

Pastor Scott L. Harris
Grace Bible Church, NY
August 23, 2020

DEFEATING LUST IN A SEX SATURATED SOCIETY Selected Scriptures

INTRODUCTION

This morning we continue with another topical sermon on a subject I have been asked to address. I am looking forward to beginning our expositional study of 1 & 2 Thessalonians in September, but until then I do think it is important to deal with the few remaining issues that are on the preaching schedule. I hope the past two sermons on eschatology have been helpful to you in understanding the over all plan that God has revealed for the future. This morning I want to deal with a topic that I had planned to preach on a month ago since it tied together the three sermons on integrity, godliness and entertainment. However, as I was preparing it I realized I did not have a place to send the children and this is a topic for adults. We now have our children's church in operation, so you can now act with parental discretion and send your children out with David & Natasha to the canopy out near the back shed. The topic this morning is defeating lust in a sex saturated society?

It was not that long ago that you could do a lot to defeat lust by simply avoiding being exposed to the promotion of the temptations that fuels it, but now you cannot avoid it because graphic images and innuendos are shoved in our faces constantly even when watching, listening to, or doing something that has no relationship to human sexuality. At one time broadcasters observed restrictions on what was shown on TV during the early evening hours to protect children from things they ought not to see. That was trampled all over years ago. Many programs that are supposed to be "family friendly" are not so friendly showing things and discussing subjects that are not appropriate for children or anyone that cares about morality. The rating systems used by both broadcast television and the movie industry are bad jokes that are nearly worthless in figuring out the content. Relying on the entertainment industry to determine and rate the moral content of their productions is like asking a convicted pervert to chaperone your daughter. Hollywood adds provocative scenes into their productions even when it has nothing to do with the story line because sex sells. Advertisers are notorious for tying sexual images to products that have nothing to do with human sexuality. Email inboxes get flooded with all sorts of unwanted junk and much of that can be of an immoral nature even when you are diligent to keep blocking the trash. Pop up adds while looking at websites can be quite disgusting. There are several news websites I will not go to any more simply because I do not like the visual assault that occurs from the sidebar and pop up adds, and frankly, if that is how the news site seeks to generate its income, I have to be suspicious about the news they are reporting.

I am glad that I live in a community where there are very few billboards. That is not so in other places and even horse blinders would not prevent your children from seeing the garbage depicted on them. And since your kids and grandkids will probably be more adept at the use of computers and smart phones than you and have access to those things through friends even when you restrict them at home, you are going to have a very hard time preventing them from exposure to adult themed material. You will have to instill into them and into yourself, if you have not already, something internal that will help them keep a clean heart even when their eyes, ears and minds are assaulted by perversion. There are external actions you can take that can be very helpful, and I will be talking about those later, but unless you train the heart, no external measures will be able to provide enough protection.

GOD'S PROHIBITIONS CONCERNING HUMAN SEXUALITY

The problem with human sexuality begins with man's rejection of God's design for it and it only gets worse as man's selfishness and sin compound to descend into increasing depravity as outlined in

Romans 1:18-32. God has made Himself evident to all men both internally in conscience and externally in creation so that all men are without excuse, but in ungodliness and unrighteousness men suppress the truth in unrighteousness. 2 Peter 3:5 describes this as a willing forgetfulness (NKJV), a deliberate overlooking (ESV) of the evidence that God exists and has intervened in the affairs of men specifically in the flood of the days of Noah. Paul continues in Romans 1:21-22 that “*even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened,*”²² *Professing to be wise, they became fools.*” In that foolishness men seek replacements for God. In the ancient world it was physical idols. In the modern world all sorts of alternatives are offered from false religions, to foolish philosophies, to materialism, to worldly pursuits of fame, position, power, and pleasure - hedonism. All of those things are just varied aspects of worshiping what is created, including self, instead of the Creator.

The rest of Romans 1 describes God’s increasing judgment by removing His hand from those who pursue greater sin. God gives such people *over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them* (vs. 24). The next step down is God giving them over to degrading passions of sexual perversions with homosexuality specifically described (vs. 26-27). As sinful man declines further in no longer even wanting to acknowledge God, God gives them over to depraved minds with a host of sins then listed including unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil, envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice, gossip, slander, insolence, arrogance, boasting, inventors of evil and disobedient to parents. They become characterized by hatred of God and being untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful and lack ability to understand - you can’t reason with them. Doesn’t that all sound like the daily news reports of 2020, and even worse, it describes many of our political leaders. Both of our major political parties have problems in this area, but the Democrats are far worse and that is directly tied to their rejection of God. Remember that at their convention four years ago they booed a reference made to God and they wanted Him removed from their party platform. I very seriously doubt that there was any effort to reference Him in any positive way this year. The evil they advocate, including support for all sorts of perversity, is directly related to their rejection of God.

We now live in a society in which sexual perversions are celebrated by many of our societal and political leaders. The majority of the exalted lawyers sitting on the U.S. Supreme Court failed basic biology since they could not distinguish that there is a difference between men and women, male and female. Public schools have become the enemies of godliness in most districts and their sexual education classes puts your child at grave moral risk because they are teaching their immoral values, not simple biology. Frankly, in this area, if there is anyway for you to keep your children out of the public schools, you need to do so. (For those reading this sermon, that may well be true for your area too. You can be a missionary to your local school district by being a teacher, PTA member, etc., but your children are not prepared to be missionaries in them until perhaps High School and only then if you have diligently trained them for that purpose). And since the local public schools are not physically opening anyway, it is a great time to find an alternative including homeschooling.

Man’s rejection of God has led him to reject God’s plan for human sexuality which is to occur only between one man and one woman in the bonds of marriage which is to be for life. Jesus was clear on this in Matthew 19 as He quoted from Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 that from the beginning, God *made them male and female* and that “*for this reason a man shall leave His father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.*” With only one exception, divorce will cause adultery when remarriage occurs (Matthew 5:32; 19:9). Sexual activity with anyone other than your spouse is sexual sin. The only difference between adultery and fornication is that the adulterer is married and the fornicator is not married. Leviticus 18 lists additional sexual sins including consanguinity (sexual relations between too near a relative), homosexuality (both male and female) and bestiality. These are universal standards because they are described as things the Egyptians did that were either lewd or abominations before God.

The Scriptures are also clear that God made humans in only two sexes. You are either male or female, a guy or a girl, a man or a woman. You are not and cannot be both, some transitional form, or something that flips back and forth between the two. Genetic biology is also direct on this point. Every human gets an X chromosome from the mother, and from the father, every human gets either an X or a Y chromosome. From there it is genetically very simple. If you have XX you are female. If you are XY you are a male. Even those with the rare cases of double sets of chromosomes, if you get a Y, you are male. There are no other options. Hormone therapy can cause changes to a body's appearance, but it does not change sex or gender. (Please note that the effort to change the meaning of the word *gender* into "a mental perception of sexual identity" does not change biological reality). Surgery to remove sexual organs and replace them with something else will also change the appearance of a body, but that body still remains what it was when conceived as either a male or a female, only now it is a mutilated body. Tragically, these kinds of therapies and surgeries are being forced on an increasing number of children. That is not loving. That is not caring. And despite the claims, it is not psychologically healthy. It is flagrant abuse of a child regardless of how many initials you place after your name.

Some claim there are no verses that specifically speak against someone who is a trans-sexual, i.e., someone who identifies as the opposite sex of what they are physically. Really? No, the Bible does not talk about people having surgery other than God taking a rib to fashion Eve (Genesis 2), circumcision (Exod. 4:25), emasculation (Deut. 23:1), things such as "*the wicked tongue will be cut out*" (Prov. 10:31), and Jesus' use of metaphor in Matthew 18:7-9 about cutting off your hand or foot and plucking out your eye if it causes you to stumble in sin. The Bible does speak directly about gender confusion in Deuteronomy 22:5 stating, "*A woman shall not wear man's clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman's clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God.*" If cross dressing is an abomination to the Lord God, then how much worse it must be when gender confusion results in hormone therapy and surgery?

Every aspect of trans-sexualism is sinful because it is directly against the biology in which God created the person. Psychologist can call it whatever they want, but the reality is that it is rebellion against God even for those that make religious claims including Christian ones. All sexual perversions, including trans-sexuals, are claiming that they know better than God. Claiming someone can be entrapped in the body of the wrong sex is utter foolishness and an expression of envy and jealousy of the opposite sex. Instead of looking to God to enable them to be the person God wants them to be, which would include confession of sin and repentance, they will either plead with God or be defiant. The pleas are usually either A) take away the feelings, or B) enable them to satisfy the feelings. The defiance can be either active shaking their fist against God or a passive ignoring Him to do what they want.

Let me make it clear that these are the normal responses of sinful people about any issue. Issues that are sexual in nature tend to have a lot more emotion involved which tends to cloud the issues. Let me quickly deal with these responses. First, God has already provided you what you need to change your feelings because feelings are based on beliefs which in turn are based in your perceptions. The perceptions and beliefs of Christians are to be guided by the truth of God's word and will. Your feelings change as your mind is renewed and transformed into the image of Christ (Romans 1:1-2; 8:29). Don't pray for God to change your feelings, pray that He will open your mind to understand His word and grow in your knowledge of Christ so that you will follow truth and His will. Again, your emotions / feelings follow what you believe which is based on your perceptions, so as those are changed to match truth then what you believe and eventually what you feel also change. If you are praying God will enable you to have your feelings satisfied, then James 4:3 applies directly to you - "*You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.*" It is time to repent and change your prayer to "*Thy will be done.*"

If you are defiant against God, whether active or passive, then it is time to repent while you still can. Many Scriptures warn about the condemnation of sinners. Revelation 21:8 tells of the future warning, *for*

the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” But these warnings are given so that you can turn before you die and it is too late. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 is direct about the consequences of sin, but it also gives hope. ⁹ *“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, nor homosexuals, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.”* Paul then adds in verse 11, *“Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.”*

What made such a radical change in the destiny of condemned sinners? The mercy of God allowing the sinner to still live. The goodness of God convicting the individual of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8). The grace of God causing him to be made alive to believe and have faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:8-9). That faith is then reckoned to him as righteousness so that he is justified before God because of Christ (Romans 4:5) and so he saved from sin and its consequences and adopted into God’s family (John 1:12-13).

God’s Plan for Human Sexuality

Do all these prohibitions mean that God is against human sexuality? Certainly not, for after all, God is the one that designed and created mankind and human sexuality commanding that they *“be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth”* (Genesis 1:22, 28). All the prohibitions are given to protect man from going astray from God’s good plan and bearing the consequences of sin which includes all sorts of venereal and bowel diseases, shattered relationships and the physical, mental and emotional abuse that comes when people exploit each other. Following God’s plan for human sexuality brings multiple blessings of stable marriages and families which are the foundations of any strong society, mutual satisfaction, and the deep intimacy that only comes with years of faithful commitment to one another.

What is God’s plan for human sexuality? Contrary to the ideas floated around that God only tolerates human sexuality for the purpose of pro-creation, God heartily approves of the physical relationship between a husband and wife. Again, He is the one that designed it. Outside of marriage sexual relationships are no, no and NO! Within marriage, the physical relationship is yes, yes and YES!

Certainly pro-creation is part of the marriage relationship as already cited from Genesis 1:22 & 28. However, there is much more in that relationship than just the conception of children. Consider Genesis 2:24, *“For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”* The one flesh statement here is often viewed as the idea that they have children whose genetic make up is from both parents - one flesh from two. That is true, but there is much more to it than that. In 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Paul strongly admonishes them for their continued practice of going to the temple prostitutes because they viewed it about the same as going out for a meal. In verse 15 he tells them in strong terms that since their bodies are members of Christ, their practice is taking the member of Christ and making it a member of a prostitute and that absolutely should not be. Why? Verse 16-17 - *“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 become one flesh.” But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit (with Him).* This is no reference to children here. Paul’s argument is the spiritual union the believer has as a member of Christ’s body is being joined to the prostitute in the physical union with her. In other words, human sexual relations is much more than just a biological act. There is a deeper union that also includes a spiritual aspect. No wonder the modern hook-up culture leaves people so messed up since they are leaving bits of themselves all over the place. Human sexuality is powerful and is a great good when it occurs according to God’s design, but it is a great evil when it is not just like many other things man does contrary to God’s design.

From Genesis 2:18-25 we know that Eve was fashioned by God in part because it was not good for Adam to be alone and there were no animals that would be a *“helper suitable for him”* (vs. 20). Eve would be both as someone specifically designed by God that corresponded to Adam that could assist him in fulfilling God’s mandates, and she would also be a companion that would remove loneliness. Their sexual relationship would be part of fulfilling both of these functions.

The Scriptures have many passages that show God’s approval of physical intimacy in marriage. Some of them are explicit enough to shatter the idea that godliness is supposed to be prudish in the sense of being *“easily shocked by matters related to sex or nudity”* (Oxford dictionary). That would include passages such as Proverbs 5 which warns against the wiles of the adulteress in the first part of the chapter while commending the physical relationship of husband and wife in verses 15-19 as a cause of rejoicing, satisfaction and exhilaration. The Song of Solomon is explicit enough that a Jewish tradition developed that it should not be read until you are 30. It probably is wise for young men to wait until marriage to study it, but it is a great book for a honeymoon.

The truth is that the godly are prudes in the meaning of the root French words for a man or woman that is good and true. The godly understand and rejoice in their sexuality while also understanding and following proper decorum that private matters between a husband and wife are to stay private. Adam and Eve were naked and unashamed (Genesis 2:25), but after the fall into sin, nakedness is equated with shameful throughout the rest of the Scriptures. The godly do not expose the nakedness of their spouse either visually or verbally. They dress with modesty and discretion instead of trying to show off their assets whether physical or financial (1 Timothy 2:9). Their behavior is proper and never promiscuous or sensual (Romans 13:13) because 1) that is what is right before God, and 2) they never want to be a cause of stumbling to someone else (1 John 2:10). It is the wicked that seek to flaunt their physical attributes and present themselves as objects of sexual attraction. In our perverse society, those ideas prevail so strongly that Christians are often led astray in the quest to be fashionable and accepted. That is not only ungodly, it is dangerous. A strong politically incorrect warning to all of you ladies. If you dress like a prostitute, then don’t be surprised when ungodly men pursue their sinful bent and treat you like one. To be point blank, you do not need to be fashionable, but you do need to be holy. The bulletin inserts on modesty give you some basic practical guidelines to consider and follow.

The Problem with Lust

The problem is not human sexuality itself. The problem is lust to fulfill sexual desires in an ungodly way. Remember that lust simply means strong desire, and strong desires are good when they are for what is godly. For example, the same word for lust is used in 1 Timothy 3:1 for the desire to do the work of an overseer and in Matthew 13:17 for the desire of the prophets and the righteous to see the fulfillment of the prophecies about Christ. However, when those strong desires are for something that is ungodly or to fulfill something that would otherwise be godly in an ungodly way, the result will be sin. James 1:13–15 explains, ¹³ *Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.* ¹⁴ *But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.* ¹⁵ *Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.*”

There is nothing wrong for a husband and wife to have strong desires for each other. That should actually be a good and proper element of a godly marriage. However, if that lust is for someone other than your spouse, it is ungodly and leads to all sorts of sinful actions. Jesus warned about this in Matthew 5:28, *“but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”* Let me quickly add here that this is true even if that lust is directed toward a fantasy object such as occurs in pornography because this is a sin of the heart. Pornography is destructive to everything it touches. It demeans everyone involved producing it and it is common for it to occur under duress so that it is actually the recording of a crime. Since it makes both

the men and women involved sex objects, it demeans all men and women by that association to those that view it. It perverts those that watch it turning them into voyeurs of a fantasy world which can cause a disconnect with the real world or degrade it in the quest to imitate the fantasy. That corrupts relationships leading to their destruction. It also prevents proper relationships from forming since fantasy is easier to manipulate than real people. Pornography is destructive to everything it touches, and it touches much more than just the people that produce it or view it.

The problem of lust is huge as explained in 1 John 2:15-17 which warns about the love of the world and its corresponding lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and boastful pride of life. We could spend weeks on that subject. However, in the area of strong sexual desire, God's solution is marriage. Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 7:1-5, ¹ *Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman.* ² *But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband.* ³ *The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband.* ⁴ *The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.* ⁵ *Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

Notice how practical Paul is in this passage. Paul will advocate the benefits of being single throughout this chapter, but he recognizes and accepts the reality that others have different desires, strengths and abilities than he does. He summarizes in verse 9, *"but if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn."* While that is not the best foundation for a marriage, it is God's solution for lust and therefore a legitimate reason. Notice as well in the previous verses that this is a duty, an obligation, or as stated more politely in the NKJV, an affection due the spouse. Your body belongs to your spouse, so you are not to deprive one another except by agreement for short periods devoted to prayer. Sex is not a tool to be used to manipulate your spouse. It is a blessing from God and the preventive measure against Satan's efforts of temptation.

Defeating Lust

How do you defeat lust for things that are improper or for fulfilling proper desires by improper means? In this sex saturated society you will be assaulted by many things designed to entice you away from God's design for human sexuality. What do you do?

Heart. In both Hebrew and Greek the metaphorical use of the word "heart" refers to your core of being constituting your essential beliefs about who you are and your purpose of existence. What you do exposes your inner nature and values. From the negative side, Jesus warned in Matthew 15:18-19 that the heart was the source of evil thoughts and actions. On the positive side, we are to set our hearts to seek, love and do the will of God with all our heart.

The first and most important defense against improper lust and the defense that should control everything else is having a pure heart that is set on God. If you believe that the supreme purpose of your life is to glorify the God that created you and that the supreme command in your life is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, then all other desires will begin to be put into their proper place.

One of the great problems with our sex saturated society is its foundational premise that being sexually active is one of if not the most important aspects of life. That is a lie from the pit of hell. God strictly prohibits sexual activity outside of marriage, but even within marriage, while it is a wonderful part of it and you are not to deprive each other, it is not the purpose of marriage. It is only an aspect of it that helps fulfill the purposes of marriage. Is your marriage over if one spouse is deployed to a distant place for six months or a year or more? Does life end if one spouse develops a disease that hinders or prevents sexual intimacy? Do the godly who remain virgins until marriage lack purpose and meaning in life until marriage? Or do godly widows and widowers cease to have purpose and meaning in life? The answer to all those questions is of course not.

When your heart is set on God as the first and foremost priority of your life, then your desires and the quests of your life will follow His will and He will satisfy them. David put it this way in Psalm 37:4 *“Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart.”*

Will. The second critical factor in defense against improper lust is your will. Your will is what you determine to do based on your core values - your heart. At times you simply exercise your will without much thought, but at other times it is and must be a very cognitive determination of action. In the battle against lust, in Job 31:1 he defended himself against a false accusation saying, *“I have made a covenant with my eyes; How then could I gaze at a virgin?”* Job exercised his will in advance to determine what he would and would not do to protect himself from sin. Keeping that covenant may not have always been easy, but when a compromising situation arose, he had already determined his actions and he exercised his will to carry them out.

I took this verse to heart as a young man, and it helped tremendously, and the longer I exercised my will in accordance with Job’s example, the easier it became. At times it took cognitive effort to look away when a woman dressed in a provocative manner came into my view, but it also became an increasingly automatic response so that I did not notice them. It is still that way today. I am often oblivious to what women are wearing, but when I do notice, I remind myself of the covenant I have made with my eyes and turn away. It is an exercise of my will, and in harmony with the desires of my heart, it is my main defense against the enticements of a sex saturated society.

Mind. In conjunction with my heart and will is being careful to direct and control my mind. This is in two major areas. First is making sure that I am pursuing truth and not yielding to the perceptions I may have or that are trying to be created for me in the effort to manipulate my beliefs and therefore my responses. The Lord is the God of truth (Psalm 31:5). Jesus is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). The Helper Jesus sent after His ascension is the Spirit of truth (John 15:26). God’s word is truth (John 17:17). In the pursuit of truth I am pursuing God and what reflects Him which matches the greatest desire of my heart and will. Pursuing truth a great protection against both the claims of marketers and seductive story lines that seek to influence your mind. Examples: 1) An advertiser insinuates a sports car would make you attractive. Truth: A) The girl does not come with the sports car. B) The kind of girl attracted to you because you have the sports car would make a very poor wife. C) Your godly wife does not want a sports car. 2) The movie presents the idea that promiscuous jet setters lead exciting, fulfilling and successful lives. Truth: A) They get venereal disease. B) They live in a succession of shallow and / or failed relationships. C) They often die young, but if they stay alive, they also get old and physically decline like everyone else. D) They will die without God and suffer His eternal condemnation (Psalm 73).

The second area of the mind is controlling its usage. Paul put it this way in Philippians 4:8, *“Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.”*

Emotions. An area that you must learn to control in order to battle lust in a sex saturated society is your emotions. Tragically, most people in our society are now controlled by their emotions to the point that they use them justify their actions. While the agitators of the continuing protests and rioting know what they are doing, a large portion of those joining in are doing so just because they feel a certain way. The facts and truth are immaterial to them. It is part of the tragedy of the post-modern paradigm of feelings and perceptions replacing reality.

I have already commented on this earlier, but let me repeat that your emotions are based on your perceptions. If your perceptions and beliefs are wrong, your emotions will lead you down sinful paths. If you change your perceptions and beliefs to match the truth, your emotions will eventually change and then support the determinations of your heart, will and mind.

Pragmatic Defenses

I want to close by briefly mentioning three pragmatic defenses that can help as you set your heart on God, train your will, pursue truth with your mind, and bring your emotions into subjection to your mind, will and heart.

Avoidance is the first defense. Commands and advice to keep away from situations and people is common in the Bible. In Proverbs 4:14-15 the son is instructed to avoid the path of the wicked and evil men. Paul tells Timothy to avoid worldly and empty chatter because it leads to ungodliness (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:16). Paul also tells Timothy to avoid men that hold to a form of godliness but deny its power (2 Timothy 3:5). You can prevent a lot of temptation by simply staying away from situations in which it would occur and people that would promote it. Proverbs 5:8 warns about the adulterous to *“keep your way far from her, And do not go near the door of her house.”* Proverbs 7:25 adds, *“Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, Do not stray into her paths.”* Avoidance can and often does take active effort, but it is very practical and very effective. Don't go there. Don't see or talk to that person.

When it comes to electronic forms of communication, it also means using blockers to keep from receiving unwanted materials in emails, social media, television, websites, etc. That starts with those offered by your internet and television service providers. It continues with programs to give further protection on your devices including your smart phone. You cannot be tempted by what you never receive.

Flee is the second defense. When you find yourself in a compromising situation or one that is presenting temptations, then it is time to flee. Paul was very direct about this telling Timothy to *“flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord with a pure heart”* (2 Tim. 2:22). He commanded in 1 Corinthians 6:18, *“Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”*

Do not try to “tough it out” or save face because you don't want others to think the situation is bothering you. That is the reasoning of a fool. Turn off the TV, exit the program, switch to a different website, delete the email, walk out of the theater, do whatever you have to do to flee the situation and the temptations it brings. That is godly wisdom and the command of God. Remember the promise of 1 Corinthians 10:13, *“No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.”* A common reason that Christians do fall to temptation is that they simply do not take the way of escape that God provides them. They fell because they failed to flee.

Accountability is the last defense and it is in accord with the reality that we do need one another to help us walk as we ought with the Lord. We need others in our lives that know us well enough to admonish, encourage and help us as needed when needed (1 Thess. 5:14). We need spiritually mature people who will help bear our burdens with us as they help restore us when we stumble in sin. All the many “one another” commands apply to this as well. Have someone you trust to share your areas of weakness and struggle become your accountability partner. If you don't have someone, then develop such a relationship as quickly as possible now. This is someone with whom you will regularly tell how you are doing and have them pray with you. This is also someone whom you will give access to see your web-browsing history, emails and social media. There are programs to help do that for your electronic devices so that they receive a report if anything questionable comes up. I even have that on my own computer.

And finally, keep your life open instead of secretive. All the rooms in our church have windows so that you can see inside. Others that you trust should know where you are going, who you are seeing, and what you are doing. Electronic devices should be placed where others can easily see them. All my

computers face outward toward the middle of the room for that reason and the door to my office is usually open and never locked. Smart phones are the most dangerous since they are often used when alone or held in a way that prevents others from seeing it. A simple rule of thumb is to always place the display in a position where it could be seen by others whenever possible and especially when using the internet.

Conclusion

The summary of all this is very simple. We live in a sex saturated society that will compromise your walk of righteousness unless you are diligent to follow preventative measures God has and will supply. The most important protection is loving God with all your heart so that His desires become your desires. Set your will to pursue godliness and your mind to pursue truth. Bring your emotions into subjection to your mind, will and heart. Avoid sinful situations and flee if you find yourself in one. Develop godly friends who will help you grow in Christ and hold you accountable in your Christian walk. Be sure that you are the positive influence on the ungodly and they do not influence you. If you find that they do influence you negatively, then flee from them and stay away from them.

The goal of the Christian life is the glory of God by living a life of personal holiness and service to Him.

Sermon Notes - 8/23/2020

DEFEATING LUST IN A SEX SATURATED SOCIETY - Selected Scriptures

INTRODUCTION

GOD'S PROHIBITIONS CONCERNING HUMAN SEXUALITY

Man's rejection of God's design - Romans 1:18-32; 2 Peter 3:5

God's wrath revealed by "giving them over" - removing His hand.

A Wretched Society

Man's Rejection of Heterosexual Monogamy (Genesis 1:27; 2:24; Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Leviticus 18)

Man's Rejection of God's Design and Biology

Cross-dressing - Deut. 22:5

Sinful Pleas

Take away my feelings

Enable me to fulfill my feelings (James 4:3)

Dangers of Defiance & Hope for Those that Repent (Rev. 21:8; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

God's Plan for Human Sexuality

Genesis 1:22, 28 - Procreation

Genesis 2:18-25 / 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 - Intimate Companionship

Genesis 2:18-25 - a suitable helper - one who corresponds

Commendation of the Marital Intimacy - Proverbs 5, Song of Solomon

Unashamed Prudes - Genesis 2:25; 1 Timothy 2:9; Romans 13:13; 1 John 2:10

The Problem with Lust

Lust = "strong desire."

Good Lust - 1 Timothy 3:1; Matthew 13:17

Temptation, Lust & Sin - James 1:13-15

Sinfulness of Improper Lust - Matthew 5:28

Defeating Lust

Heart

Will

Job's Covenant with His Eyes - Job 31:1

Mind

Emotions

Pragmatic Defenses

Avoidance - Proverbs 4:14-15; 1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:16; 3:5, Proverbs 5:8; 7:25

Flee - 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 Corinthians 6:18

Accountability - 1 Thess. 5:14, the "one another" commands

Conclusion

THINK ABOUT IT – Questions to consider in understanding the sermon and its application. Are the TV and Movie ratings systems trustworthy? Why or why not? How has mankind rejected God's design in general (Romans 1:18-32)? How does God reveal His wrath against unrighteousness in the present time? What are the three steps of moral decline described by Paul in Romans 1? What level do you think American society is at? Explain. How has man rejected God's design for marriage? For monogamy? Are there / can there be more genders than determined by either God's design or biology? Explain. Does the Bible speak against transsexualism? Explain. Should you ask God to take away your improper feelings? Explain. What provisions has God made for your feelings to change? Why is it wrong to ask God to satisfy your feelings? What is the danger of defiance of God? How can a defiant sinner become a child of God? What are God's purposes for physical intimacy in marriage? How do we know that the "*two shall become one flesh*" is more than just physical? Is the Bible prudish? Explain. Should godly people celebrate their sexuality, and if so, how? What is lust? When is it good? When is it bad? What is the relationship between temptation, lust and sin? When is lust a sexual sin of the heart? What is God's solution for sexual desire? Why is it wrong for a spouse to deprive their partner? Why is that dangerous? What does the "heart" refer to in Hebrew and Greek usage? Why is the heart the source of good and evil in a person's actions? How is the heart the first and most important defense against immorality? If your heart is right, what should be your greatest desires? What is the relationship between heart, will, mind and emotions? How can your will protect you from immorality? How did it help Job? Why is it critical to pursue truth? What should you think about? Why is it dangerous to let your emotions control you? What is the basis of your emotions? How can you change them? What is the importance of each in protecting yourself from immorality including pornography: Avoidance. Fleeing. Accountability. **Blocking Software:** Check with your TV / Phone / Internet service provider for blocking programs. Also: Qustodio, Kasperky Safe Kids, Clean Router, **Accountability Software:** Accountable2you.com Covenanteyes.com x3watch.com