

Battling Sexual Lust Various Scriptures

Introduction

Advocates of sexual “freedom” often portray sexual immorality as an enlightened modern way of thinking in contrast to unenlightened and oppressive traditions of the past. But that is a bold distortion of history.

The battle for sexual purity is not a new war. It did not start in the sexual revolution of the 1960’s that has now permeated our entire culture. Rather, the 1960’s were but an open return to the pagan worldview of the past, a repudiation of the biblical worldview that our sexuality is a good gift from God to be enjoyed and protected with the sacred boundaries of the marriage relationship. If we think fighting this battle is hard in our day—and it is, especially with the wide presence of pornography with its addiction power usually combined with the addiction power of self-pleasuring, we do well to remember what it was like to take on the culture of the Canaanites (OT) or that of the ancient Greeks and Romans (NT).

Pornography—combination of the Greek term for sexual immorality plus *graphy*—to write

The battle against sexual lust is fundamentally a worship issue. Do I worship

God in my practice of sexual self-control? Or do I worship myself (or some other idol) in my practice of sexual indulgence, divorced from its connection to lifelong steadfast love in marriage? (God's perfect design)

Romans 12:1-2

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

1. The battle for sexual purity involves consecrating your body and your mind to God.

Exodus 20:17

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.

2. God's commands call us to curb our heart desires.

Proverbs 5:20-23

²⁰ Why should you be intoxicated, my son, with a forbidden woman and embrace the bosom of an adulteress? ²¹ For a man's ways are before the eyes of the LORD, and he

ponders all his paths. ²² The iniquities of the wicked ensnare him, and he is held fast in the cords of his sin. ²³ He dies for lack of discipline, and because of his great folly he is led astray.

3. Sexual sin has intoxicating and killing power. Avoid its snares through constant awareness of God's watchful care.

Proverbs 6:23-25

²³ For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life, ²⁴ to preserve you from the evil woman, from the smooth tongue of the adulteress. ²⁵ Do not desire her beauty in your heart, and do not let her capture you with her eyelashes.

Proverbs 7:1-5

¹ My son, keep my words and treasure up my commandments with you; ² keep my commandments and live; keep my teaching as the apple of your eye; ³ bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart. ⁴ Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call insight your intimate friend, ⁵ to keep you from the forbidden woman, from the adulteress with her smooth words.

Proverbs 7:24-27

²⁴ And now, O sons, listen to me, and be attentive to the words of my mouth. ²⁵ Let not your heart turn aside to her ways; do not

stray into her paths, ²⁶ for many a victim has she laid low, and all her slain are a mighty throng. ²⁷ Her house is the way to Sheol, going down to the chambers of death.

4. The Word of God provides wisdom for us in the battle for sexual purity. Learn it and love it.

Notice that these warnings are given from a father to his sons.

Matthew 5:27-29

²⁷ "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell.

5. Christ taught that sexual sin starts in the heart and ends in hell. You are fighting a war for your soul—kill or be killed.

The apostles take the same view.

Colossians 3:5

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

1 Peter 2:11

Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.

Romans 13:13-14

¹³ Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

6. Battling sexual sins through the power of Christ calls for strategic precautions. Immoral sexual lust and actions involve making provision for gratifying the flesh.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-7

³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, ⁵ not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶ that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. ⁷ For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness.

7. God's will for every Christian is sexual purity. Violating this holy calling brings harm against others and judgment from God.

2 Timothy 2:22

So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

8. We need one another in our battle for purity. Get help from a trusted brother or sister.

1 Corinthians 6:13, 18-20

¹³ "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

¹⁸ Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰ for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

9. We must not give in to sexual sin because our bodies belong to the Lord through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Romans 6:12-14

¹² Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. ¹³ Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been

brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.

¹⁴ For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

10. Keep presenting your body parts to the Lord for righteousness instead of using them as weapons of sin.

Ephesians 5:3-4, 12

³ But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. ⁴ Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.

¹² For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.

11. The battle for purity includes purifying how you talk.

We talk about what we think about, and when we do we reinforce it—to our good or harm.

Galatians 5:16-24

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife,

jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

12. The power of the Holy Spirit is greater than the power of sexual lust, so whenever you yield to the Spirit you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh.

Resources

Will help you in your own battle and are great resources for reading together with a brother or sister for mutual help.

Heath Lambert. *Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace.*

Deepak Reju. *Pornography: Fighting for Purity. 31-Day Devotionals for Life.*

Donald S. Whitney. *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life.*