

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### 1. Definition of Lusts

"Lust" as used in the Bible is any strong desire and can be good or bad.

### 2. Role of Lusts (strong desires)

#### a. James 1:12-15

*12) Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.* (Temptation can be resisted, and resistance will be rewarded.)

*13) Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:* (Temptation does not originate with God.)

*14) But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away from his own lust, and enticed.* (Temptation originates from our own lusts.)

*15) Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* (Temptation, when indulged, brings forth sin and death—the LSD sequence).

#### b. Lusts (strong desires) provide "points of agreement."

- When our desires mate with our will a sin is born.

#### c. Lusts (strong desires) are personalized.

- James 1:14 speaks of "designer lusts" when it says "every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

### 3. Sources of Lust (strong desires)—Ephesians 2:3

*We all had our conversation [lifestyle] in times past in the lusts of our flesh [sinful nature], fulfilling the desires of the flesh [body] and of the mind.*

This verse teaches two sources of our lusts (strong desires).

#### a. Desires of the Body — appetites we are born with (part of our human nature—our humanness)

##### 1) The body (with its appetites/desires) can be used to please God.

a) A bodily desire to eat is designed by God to fuel our bodies and please our sense of taste. Gratefully eating what God has provided without violating His laws (i.e., stealing, complaining, gluttony, manipulating others to get what we want, etc.) pleases God.

b) A bodily desire to sleep is designed by God to rest and refresh our bodies. Regularly sleeping without violating God's laws (i.e., being a sluggard) pleases God.



- c) A bodily desire (at puberty) to be sexually gratified is designed by God to draw us into closer relationship with our spouse. Regular, enthusiastic sex without violating God's laws (giving vs. getting, only with spouse, etc.) pleases God.
- 2) The body (with its appetites/desires) must be controlled since its desires cannot be eliminated (1 Corinthians 9:27).

*But I [discipline] my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*

- a) The flesh [sinful nature] can appeal to the body to fulfill these bodily cravings outside of God's laws (wrong purpose, wrong time, wrong way).
- b) Repeated indulgence in bodily cravings results in habituation.
- i. Uncomfortable and restless unless indulging; supercharged cravings
  - ii. Food no longer pursued just for nourishment but for its comforting pleasure.
  - iii. Sleep no longer pursued to refresh but for the pleasure of escape.
  - iv. Sex no longer pursued to draw closer to a spouse but for its erotic pleasure alone.

*Continued in Session 6*

# SESSION 6

## The Anatomy of Lust, Part 2

### Session 5 • The Anatomy of Lust, Part 1 (REVIEW)

#### 1. Definition of Lust

#### 2. Role of Lust

#### 3. Source of Lust

a. **Desires of the Body** — appetites we are born with (part of our human nature—our humanness)

b. **Desires of the Mind**—appetites we learn (part of our personal nurture)

- 1) An unlimited number of learned lusts which do not necessarily have to be sinful
  - a) A boy growing up without a dad watches other boys with dads and wishes he could have one. He imagines what it would be like. He creates for himself a strong desire for male attention and affirmation.
  - b) A high school girl moves from a conservative rural community to a metropolitan community to go to college. As she is exposed to the stores, boutiques, and malls, she sees the latest fashions and styles. She begins to imagine what she might look like and how her acceptance among her classmates would improve if she dressed better. She becomes obsessed with her clothes and with seeking approval.
  - c) A child learns in school that teachers and parents smile more approvingly when he makes A's on his schoolwork. It also gives him a measure of respect in the classroom among his peers. He becomes highly perfectionistic in his drive for achievement and honor.
  - d) A little girl cowers in the corner as her drunken dad and her mother fight. Her dad hits her mother again. Her mom runs to the corner, picks up the little girl and runs next door to the neighbors. This isn't the first time this has happened, and it won't be the last. The girl fantasizes about what it would be like to have a "normal" dad to take her for walks to the park where he would swing her. She wishes for a mommy who didn't have to cry so much because she got hit. Mommy doesn't have time to play with her because she is trying all the time to make sure the house is just perfect so dad won't get mad. She develops bitterness for all men and determines that she will not be a weak woman like her mother.
- You can see how none of these situations has to be sinful in itself, but in each case, the desire will grow proportionately with the amount of time the individual *thinks* about what things would be like if he/she had what is being desired.
- Tragically, as the desire grows it may become a "point of agreement" for a temptation which, when indulged, becomes sin.
- 2) Desires of the mind are imprinted (learned) more readily by . . .
  - a) Repetition
  - b) Concentration
  - c) Emotion
- 3) Desires of the mind are the lusts spoken of in I John 2:15-17
  - a) Lust of the flesh (intensified bodily cravings for pleasure—learned from the world as exposed to and influenced by its music, movies, magazines, etc.)
  - b) Lust of the eyes (intensified cravings for possessions—learned from the world)
  - c) Pride of life (intensified cravings for power/prestige—learned from the world)

- 4) Desires of the mind are not permanent.
- 5) Desires of the mind must be restrained until they can be replaced.
- 6) Desires of the mind can be mixed with desires of the body
  - The bodily desire must be controlled since it cannot be eliminated; the desire of the mind must be restrained until it can be replaced.
  - a) Bodily desire—eating; desire of the mind—Mexican food
  - b) Bodily desire—sex; desire of the mind—homosexual sex
  - c) See Appendix A, “A Letter to a Brother” for an example of how bodily desires and desires of the mind interact.

#### 4. The Dangers of Lusts

- a. Deceitful (Ephesians 4:22)
- b. Foolish and hurtful (1 Timothy 6:9)
- c. Controlling (Romans 6:12)
- d. Unclean (Romans 13:13-14; 2 Peter 2:10)
- e. Enemies of the soul (1 Peter 2:11; James 4:1)

## Understanding Homosexuality

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1. Clearly, homosexual actions are sinful as we have already seen in session 2. It is important to understand as well, that desiring homosexual actions is wrong and must be changed as well. We cannot permit an ethic that says it is permissible to have homosexual desires as long as you do not act upon them. Those desires can change as well, but will be more difficult depending upon the individual's history—how long he has entertained them and to what extent and how often he has indulged them—and his current spiritual maturity. We can acknowledge the legitimacy of sexual desires which must be restrained outside of marriage, but we cannot legitimize perverted lusts—desires for sex with children, animals, those of the same sex, or those of the opposite sex who are not your spouse.

2. Some men and women choose a homosexual lifestyle as young adults. Others discover a “gender confusion” at very young ages which may lead to homosexual activity. Gender confusion most often is caused by aberrations in childhood personality development—negative experiences, and negative misperceptions of even positive experiences.

Most—though not all—homosexuals, lesbians, and sexual addicts did not come from healthy homes. Dysfunction (neglect, rejection, etc.) and trauma (divorce, abuse, etc.) are common components and negatively affect the child's development, perceptions of himself and others, and attraction or disgust for one or both of his parents. Add to this confusion a sexualized culture, and you have a recipe for addiction and perversion when the child enters puberty.

To a child who is swimming in a tidal wave of pain trying to keep his head above water, anything that feels good and offers more security looks like a life raft—even if that means attraction to and sexual involvement with his own gender.

Gender confusion is often mistakenly called “homosexual orientation.” The human heart has, instead, a “sin orientation”—a propensity to go its own way (Isaiah 53:6). That sinful orientation manifests itself in many varied ways depending upon the bent of the personality and the life experiences of the child.

It is important to keep clear that all sinful practices begin with a sinful nature. Any environmental influences tempt the sinful heart to express itself in a certain way. To put it another way: the root cause for homosexuality is a sinful nature. That nature can be influenced to sin a certain way based upon outside influences.

3. Someone who has decided he is homosexual has three choices:

- a. Continue the internal battle privately—an exceedingly difficult war to fight in secret
- b. Abandon biblical teaching altogether in order to practice his lifestyle—a very tempting option since it ostensibly offers relief from the battle
- c. Embrace a gay-friendly theology that allows him to practice homosexuality without censure from his religion. From his reinterpretation of the Bible he comes to the following conclusions:<sup>31</sup>
  - 1)“There is no biblical condemnation of homosexual behavior as long as it occurs within the boundaries of a ‘loving, committed relationship.’”
  - 2)“Scriptures commonly supposed to condemn homosexual acts, instead condemn only homosexual lust or irresponsible homosexual behavior.”
  - 3)“The words commonly translated to mean ‘homosexual’ are generally mistranslated and should be taken to mean either ‘idolaters,’ ‘homosexual prostitutes,’ or ‘cowardly people.’”

See Appendix 3, “Pro-Gay Theology” in Joe Dallas’s book, *Desires in Conflict*, for detailed answers to these erroneous conclusions.

In a brief but very perceptive work, Ed Welch concludes,<sup>32</sup>

*We can grow to be able to hate anything that hints of rebellion against God. We can be liberated from homosexual obsession. And we can understand that male-female marriage is one of God’s good gifts. This does not mean that all people who once struggled with homosexuality will pursue marriage. In some cases God gives grace to be celibate. But since marriage is a good gift, and God’s pleasure is toward Christian marriage, then as one-time homosexuals grow in adopting the mind of Christ, they will find pleasure in the same thing that God does.*

*How long will it take? If a person is willing to follow Christ, and he or she is surrounded by a caring church, then homosexual behavior can stop immediately. “The grace of God...teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives” (Titus 2:11, 12). No one should think, however, that homosexual desire will be gone as quickly. The person who has had a long history of homosexual practice will be doing battle for many years. The power of homosexual thoughts to enslave will gradually be defeated, but the stray homosexual thought may be evident decades after there has been cessation of homosexual acts. Is this discouraging? Does this mean that deliverance [from a demon] is necessary? No, it means that God is at work, giving power to fight, reminding us that warfare is normal, progressively sanctifying us, and giving us the privilege of constantly depending on Christ by faith.*

*For these goals to be steadily approached, one-time homosexuals need more than a counselor. Like us all, they need the larger body of Christ and its varied relational opportunities. Men need other men who love, listen, and model brotherly relationships. Women need other women with whom they can have close but not obsessive or sexualized relationships. Both men and women need godly relationships with the opposite sex and with elders and pastors who can faithfully pray and, if necessary, bring church discipline as a means of God’s loving correction. Other relationships might include small groups with couples and singles, accountability groups with other men, and small prayer groups. In some cases churches may have specialized ministries to homosexuals (e.g., support groups) or more general ministries to those who want to leave sexual slavery of any kind.*

*An effective church should have homosexuals! Because of the love of Christ, the church should pursue homosexuals. And through its exaltation of Christ in preaching, corporate prayer and worship, the church should attract homosexuals. It should minister the Word to those who are already in church by flushing out the self-deceived, exposing the dishonest, confronting the rebel, offering forgiveness to the guilt-ridden, and giving hope. The church should also welcome and hold the attention of those who struggle with homosexuality but have never been part of the church. With such people we can add that the church should minister by surprising them with love, a sense of family, and the absence of self-righteous judgment. It should offer truth in such a way that is convicting, attractive, and radically different from anything else the homosexual has ever heard. May God enable us to fulfill this high calling.*

31 Joe Dallas, *Desires in Conflict* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1991), 36.

32 Edward T. Welch. *Homosexuality: Speaking the Truth in Love* (Glenside, PA: Resources for Changing Lives, 2000), 35-37. This 37-page booklet is a reprint from an article entitled “Homosexuality: Current Thinking and Biblical Guidelines” first published in *The Journal of Biblical Counseling*, Volume 13, Number 3, Spring 1995, pp. 19-29.

# SESSION 7

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## Preventative Strategies *(Staying Out of the Skid)*

When you are driving on ice, it is easier to stay out of a skid than it is to get out of one once you are in it.

### **Build your relationship with God**

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According to Romans 1 you must suppress the knowledge of God to spiral into sexual sin. God clearly states that it is the unconverted man's ignorance of God that propels him into a life of lustful passions. When a believer is ignoring God, he is subject to the same powerful lusts.

*(NASV) For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God. (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5)*

*(NASV) As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:14-16)*

*Put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. (Colossians 3:10).*

*According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. (2 Peter 1:3).*

The solution is found in "knowing God." But knowing God involves more than accumulating intellectual knowledge. It means an intimate relational "knowing" in the same way that "Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived" (Genesis 4:1). Obviously, Adam had more than an intellectual acquaintance with Eve. For Eve to bear a child, the relationship had to be intimate. The intimacy of knowing God is described by Jesus as "abiding in the Vine."

Knowing God requires spending much time with Him—listening to Him in His word, expressing your heart to Him about what you just heard, committing yourself to obey and honor Him in light of what you learned, asking forgiveness for failing Him, rejoicing in His love and wisdom evident in how He has mercifully dealt with you, meditating upon His character and works to learn more of Him, leaning on Him for direction and encouragement in times of need, seeking to represent Him well in your relationships with others, and asking Him to meet the needs of others. In short, it means making Jesus Christ the most important person in your life.

Knowing God in this way is not the pursuit of a scholar, but of a lover. Believers who do not know God well are not experiencing a relationship with "joy unspeakable and full of glory." They do not know "peace that passeth understanding." Their relationship with God is not characterized by delight, satisfaction, and passion.

Study the psalms to see an intimate relationship with God in action. The psalms are not mere exercises in Hebrew poetry. They are the expressions of men who sought God with their whole hearts and found Him to be more than enough.

It is this kind of relationship with God that stamps the character of God upon a man's soul. It is that character that God says will guarantee that "you will never stumble" (2 Peter 1:10 NASV).

So how can you have the kind of character that does not fall into sexual sin?

#### **1. You must possess eternal life**

In John 4 Jesus struck up a conversation with a woman who had come to the village well for water. She had been divorced four times and was living in adultery at that moment. She identified with His analogy that she was continually unsatisfied in her attempts to quench the thirst in her soul.

He knew her bondage to sexual sin, but did not offer her a recovery program. He offered her the gift of eternal life through the Messiah—Himself. He probably pointed to the well as he said,

*Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life. (John 4:13-14)*

She, like Solomon, learned that the way to be “alive and real and satisfied” is not by another sexual pursuit, but by a relationship with the living God through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Anyone who has made any kind of sin his “practice”—that is, it has become his lifestyle—must take seriously God’s words which indicate that he may not be a true possessor of Jesus Christ. Here are the exact words from God Himself.

*(NASV) Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who [continually] practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21)*

*(NASV) Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who [continually] practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who [continually] practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. No one who is born of God [continually] practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot [continue to practice] sin, because he is born of God. By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not [continually] practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:7-10)*

This is not to say that a Christian cannot be caught up temporarily in bondage to some sin. If he is a believer, however, he will be convicted of his sin, will experience the chastening of God for his sin, and will want out of his sinful practices.

An unbeliever will be justifying himself to himself and others and will have no concern that his sin destroys fellowship with God. His primary concern will be that his “Christian” image with those who know about his sin will be damaged.

If you are not sure you are a believer, please carefully read through the information in Appendix B.

## **2. You must be a growing Christian.**

God’s antidote for sensuality is Christlike character. You must be growing to prevent stumbling, and you must understand God’s plan for growth—sanctification.<sup>33</sup>

Foundational to spiritual growth is a commitment that the most important pursuit in your life will be the development of Christlikeness in your life. Unless you are cultivating and sustaining a commitment to become like Jesus Christ, all of your efforts to overcome sexual sin will be short-circuited.

### **A Commitment to Christlikeness Comes First**

1. Sanctification involves more than a change in behavior. It requires a change in Who we live for. Peter tells us we are to “add to [our] faith virtue” (2 Peter 1:5). “Virtue” is defined by Peter as “the excellencies [of character] of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9 NASV).

Peter goes on to say (2 Peter 1:5-7) to add “to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge [self-control]; and to [self-control endurance]; and to [endurance] godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness [love].”

<sup>33</sup> If you are not possess a working understanding of the doctrine of sanctification, let me suggest you study one of the following books:

Berg, Jim. *Changed into His Image*. (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1999). You can read the table of contents, preface, and chapter one by clicking on the “Resources” tab at [www.ChangedIntoHisImage.com](http://www.ChangedIntoHisImage.com). You can also download thirteen seminar sessions covering the chapters. A 13-week study guide and video seminar are also available.

Bridges, Jerry. *The Pursuit of Holiness*. (Colorado Springs: CO: NavPress Publishing Group, 1978, 2006).

Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *He That Is Spiritual*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1918, 1967, 1983).

Pentecost, Dwight. *Designed to be Like Him*. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2001). This book was originally published by Moody Press in 1966 under the title *Pattern for Maturity*.

There will be no maturing of knowledge, self-control, endurance, and so forth unless the commitment to using those qualities to become like Christ is in place. See Appendix C for an overview of this passage.

2. A commitment to Christlikeness means developing the disciplines in your life that will further your growth in Christ. Those disciplines include regular personal devotions and regular attendance at and participation in the ministry of a Bible-preaching church.<sup>34</sup>

## Build your relationship with your wife

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**You must pursue God as you ought, and you must pursue your wife as you ought.**

### 1. You must be in a *growing* marriage.<sup>35</sup>

You must study God's design for marriage. See the Annotated Bibliography in Appendix D at the end of this syllabus for recommendations on books to help your marriage. Many men treat their cars better than their marriages and families. When a man knows that something is wrong with his car, he will usually find someone to fix it for him if he doesn't know how to do it himself. He will not drive it until it breaks down on the interstate. A wise man will have his car serviced at regular intervals and will be alert to anything that seems to be malfunctioning so that it does not get worse.

A wise husband and father does the same. He does not wait until the marriage is "on the rocks" or the kids "have gone bad" to give attention to those relationships.

- a. Read and listen to seminars and sermons on marriage.
- b. Attend a family conference or marriage retreat at least once a year.
- c. Study your wife. She is your best marriage manual and can tell you exactly what needs to be done to improve your marriage. She already knows and will even tell you if you will not defend yourself and justify your actions when she shares her heart and if you will do something about what she suggests.

The world says that you cannot understand a woman. God says in 1 Peter 3:7 that there is one woman you must understand—your wife!

*Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge [in an understanding way], giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.*

### Sex is a Picture—and a Mirror

Sex with your wife is an illustration of—and a reflection of—your relationship with Jesus Christ, according to Ephesians 5:25-33. The self-denying, God-focused, others-oriented heart necessary to build an intimate relationship with Christ is the same kind of heart necessary to build a satisfying relationship with your wife. If you do not have a good relationship with your wife, most likely you do not have a good relationship with Christ either. The same skills and character are required for both.

Men who turn to immoral sexual activities are most often relationally and sexually lazy. They want pleasure without the hard-work of commitment and responsibility. And men who are sexually committed to their wives but are no more than "drive by lovers" in bed are dishonoring their wives as well. A sexually responsible man nourishes and cherishes his wife as he does his own body and as Christ nourishes and cherishes the church.

A man's sexual frustration with his wife most often mirrors her relational frustration with him.

If you need help in your marriage, see your pastor for counseling, read good books on marriage, and begin talking with your wife about your desire to see your marriage improve. Then improve your walk with Christ so that you have a good foundation for your marriage.

Sexual sin is tantamount to spiritual castration and leaves a man spiritually emasculated and impotent. He has no spiritual "guts"—no godliness—which is at the heart of biblical manhood.

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<sup>34</sup> For further help on the spiritual disciplines you need to develop, study Kent R. Hughes book, *Disciplines of a Godly Man* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1991).

<sup>35</sup> If you are single, you should be preparing yourself financially, socially, educationally, emotionally, and spiritually so that you would make a strong spiritual leader in a home should God bring a prospective spouse across your path.

It is significant that the OT sign that a man belonged to God was circumcision. God gave him a daily reminder that God had made certain promises to him, and the man in turn was to keep his promises to God. He would begin the path of his own disintegration if he broke the covenants that bound him.

## 2. You must recognize the characteristics of an affair.

An affair is any over-involvement that drains energy from the marriage relationship. It can be a sexual affair, but it can also be non-sexual—work, sports, buddies, ministry, etc. What are the warning signs that an affair is in progress?

### Resentment

Affairs begin with discontentment (which we saw is fueled by unbelief: “God is not doing enough for me; God Himself is not enough for me. I need something more.”) Check your attitude about your spouse (Malachi 2:11-16 says “take heed to your spirit” about your spouse).

- a. What do you say about your spouse?
- b. Do you move toward your spouse (relationally) rather than away from her when you see her coming (when opportunity arise)?
- c. Do you seek out ways to come into more contact with your spouse?

A discontent spirit is characterized by unfulfilled expectations and “its not fair/if only” thinking. When you recognize this stage, know that you are on “The Way Down.” This is why your personal walk with God is so critical. Without the “life of God” satisfying you, you will be discontent when your world is not the way you want it.

Note: This downward spiral illustrates the process of degeneration for any commitment you should be maintaining in the will of God—to your spouse, to your vocational calling or education, to your God, or to your church.

### Restlessness

You are now keeping a list of injustices; discontentment and dissatisfaction are increasing. Bitterness is building. Since bitter people are not happy, they look around for something to make them feel “alive and real and fulfilled.” They desire “adventure.” They want something to be happening that will relieve the discontentment they feel.

### Rationalization

This is where the mental gymnastics begin:

- “She is far more intellectually stimulating/ compassionate/ exciting/ understanding/ spiritually-minded than my wife.”
- “If I weren’t married, I’d ask her out.”
- “Nothing will ever happen; this is just innocent helpfulness.”

The mind-games of excusing, planning, justifying, and anticipating build. You look forward to special appointments, lunch dates, innocent outings, opportunities to help her with her car, etc. You might even begin sharing with her your spouse’s deficiencies—flattering your new “focus” with how she is so much better.

### Rendezvous

Here the contact has moved to private meeting times and perhaps sexual contact. Once the relationship has gone sexual, it is unlikely you will ever get out without another person’s involvement, preferably your pastor or someone with spiritual clout in your life. Genital contact takes the relationship to a level of intimacy that is reserved for a marriage covenant. It violates the current marriage covenant and seduces the lovers into a “fantasy covenant” that is hard to break.

## Summary

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To stay out of a skid, you must commit yourself to developing a growing and mature relationship with Jesus Christ and a similar relationship with your wife.



# SESSION 8

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## Rescue Strategies (Getting Out of a Skid)

When you are driving on ice it is easier to stay out of a skid than it is to get out of one once you are in it. An average but careful driver can stay out of most skids, but it takes a “fancy” driver to recover from a skid.

### Rescue Depends Upon God

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*And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. (Joel 2:25-26)*

The theme throughout this entire study is that God is the only one who can breathe life into a man. He is the Source of what makes a man feel “alive and real and fulfilled.” Without Him even a harem of 1000 women will not be satisfying. Man was made to drink living water. You must make your relationship with God top priority in your life as we have been seeing in previous sessions.

### Rescue Hinges on Repentance

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*He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. (Proverbs 28:13).*

#### 1. Confess<sup>36</sup>

a. Admit your wrong to the one(s) you have wronged in terms they would agree with.

1) You must confess your sin to God.

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9).*

2) Your wife must know about your failure.

You have violated a covenant agreement with her (Malachi 2:14). You have taken authority over your body which belongs to her (1 Corinthians 7:1-4).

It will help your wife believe that you are serious about turning from your sin if you have already disclosed your sin to your pastor and placed yourself under his accountability.

Understand, however, that while your confession may greatly relieve your burden of sin and secrecy, your wife will have just now been given an enormous burden that she must work through. It will appear to you that your problems are over, although they are not; you have much work to do. She will feel as if her problems are just beginning.

She will have as hard a time fighting her imaginations about your involvement with pornography or another person as you will have fighting your memories. This is a time for both of you to realize how hard it is for the other person.

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<sup>36</sup> For more help on the issues of confession and forgiveness study the following:

Adams, Jay E. *From Forgiveness to Forgiving: Discover the Path to Biblical Forgiveness* (Calvary Press, 1997).

Berg, Jim. *Quieting a Noisy Soul: Overcoming Guilt, Anxiety, Anger, and Despair* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 2005).

Vaughan Harold and T.P. Johnston. *Forgiveness: How to Get Along With Everybody All the Time!* (Vinton, VA: Christ Life Publications, 1992).

3) Your pastor must know about your failure.

It will relieve your wife some to know you are getting counsel, and you need the accountability of someone who will not only ask you if you are staying clean but will hold you accountable for building your relationship with God and with your wife.

If you have any position of trust and leadership in the church your pastor must know of your problem in order to make the necessary adjustments to your responsibilities—care of teens or children, teaching or financial responsibilities, etc.

4) Your children must know about your failure if they are old enough to understand and if they might find out some other way (from church discipline, gossip, etc.) or if they have already suspected something.

5) Your employer or other organizations in which you hold membership need to know if your moral character is a condition for employment or membership.

If you have broken a covenant with them, they have a right to reevaluate your standing in light of the new information. It is just as wrong to hold on to a membership you have disqualified yourself from as it is to hold on to stolen goods. Reconciliation involves restoring what you have taken dishonestly, whether that be money, trust, or membership.

The confessions of King David and King Saul reveal the difference between genuine repentance (“godly sorrow”) and regret (“sorrow of the world”). A repentant man does not negotiate the consequences of his sin.

Study the background and the message of 2 Corinthians 7. The repentance of the Corinthian church after Paul’s rebuke in his first epistle to them is exemplary and shows the characteristics of a genuinely repentant heart.

b. Admit the other external manifestations of sin as well as the internal issue.

From whence come wars and fightings [external manifestations] among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members [internal issues]? (James 4:1)

Your problem isn’t just the sexual sin on the “ring” of the donut, but the “self-centeredness” that permeates your other roles and responsibilities on the donut “ring.” Spend time reflecting on all your behaviors in all areas of your life. Make a list of manifestations of your selfishness. Share it with your wife, pastor, or trusted friend and ask them to add to the list anything you have missed. Humility is the key characteristic of genuine repentance. Don’t ask them to do this unless you have a significant list already started. If you have listed nothing, you are either still in hiding or lazy. Do not ask others to do your “dirty work.”

God is interested in cleaning up all of your life—all parts of the donut—not just the part that is the most embarrassing and disturbing at the present.

**2. Forsake**—be willing to accept corrective measures.<sup>37</sup>

a. Restitution (Luke 19:8) – You cannot remain in a state of having profited from your sin.

b. Restriction

1) Just because the sin has been forgiven does not mean that further consequences should not follow.

In God’s providence, the consequences are often needed for motivation to make lasting change.

Restoration of fellowship and restoration to trust and leadership are two entirely different matters involving two entirely different sets of qualifications. The restoration of fellowship requires a change of heart about the sin—repentance and confession; the restoration of trust or leadership requires a change of character—forsaking of sin (Proverbs 28:13). Even then, though character may be changed, God may still forbid a position of trust and leadership, such as the return of an adulterous man to the pastorate.

2) Adam and Eve were never allowed to return to Eden even though they obviously accepted the skins of covering God gave them symbolizing His forgiveness.

<sup>37</sup> This section is adapted from *Taking Time to Quiet Your Noisy Soul*, the worktext in the counseling program *Quieting a Noisy Soul* by Jim Berg (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 2005), 28-29.

- 3) Moses was never allowed to enter the Promised Land as the leader of Israel even though his relationship with God was restored after striking the rock and even though God used him in the ministry after the sin.
- 4) David was used by God to write many psalms and to lead Israel after his heinous sins, but the consequences continued his entire life. Even after God granted forgiveness, God allowed his concubines to be violated and his family to remain divided as long as he lived. Those continued consequences were designed by God to wean David from an adulterous heart. They were not signs that God had not forgiven him.
- 5) The prodigal son was restored to fellowship with the father, but his inheritance was not restored. He had already spent it. There are some things you lose when you sin that you can never get back.

#### c. Radical amputation

- 1) A truly repentant man will be willing to do whatever it takes to keep from sinning again.
- 2) The term “radical amputation” was coined by Jay E. Adams to show that the action Jesus is demanding is “radical” because it involves doing whatever is necessary to make it hard to sin again—metaphorically taught by plucking out an eye or cutting off an arm (amputation). See *Ready to Restore* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), 58-59.

*(NASV) And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell. (Matthew 5:29-30)*

*Flee also youthful lusts. (2 Timothy 2:22)*

*Flee fornication [sexual immorality]. (1 Corinthians 6:18)*

- 3) Radically amputate “trigger points” and “rituals”

Depending upon the nature of the sin this may mean eliminating (i.e., radically amputating) friends who have a negative influence; destroying sensual music recordings, removing fleshly television programming, books and magazines from the home; avoiding any time alone (particularly if an addiction is involved); changing a work schedule that keeps you away from home or church; destroying credit cards; canceling internet access or a cable or satellite subscription (or removing the television altogether); and so forth.

It may mean taking a different route home from work, changing jobs to stay away from certain people, canceling the private post office box, letting your wife see all the financial and cell phone records, letting your wife have the only password to the internet and all folders on your computer, throwing away any gifts, letters, pictures, and other reminders of the other person, and so forth.

The main principles are “no secrets” and “no trigger points.”

#### d. Restructure your life.

- 1) Restructuring first requires radical amputation.
- 2) It also requires personal accountability to someone else for structure and order in your life.

Usually this means regular contact with a pastor or peer for instruction, correction, and encouragement. If it is with a peer, the peer must be committed to getting the pastor involved if you are resistant. Accountability without clout isn’t accountability.

Usually this means going through a prepared structure program for change.

a) Begin with a book or study on overcoming sexual sin for the first month.

b) Follow up with *Quieting a Noisy Soul* for the next six months.

The first study addresses the sexual problems from a spiritual standpoint with many practical helps. The second provides the biblical foundation for a stable walk with God and addresses many of the attendant problems of sexual misconduct—guilt, anger, despair, fear/anxiety.

3)It often requires marital counseling for both you and your wife in order to get your marriage back on track. *You* should take the initiative to contact the pastor/counselor even if your wife makes the suggestion first. You should maintain the counseling by *your* initiative until both your wife and your pastor are satisfied that you have become a different man—a giver instead of a taker; a lover of God and others instead of a lover of self.

A lack of initiative on your part shows that you are not doing “whatever it takes” to please God by a healthy marriage. A lack of interest in spiritual/marital issues shows that the spiritual virility is still lacking. Often that means repentance was not genuine, or that you fudged on “radical amputation,” or that you are dodging spiritual accountability and structure.

## **Rescue Continues Through Faithful Men**

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*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. (2 Timothy 2:2)*

Though a wife might hold the password or the cell phone records, she should not have the burden of discipling her husband. She is to follow him, her spiritual leader, not lead him spiritually. Men in the church must devote the time necessary to strengthen themselves and then help their fallen and repentant brothers to grow in Christ.

The principles presented in this seminar and the list of resources in the Annotated Bibliography in Appendix D provide more than enough material for faithful, godly men to equip themselves and each other to minister to those both inside and outside the church who battle sexual lust. This is no time for lazy, pleasure-driven men. Our day calls for spiritually-minded who can come alongside those who struggle and offer them the Living God.

# APPENDICES

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## Appendix A

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### A LETTER TO A BROTHER

Through the years I have had numerous contacts with Christian men and women struggling with various degrees of homosexual desire. I am presenting below a fictitious letter of inquiry that illustrates the typical cry for help. The letter represents no one single individual; however, everything mentioned has been true in one situation or another. I have blended situations together to protect the identity of fellow believers. Furthermore, my reply does not represent a reply to a single individual but again is a compilation of replies.

Please note that in the letter below, the young man's homosexual desires and his fixation upon "feminine emotions" were created by his own thought processes. These desires are so strong that they indeed feel like needs. He does not need someone to meet those "needs." He needs someone to help him recognize his "needs" for what they are (inflamed desires which must be denied and replaced) and someone who will lovingly and compassionately disciple him toward a biblical view of life.

The struggle you see portrayed here is not new, nor is it uncommon in our day. This brother rightly takes responsibility for his sinful fantasies and refuses to blame his cousin for his present struggles. My reply, typical of what I would send to such an inquiry, focuses on why his desires—both sexual and emotional—seem so strong that they feel like desperate needs to him.

I hope this gives you some help as you consider how to help others who are struggling with the same temptations.

#### Dear Dr. Berg:

I am writing you because I am struggling with something very shameful in my life. A friend who has tried to help me recommended that I contact you. I will tell you my story and then share with you the struggles I face in the present. I will try not to be unnecessarily indiscreet, but I want you to know enough so that you will understand the nature of problem.

I grew up in a pretty normal Christian home. My dad was a building contractor and an avid sportsman—hunting, fishing, etc. My older brothers followed his interests and enjoyed great times of comradery with Dad on hunting and fishing trips. I was a "surprise baby" born ten years after my second brother was born, so my brothers were not around for me to play with when I was young. They were already in high school and had their own schedules and interests by the time I was five.

Instead of developing a love for the outdoors, I appreciated fine music and enjoyed learning to cook in the kitchen with my mother. Dad, though a Christian, was pretty rough on Mom. He didn't treat her kindly, and I resented him for it and pitied Mom. She never complained and always reacted with a gentle Christian spirit which I admired.

One summer my seventeen-year-old cousin came to live with us and work with Dad on the construction crew. He had been a handful at home for my aunt and uncle, and they thought a summer of hard work would be good for him.<sup>38</sup> I was twelve at the time, and both my brothers were out of the house and on their own. I really liked my cousin, and he seemed to take an interest in me—something my father and my brothers had never done. I especially enjoyed playing video games in the evenings with him. He showed me how to download additional games from the Internet. But he also introduced me to pornography on the Internet. My parents never suspected anything.

<sup>38</sup> By the way, I have seen several parents look to hard work as a remedy for teen rebellion. While a stubborn teen may need to learn personal responsibility—and a teenage boy should be working hard instead of filling his life with parties, video games, and sports—hard work is not a cure for rebellion. In this case, working long hours would show this boy that responsible living requires effort, but what he really needed was a spiritually-minded adult who would use the frustrations and opportunities of manual labor to call him to self-denial and a right view of God. The uncle in this situation wasn't spiritually strong—though he had a strong work ethic—and no discipleship was taking place in his son's life or in his nephew's life. The letter shows the tragic result of neglect in both boys' lives.

He showed me mostly male pornography. At first I was disgusted, but I will have to admit I was also curious. I wanted to be a man with all my heart and felt something was missing from my development. My cousin taught me to stimulate myself, and we eventually did it watching each other. I look back and see that this was probably his plan from the beginning. He was heavily into male pornography and was looking for someone to join him.

After he left that summer, I continued my Internet searches, and my urges to indulge myself grew to unquenchable proportions. I lived for sexual gratification. I was terribly ashamed, but I felt irresistibly drawn to what I was viewing on the screen. I can honestly say that though the sexual draw was strong, my real desire was for a relationship with a strong man who would care about me. Initially, I saw that in my cousin. I thought he really cared. He was physically strong yet tender and patient with me. I had seen physical strength in my dad but despised his lack of gentleness with Mom and me. I see now that my cousin's attention was probably just his way of preparing me to join him in his evil acts.

When I was fourteen, I went to a summer Christian camp for a week and got saved. My family attended a good church, and I had gone forward at age eight at a vacation Bible school program, but initially only because a friend of mine went forward and I wanted to be with him. Looking back now, I know I was saved, but I never had assurance of my salvation. I'm sure the continued indulgence in my sin didn't help that. Every time I fell, I would pray to be saved again.

I finally got so disgusted with my life and the bondage I was in that I wanted to take my life. I knew that suicide was wrong and that it would crush my mother. (I think my dad would have been relieved, since he didn't know what to do with a son who couldn't hunt, fish, and wield a hammer on the job site.) I began to read my Bible and pray diligently for God to help me. I knew I could not get out of this by myself.

I went to teen camp again the next summer and talked with one of the visiting youth sponsors about my problem. I had heard him speak at a youth rally in our church, and I thought he could help me. He said I needed to confront my cousin and tell him that his actions had started my journey to ruin. He thought that was all I needed to do to solve my problem. I disagreed with him.

I had forgiven my cousin in my heart right after I was saved and had even tried to witness to him. He was married by that time, though he and his wife had numerous problems. Anyway, though my cousin started me down the wrong path, he is not responsible for my actions. I cannot blame him or anyone else for my sinful actions and thoughts. I wish now that I had talked with one of the camp directors that summer. I think I would have gotten better advice than I received from the youth sponsor I spoke with.

I can tell you that for a couple of years now I have not indulged in pornography or my old sexual habits. I began a systematic program of memorizing and meditating upon Scripture. God is helping me with my thought life and my old desires. I am concerned, however, about what I call "feminine emotions." It seems that my sensitivities are greater than other men. I seem to latch onto relationships with men in an overly dependent way. I expect perfection from their testimonies and am sensitive about anything they would say that is hurtful to me. I have even fantasized about hugging them. I don't want anything sexual. I know that the homosexual lifestyle is wrong and would never satisfy. It would be a life of constant guilt and pain. I don't want to go there with my life. I just want the security of strong male friendship. I have to admit that I have become so possessive in a couple of those relationships that I destroyed them. You cannot imagine the heartache I felt when those men pulled away from me because of my jealousy and intensity.

What am I supposed to do with these desires for tenderness, gentleness, and compassion in my relationships with men? Sometimes I am so lonely that all I can do is weep and pray. I have had thoughts of suicide again because I am so empty. Something seems to be missing. The desire I have for these relationships seems to be as strong as the desire for sexual gratification used to be. I seem to really need a close relationship; yet I sabotage every one that develops. I don't want to spend the rest of my life alone. I want to be married. I want to be a normal man. How do I become a real man both in my physical and emotional desires? Have you ever seen anyone in my situation change, or do I have to look forward to this kind of pain all my life?

I just got your book *Changed into His Image*, but have not read it yet. I know it is biblical and will give me the right advice rather than psychology. It's frustrating because when I hurt, I can't just walk up to one of my friends and spill my guts and have him empathize with me. I realize it doesn't work that way in this world. I wish my problem had been alcohol or drugs. I could have spoken freely then. Any help you could give me would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

A frustrated brother

## Dear Brother:

To understand what is happening in your life, there are several matters that you must consider together. First, there is the matter of your sinful nature within.

You already see how that nature can pollute even legitimate desires for friendship, companionship, etc. Since you have *Changed into His Image*, spend some time in the first five chapters to get a good overview of that nature and how it is at work in you now. Since you can read those chapters to help you understand the sinful nature, I won't say more about it but will concentrate on how your desires for sexual experiences with men have become so strong and why your desire for certain emotional factors seems so powerful.

Let's begin by considering the diagnosis Paul makes of the heart in Ephesians 2:3. He says,

Among whom also we all had our [lifestyle] in times past in the lusts of our flesh ["flesh" here meaning the sinful nature], fulfilling the desires of the flesh ["flesh" here speaking of the body] and of the mind."

It is important to see that he addresses two kinds of desires—those of the body and those of the mind. Both kinds of desires can be fuel for the "lusts of our flesh." The word flesh is used twice in Ephesians 2:30. The first time it is mentioned, it refers to the sinful nature. The second time it applies to the body as it is contrasted to the mind. It is important to distinguish between these meanings. The meaning of the word flesh in the Scripture always has to be determined by the context in order for us to know whether it is talking about the body or about the sinful nature.

The important point to see is stated towards the end of the verse where he distinguishes between two kinds of desires—desires of the body and desires of the mind. Let me illustrate the difference between desires of the body and of the mind this way.

I liken the desires of the body to the standard equipment of a car. When you purchase a car, you generally get an engine, four wheels, a steering wheel, etc., as standard equipment. If you want specialty items—leather upholstery, deluxe wheel covers, enhanced sound system, etc.—you must order them as part of a custom package; these things are not standard equipment.

The desire to eat, the desire to breathe, the desire to have sex once puberty is reached—all of these are standard desires of the body; they come with the original package. They cannot be eliminated and are to be gratified only within biblical bounds. For example, I have a desire to eat, but I cannot steal my food or eat in a gluttonous fashion without violating God's commands concerning how I gratify that desire. The same is true with regard to the desire for sex. It is standard equipment, but it must be gratified within God's parameters (i.e., only with one's heterosexual marriage partner).

In addition, God has built into us the ability to have desires of the mind. That is the function of the human heart upon which advertisers and marketers depend. If they can get you to *think* about something often enough, reviewing its benefits in your mind, they can increase your desire for the object. For example, no baby comes into the world with a natural desire for designer clothes. That is a learned desire that he picks up from his culture as he gets older. Since it is a learned desire, it can be changed or un-learned as well.

Think back to your junior high days. There may have been an article of clothing that you desired to have when you were in junior high that you would not think of wearing now. When you were in junior high, you may have thought so much about the benefits of that particular article of clothing that you actually became physically sick when you even thought about going to school without having it. The desire seemed so strong, so much a part of you, and therefore, so legitimate. It felt as natural to you as the desire to eat. In fact, sometimes it was stronger than your appetite for food.

Today you would not be caught dead wearing the item, because you have changed the way you think about it. Since you no longer mull over in your mind the benefits of that article of clothing, it no longer has the same value to you nor the same pull on you. Your desire for it has decreased proportionately, to the point now where it is basically extinct. You have un-learned the desire.

These learned desires of the mind, which grow and diminish based upon our thoughts as to their value and benefit to us, apply to many areas—including sex. The normal sexual desire is a desire of the body, but it can be customized—intensified in strength and/or focus—in all sorts of unusual and perverted ways through the desires of the mind. This is where the whole concept of fetishes, homosexuality, bestiality, pedophilia, or pornography comes into play. They are all learned customizations of a standard bodily desire.

I have had men tell me, “God gave me such a turbo-charged sex drive, I don’t know what to do with it.” As we talk, I point out to them that God gave them a normal sex drive, but that they have turbo-charged or intensified it by the way they have allowed their thoughts to focus on their fantasies, causing their desires to grow. Some have created strong desires for a particular customized type of sex as their mind has thought about it, just like a teen’s desire for a designer article of clothing will grow as he thinks about the benefits and value of that garment to his acceptance among his peers, etc.

The difficulty with a normal sex desire that has been customized by the mind—either in intensity or manner of expression—is that since part of it is a normal desire that cannot be extinguished, it seems as if there is no relief. The remedy is not easy to do, but it is rather easy to understand. The person must restrain any misuse of sex. He must prevent expressions of the customized aspects of it. At the same time, he must forbid expressions of the normal desire outside of marriage. He must also change his focus and thoughts so that his desire for his particular designer brand of sex diminishes as he refuses to feed it.

The same phenomenon is at work with regard to what you call “feminine emotions”—the great desire you experience for intimacy and security within a relationship, the high value you place on tenderness and kindness, etc. These, too, are desires that are enlarged in our minds by the way we think about certain things.

For example, a fellow who has experienced a great deal of rejection by his father may think that he needs a dad in order to turn out right. As he sorrows over his loss, thinks about how he has been done wrong, and looks at the resulting emptiness in his life, he may decide that the most beneficial thing he could have is a relationship with a man. He doesn’t need a father, but he has developed a strong desire for a father because in his value system he sees that it would be extremely beneficial for him and has thought much about it.

The same is true of his desires for tenderness and other softer matters of life. If they have been absent in a person’s life, he may think the reason he has problems is because people have not treated him with this kind of attitude, and therefore he needs it. Actually, he has merely customized his desires and elevated those things to a high value in his own mind, creating strong desires in that direction. Changing the way he thinks about them can diminish those desires, too.

God tells us, of course, that tenderness and compassion are important because they are the fruit of His Spirit. They are things we need to concentrate on reflecting in our own lives, but we should never think that we cannot function as a responsible, caring adult if folks have not treated us that way. If emotional sensitivities have grown to that great a level, it is because of the same phenomenon—desires of the mind—at work.

I might mention one other thing about these “feminine emotions.” We don’t strive as believers to come to some kind of balance between feminine and masculine qualities.

We turn our face toward God and meditate on what kind of person He is. He then works out His own fruit in our life, and His fruit corrects the abnormalities of any of the other problems in our lives. I address that at length in Part 2 of the book *Changed into His Image*, where I speak about what it means to renew your mind. I would point you to that section for further study.

You mention that you are aware of the “replacement principle.” The replacement for inappropriate emotional intimacy and/or unbiblical sexual intimacy outside of marriage is the intimacy with Christ that the sexual relationship is picturing in Ephesians 5:30-32.

I address how to develop a close relationship with God in Chapters 6 and 7 of *Changed into His Image*, so again, I will not discuss the matter here.

I hope these few paragraphs will give you some direction about how to view your desires. We have a great God Who will use our struggles and temptations to draw us to Himself in renewed dependence. Let me know if I can help you further.

Your brother in Christ,

Jim Berg



## Appendix B

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### HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

#### A Crucial Question<sup>39</sup>

Let me ask you a personal question. If you were to die today from a terminal illness or in some tragic accident and you were to stand before God, how would you answer God when He asked you this question: “Why should I let you into My heaven?”

Some people might feel that because they have been deeply religious and have obeyed the Ten Commandments most of the time, God should let them into heaven. Others might feel that because they have lived by the Golden Rule and have been honest and moral in their dealings with others, they should be allowed to enter. They are saying essentially that God should allow them to enter heaven because they have been good in some way.

Jesus predicted that many people would come to Him on that day and would say exactly those things. He says that His reply to them will be, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that [practice sin]” (Matthew 7:23). You see, no matter how many good things we have done, the factor that will keep us out of heaven is our sin.

The Bible makes it clear that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). That means that all of us have lived as if we are important and that God doesn’t matter. We instinctively place ourselves first instead of God and turn to our “own way” (Isaiah 53:6).

Even our effort to get to heaven by being good shows our rebellion against God because He said that there is no way any of us can be good enough to merit heaven.

Every one of us has broken His Ten Commandments—and have done so many times. He very clearly said that the “wages of sin is [eternal] death” (Romans 6:23). That means that all of us, because of our rebellion of going our own stubborn way in life, deserve the everlasting punishment of hell because of our mutiny against the Creator.

#### Good News!

The good news for us is that eternal life—life in heaven with Jesus Christ forever—is not something we have to earn. It is a gift! Though “the wages of sin is [eternal] death; . . . the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). That is good news because the Bible also tells us that it is “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us” (Titus 3:5). God is willing to mercifully give us a gift we cannot earn. He wants to give us eternal life. But that gift must be personally received by us.

The student center on the campus of Bob Jones University, where I minister, operates a lost and found area for the students. If the lost item has a name on it, the student center staff notifies the student to come to pick it up. If there is no name on it, the staff holds it for several weeks and then disposes of it or sells it for a small price at a lost and found sale. The staff is very willing to let the student have his property, but he must come by and show his identification card to claim it.

Salvation from the eternal punishment of our sins is available to everyone, but we, too, must personally claim it.

How can salvation be a free gift? Though it is free to us, it cost Jesus Christ everything. You see, our sins against God require that a penalty be paid. Sinning against our Creator is such a great offence that the only just penalty is eternal suffering and separation from God Himself in hell. Hell is the result of God’s granting a man his request—“God, leave me alone.” We may not realize it, but that is essentially what we say to God every time we reject His way and live life our own way. That is the bad news for the sinner.

The good news is that God loves us and arranged for His own Son to live on this earth to pay the penalty for us. Though Jesus lived in a body like ours, He did not share our sinful and stubborn nature. He lived a sinless life in complete obedience to His Father while on the earth. He qualified—as a perfect sacrificial lamb—to die in our place. Look at these chilling but wonderful words from the Old Testament, which predicted the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross for us.

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39 Jim Berg, *When Trouble Comes* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 2002), 21-27.

*He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement [for] our peace was upon him: and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:5-6).*

The apostle John states the same thing this way:

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. . . . He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God (John 3:16, 18).*

Jesus' sacrifice of His own blood as the eternal payment for anyone who would believe on Him satisfied the righteous anger of God against our mutiny. All that is left is for us to admit to God that we are indeed hell-deserving sinners, realize that Jesus died in our place and arose from the dead, and then accept the gift of eternal life from God. It is a simple plan—one that even a child can understand. A child will cry out for help to the person he believes will help him. A sinner who wants the gift of eternal life can come to Jesus Christ by praying a prayer like this:

*Lord Jesus, I realize that I am a sinner. I have not obeyed You. I have gone my own way many times. Since You are perfect and Your heaven is perfect, I realize that even one sin would disqualify me from heaven.<sup>40</sup> I repent of my sin and ask Your forgiveness. I accept Your gift of eternal life. I want Your substitutionary death to be applied to my sin account.<sup>41</sup> Cleanse me from my sin and make me one of Your own children.<sup>42</sup> Thank you for loving me and for saving me.*

It is my prayer that if you do not know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior from sin, that you will repent of your sin and come to Christ today. He is waiting to hear from you.

*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Romans 10:13).*

<sup>40</sup> James 2:10.

<sup>41</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:21.

<sup>42</sup> John 1:12.

## Cultivating Christian Character

*A Template for Disciples and Disciple-Makers*

(Summary of 2 Peter 1)

*Based upon the provisions of God for you (1-4) make every effort to cultivate the conditions in which God can produce in you the qualities (5-7) which ensure that your Christian walk is vibrant and stable and which indicate that your faith is genuine (8-11). Continually keep this pattern in front of you (12-15) for it is from God (16-21). Furthermore, it is the only antidote for twisted doctrine and twisted morals (chapters 2-3).*

(v.5) The Foundation of Christian Character	(v.6) The Vigor of Christian Character	(v.7) The Badge of Christian Character
<p><b>Virtue</b></p> <p>Cultivating a God-honoring commitment to develop and display the excellencies (character) of Jesus Christ<sup>43</sup></p> <p>↓</p> <p><b>Knowledge</b></p> <p>Cultivating a God-taught understanding of the person, the work, and the ways of Jesus Christ that fuels fellowship with Him and imitation of Him.</p>	<p><b>Self-control</b></p> <p>Cultivating a God-empowered mastery of internal desires</p> <p>↓</p> <p><b>Endurance</b></p> <p>Cultivating a God-sustained faithfulness under external pressure</p> <p>↓</p> <p><b>Godliness</b></p> <p>Cultivating a God-focused devotion that consistently promotes righteousness and opposes evil</p>	<p><b>Brotherly kindness</b></p> <p>Cultivating a God-engendered affection for and service to fellow believers</p> <p>↓</p> <p><b>Love</b></p> <p>Cultivating a God-pleasing lifestyle that Scripturally and sacrificially meets the genuine needs of others—especially the lost and the unlovely</p>
<p>Develops a <u>worshiper</u> with a <i>heart for God</i>; he <u>knows</u> and <u>loves</u> Christ.</p>	<p>Develops a <u>warrior</u> with <i>strength of heart</i>; he <u>obeys</u> and <u>champions</u> Christ.</p>	<p>Develops a <u>worker</u> with a <i>heart for others</i>; he <u>imitates</u> and <u>pleases</u> Christ.</p>

**Default:** worldliness → weakness/willfulness → wickedness

<sup>43</sup> "Virtue" means the "praiseworthy excellencies" of Christ which the believer is to "shew forth" by his life (1 Peter 2:9).

## Appendix D

### ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Please note that inclusion of a work in this list does not imply endorsement of other works by these authors nor of the ministries they represent. God has used them to be of service to the Body through these works, but many of the resources listed here mention and promote other ministries, movements, and authors from the broader evangelical spectrum which a separatist could not endorse.

## Biblical Morality and Overcoming Sexual Sin

Arterburn, Stephen and Fred Stoeker with Mike Yorkey. *Every Man's Battle: Every Man's Guide to Winning the War on Sexual Temptation One Victory at a Time*. Colorado Springs, Colorado: Waterbrook Press, 2000.

TWO CAUTIONS: 1) This book is very helpful to those who have been ensnared in deep sexual sin but is too graphic for those who have not. 2) This is the only book with Stephen Arterburn's name on it that can be recommended. It is biblically sound because it was written by Fred Stoeker with Arterburn's name used to promote the book. The study guide for this book and everything else in the "Every Man's Battle," "Every Young Man's Battle," and "Every Woman's Battle" series is very tainted with the integrationist philosophy which mixes pop psychology with biblical truth.

Berg, Jim. *Quieting a Noisy Soul: Overcoming Guilt, Anxiety, Anger, and Despair*. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University, 2005. This DVD seminar/worktext program is a natural follow-up to the Purity—Winning the Battle in a Perverse World Seminar. It offers a 24-week structured program to saturate your mind with truth in order to deal biblically with the guilt, anxiety, anger, and despair that accompany sexual sin. See [www.QuietingANoisySoul.com](http://www.QuietingANoisySoul.com) for details. A Leader's Guide, available for free download from the website, offers suggestions for use of the program in personal counseling, small groups, or larger church viewings.

Binney, Jim. *Living Purely in an Impure World*. New Concord, Ohio: The Counselors Pen Publications, 2003 (192 pages). A helpful tool for the Christian man seeking to understand his own battles and looking for practical help for deliverance. Check out other resources from Dr. Binney at [www.LeadMinistries.net](http://www.LeadMinistries.net).

Dallas, Joe. *The Game Plan: The Men's 30-Day Strategy for Attaining Sexual Integrity*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2005 (225 pages). Practical guidance for personal study but best used with an accountability partner. Presents the R.O.U.T.E. (Repentance, Order, Understanding, Training, Endurance) back to stability. Check out other resources from Joe Dallas at [www.JoeDallas.com](http://www.JoeDallas.com).

Gallagher, Steve. *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*. Dry Ridge, Kentucky: Pure Life Ministries, 1986, 2000 (285 pages). This is perhaps the most helpful book available today. It is intensely practical since it is born out of Gallagher's own sexual addiction and subsequent ministry to the sexually addicted at Pure Life Ministries, but is entirely biblical. This is a must read for those in sexual bondage and for those who disciple them. Check out other resources from Steve Gallaher at [www.PureLifeMinistries.org](http://www.PureLifeMinistries.org).

Harris, Joshua. *Sex is Not the Problem (Lust Is): Sexual Purity in a Lust-Saturated World* (previously released as *Not Even a Hint*) Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, 2003 (190 pages). Every father should read this book with his teenage son and discuss its principles, but only after the father has read it himself to see if his son is ready for the content. Very biblical and very practical.

Heimbach, Daniel R. *True Sexual Morality: Recovering Biblical Standards for a Culture in Crisis*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2004 (525 pages). This is the most complete exposition of everything the Bible says about moral standards and immoral practices. He traces four moral positions through history (romantic sexual morality, playboy sexual morality, therapeutic sexual morality, pagan sexual morality) and contrasts their errors with scripture. It lays a theological foundation for sexual morality and addresses every immoral practice mentioned in scripture including adultery, prostitution, polygamy, pedophilia, homosexuality, and bestiality. This is a rich resource for pastors and studious fathers.

Hummel, Rand. *Lest You Fall: Meditations to Fight Moral Impurity*. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 2005 (133 pages). Provides eighteen meditations on moral purity and teaches the reader how to meditate upon the Scriptures himself. Appropriate for young teens on up.

Minnick, Mark. *Getting Back Up—Spiritual Renewal*. This is a series of ten messages preached at Mount Calvary Baptist Church, Greenville, SC and available from the church website at [www.mountcalvarybaptist.org](http://www.mountcalvarybaptist.org). Though not dealing with sexual sin exclusively, the series very thoroughly addresses the struggles and biblical solutions for those who have stumbled in their Christian walk.

Mahaney, C. J. *Sex, Romance, and the Glory of God*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2004 (139 pages). His main theme for husbands is “before you touch her body, touch her heart and mind.” Very biblical and practical book on how a husband can restore romance into his marriage.

Piper, John and Justin Taylor, editors. *Sex and the Supremacy of Christ*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2005 (283 pages). Very sound and uplifting call to biblical morality by several authors. Addresses homosexuality, sexual addiction, singleness and sex for both men and women, and exalts sex within marriage.

Smith, Robert D., M.D. *Biblical Principles of Sex*. Stanley, NC: Timeless Texts, 2003 (51 pages). Dr. Smith is a retired physician and a nouthetic counselor who blends his wisdom from both fields into a very short but helpful book for every husband and for about-to-be-married men.

Wheat, Ed., M.D. *Intended for Pleasures: Sex Technique and Sexual Fulfillment in Christian Marriage*. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1977 (256 pages). Though this book has been around many years, it is still the best manual for premarital counseling as well as a resource that addresses problems which will arise with pregnancy, menopause, impotence, and aging. Occasional references condoning a “giving-to-get” philosophy and self-esteem, but overall the book is extremely valuable. Every couple should own a copy—and read it.

White, John. *Eros Defiled: The Christian and Sexual Sin*. Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1977 (300 pages). This frank and biblical treatise was one of the first to discuss sexual sin and still remains a solid study. It covers masturbation, petting, homosexuality, and adultery. Very helpful.

Wilson, Doug. *Fidelity*. Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 1999 (168 pages). Clear—and sometimes blunt— presentation of biblical teaching applied to various topics pertaining to sex: lust, pornography, fornication, adultery, divorce, prostitution, rape, polygamy, sodomy, masturbation, and celibacy. He concludes the book with practical instructions for the kind of relationship within marriage that makes for joyous sex. A complete scriptural index makes this a valuable commentary of sorts as well.

[www.ReformU.com](http://www.ReformU.com) is the website for Reformer’s Unanimous, a biblically-based organization which, in addition to its on-site residential counseling ministry, provides training for churches who wish to start a ministry to those with addictions of any kind. Materials are scripturally sound and effective.

[www.PureLifeMinistries.org](http://www.PureLifeMinistries.org) is the website for Steve Gallagher’s ministry. He is the author of *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry* and offers useful articles and helps for those struggling with sexual sin and addictions.

## Modesty for Women

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Brock, Michelle. *What is Modesty: Discovering the Truth*. Newberry Springs, California: Iron Sharpeneth Iron Publications, 2005 (162 pages). This is a helpful survey of the scriptural issues and contemporary problems women face about dress and deportment. Michelle received her undergrad and graduate degrees from Bob Jones University and prepared this material originally for the college women at Maranatha Baptist Bible College where she was teaching.

DeMoss, Nancy Leigh. *The Look: Does God Really Care What I Wear?* Buchanan, MI: Revive Our Hearts, 2003 (56 pages). A very helpful study booklet for the Christian woman. Presents the biblical foundations and forces the reader to apply them to her daily choices about dress and deportment.

DeMoss, Nancy Leigh. *The Attractive Christian Woman*. This is an audio CD collection of talks given from her “Revive Our Hearts” radio ministry. They are available through [www.ReviveOurHearts.com](http://www.ReviveOurHearts.com). This series of talks based upon 1 Timothy 2:9-10 offers practical application of scriptural truth to the question of how a Christian woman should dress.

Feldhahn, Shaunti. *For Women Only: What You Need to Know About the Inner Lives of Men*. Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, 2004 (192 pages). Based upon extensive research from both Christian and unsaved men, the author teaches women how men think about many issues. The book helps women understand sex from a man’s viewpoint and how that should govern the way a Christian woman dresses.

Gresh, Dannah. *Secret Keeper: The Delicate Power of Modesty*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2005 (96 pages). Though she draws many illustrations and statements from popular culture (movies, CCM artists, etc.), this book offers a very direct and powerful punch against today's obsession with immodest fashion. Mom or dad should read this book before giving it to a teen girl to see if the references to popular culture will make the book more problematic than helpful for their particular teen.

Jones, Beneth Peters. *In the Best Possible Light: Godly Femininity in the Twenty-First Century*. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University, 2004 (241 pages). Discusses more than just a philosophy of dress; addresses etiquette, speech, weight and care of the body, spiritual life and much more. A great guide for mothers and daughters.

Minnick, Mark. *Scripturally Defined Modesty* (1995) and *Scripturally Adjusting Our Conception of Modesty* (2004). These are two two-message series preached at Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Greenville, SC. They are available from the church's website. [www.mountcalvarybaptist.org](http://www.mountcalvarybaptist.org). They are filled with biblical insight and sound application as one would expect from the pulpit of Dr. Minnick.

Vaughan, David and Dianne Vaughan. *The Beauty of Modesty: Cultivating Virtue in the Face of a Vulgar Culture*. Nashville: Cumberland House, 2005 (226 pages). A thorough look at the issue of women's dress and deportment. Careful attention is given to biblical exegesis and to the practical application of the scriptures for today's culture.

## Entertainment Choices

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Medved, Michael. *Hollywood vs. America: Popular Culture and the War on Traditional Values*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992 (386 pages). Medved is a media critic and former screenwriter. The book traces the decline of moral standards in the entertainment world and demonstrates how that decline has contributed to many of society's ills today. Caution: the book contains explicit language and descriptions.

Myers, Kenneth A. *All God's Children and Blue Suede Shoes: Christians and Popular Culture*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1989 (213 pages). Though several years old, this work is an insightful study in how our culture changed with The Sexual Revolution of the sixties. It addresses how the popular culture has affected Christian thought about sex, rock music, etc. Very helpful study.

Postman, Neil. *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1985 (184 pages). Though now over two decades old, this book still provides a solid foundation for understanding how visual media have changed the mental processes, as well as the expectations of modern man. It is a valuable tool for parents who must make choices—not just about the content of the media their children consume—but about the amount of exposure to the media in the first place.

Wilson, Wayne A. *Worldly Amusements: Restoring the Lordship of Christ to Our Entertainment Choices*. Enumclaw, Washington: WinePress Publishing, 1999 (299 pages). Wilson, after finishing a degree in television production from Columbia College, was called into the ministry, finished seminary, and began pastoring. He blends his training in the media, an astute understanding of the history of entertainment, and sound theology into a must-read for every pastor and parent.

Winter, Richard. *Still Bored in a Culture of Entertainment: Rediscovering Passion and Wonder*. Downer's Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2002 (160 pages). Though Winter's perspective as a Christian psychiatrist occasionally interjects itself into his writing in ways that can be distracting to a reader from a non-integrationist viewpoint, he offers much insight into how today's culture is infecting its members with restlessness, boredom, sensuality, and ingratitude. He explores the effects of many entertainment modes today—extreme sports, electronic games, movies, television, and pornography. This is a rich study for the thoughtful pastor or parent.

[www.ScreenIt.com](http://www.ScreenIt.com) is a tremendously helpful site when checking out movie content. It is only marginally helpful until you become a member for approximately \$25 a year. The movie review not only describes the story line but tells to what extent violence, sexual themes, or scenes are portrayed, and lists every word of profanity used and with what frequency. No other internet resource is as detailed as this site. With this resource available, there is no excuse for being surprised by a movie's content.

## Homosexuality

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Dallas, Joe. *The Gay Gospel: How Pro-Gay Advocates Misread the Bible* (formerly, *A Strong Delusion: Confronting the "Gay Christian" Movement*, 1997). Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2007 (245 pages). This is a current revision of Dallas's previous work tracing how the gay rights movement morphed into a Christian gay movement complete with a gay theology to "authorize" their lifestyle. The book concludes with several chapters of useful talking points that expose the error of homosexuality—socially and scripturally.

Dallas, Joe. *Desires in Conflict: Hope for Men Who Struggle with Sexual Identity*. Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1991, 2003 (253 pages). Perhaps the best tool for both the homosexual and for the counselor. Joe's own previous homosexual practice and his rich ministry to homosexuals since coming back to Christ provides practical help for applying biblical principles. Useful appendix articles include "The 'Born-Gay' Question," "Pro-Gay Theology," and "Seven Questions Most Frequently Asked by Parents." Check out other resources by Joe Dallas at [www.JoeDallas.com](http://www.JoeDallas.com).

Dallas, Joe. *When Homosexuality Hits Home: What to Do When a Loved One Says They're Gay*. Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2004 (191 pages). Discusses the biblical response to sinning family members and offers advice for dealing with a gay child, a gay spouse, and other gay family members. Practical and scriptural, though the opening chapter is structured around Kubler-Ross's "Five Stages of Grief." The stages represent findings from secular studies but are not determinative for believers who are maturely walking in Christ. His discussion of each of the states is instructive for those who may experience them, but should not be taken as validation that Kubler-Ross's findings are binding for believers.

Haley, Mike. *101 Frequently Asked Questions About Homosexuality*. Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2004 (221 pages). I have not read and reviewed this book, but it comes highly recommended by Joe Dallas.

Paulk, Anne. *Restoring Sexual Identity: Hope for Women Who Struggle With Same-Sex Attraction*. Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2003 (272 pages). Very helpful book from a woman delivered from a lesbian lifestyle herself. It does contain occasional references to integrationist concepts (i.e., she blends elements of pop psychology with biblical truth).

Welch, Ed. *Homosexuality: Speaking the Truth in Love* (Glenside, PA: Resources for Changing Lives, 2000). This 37-page booklet is a reprint of an article entitled "Homosexuality: Current Thinking and Biblical Guidelines" in *The Journal of Biblical Counseling*, Volume 13, Number 3, Spring 1995, 19-29.

## Marriage and Family

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Adams, Jay E. *Christian Living in the Home*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1972 (143 pages). Provides one of the best, most biblically oriented approaches to marriage and the roles of each spouse. Excellent chapter on communication.

Adams, Jay E. *Solving Marriage Problems*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983 (122 pages). A helpful guide for those working with troubled marriages. Explores unbiblical concepts of marriage, sinful living patterns, problem relationships outside the marriage, etc.

Barnett, John S. *The Joy of a Word Filled Family*. Tulsa: Mullerhaus Publishing, 2004 (446 pages). Scriptural and practical advice from a pastor and loving father of eight children.

Chappel, Bryan. *Each for the Other*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998 (202 pages). Scripturally sound help for establishing a God-honoring marriage.

Eggerichs, Emerson. *Love and Respect*. Nashville: Integrity Publishers, 2004 (324 pages). Especially helpful in trouble-shooting sour marriages, but helpful for every marriage.

Fremont, Walter and Trudy. *Formula for Family Unity*. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1980 (180 pages). Practical wisdom about marriage and the family from a couple with years of experience in counseling and family seminars.

Lloyd-Jones, Martin. *Life in the Spirit: Marriage, Home and Work*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973. Wonderful insight into Paul's teaching on marriage and the home in Ephesians 5.

Mack, Wayne. *Strengthening Your Marriage*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1977 (151 pages). Workbook approach for the couple seriously wanting to study God's Word and make biblical applications to their marriage and family life. Great tool for counseling assignments.

Mack, Wayne. *Your Family, God's Way*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1991 (227 pages). Expansion of many of the truths in *Strengthening Your Marriage* but not in workbook form. Much help for the family.

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## Video Resources

Berg, Jim. *Premarital Counseling*—PS525. Bob Jones University Extended Education Department. Twelve hours of instruction on marriage. Useful for newlyweds-to-be or for couples who need a refresher course on the basics of the roles of marriage, marital communication, finances, as well as help for dealing with problems with in-laws and with the physical relationship. Includes 125 page syllabus. Call 1-888-253-8187 for information or visit the following page on [www.bjupress.com](http://www.bjupress.com):

[http://www.bjupress.com/services/ibe/courses/special\\_topics/biblical\\_counseling\\_series.htm](http://www.bjupress.com/services/ibe/courses/special_topics/biblical_counseling_series.htm)

Berg, Jim. **Family Counseling**—PS526. Bob Jones University Extended Education Department. Twelve hours of instruction on working through marital problems. Offers instruction on helping family members come to biblical reconciliation, unpacking complex problems and getting to the heart of the issues. Most of the principles are taught within the framework of working with a family that is experiencing troubles with their teens. Includes 100 page syllabus. Call 1-888-253-8187 for information or visit the following page on [www.bjupress.com](http://www.bjupress.com):

[http://www.bjupress.com/services/ibe/courses/special\\_topics/biblical\\_counseling\\_series.htm](http://www.bjupress.com/services/ibe/courses/special_topics/biblical_counseling_series.htm)

Fremont, Walter and Trudy. *Making Your Marriage a Masterpiece*. Bob Jones University Press. Six-part video series with study guides.

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## Internet Use and Filter Software

Lovegrove, Bill. *Christians in Cyberspace: A Biblical Perspective*. Copyright 2000 and available at <http://www.pilgrimworks.com/inet.html>. Provides a good introduction to the use and dangers of the internet from a Christian standpoint.

Olinger, Dan. *Internet Safety*. Copyright 2006 and available in two parts at:

<http://www.bjupress.com/resources/articles/t2t/1004.pdf>

and <http://www.bjupress.com/resources/articles/t2t/1005.pdf>.

*SafeEyes* from [www.safebrowse.com](http://www.safebrowse.com) is a powerful internet filter and accountability program for your computer. In 2006 it was rated #1 by "Consumer Reports" and received the "PC Magazine" editor's choice. It not only blocks unwanted content, but allows the administrator of the software to block internet use by time of day or shut off access after a pre-determined length of time. It logs all browsing and can forward e-mail, phone message, or text-pager alerts to an accountability partner when an attempt has been made to access a blocked site. *SafeEyes* uses one of the most robust pornography databases in the industry. Runs on both the PC and the Mac. This is a must-have for your home machine and laptop.





