

# GOD AND *YOUR* LUST



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The basic issue with our addiction to lust is that the root of the problem goes deeper than our flirting with innate desires. Lust, as any addiction, is a God-substitute biblically known as an idol. Unfortunately, addiction runs through the soul of every human heart because every human heart was made to worship one God. We were made to find our greatest joy and deepest satisfaction in God, not the substitute for God.

Randy Alcorn in his excellent little book, The Purity Principle says,

“[Those who lust] swap God’s present and future blessing for something they can immediately see, taste, or feel. But that something never satisfies... Every day, Christian men and women forfeit future happiness for the sake of temporary sexual stimulation. Like drug addicts, we go from fix to fix, trading the contentment of righteous living for the quick hits that always leave us empty, craving more.” (p. 12-13)

Therefore, every addiction is ultimately a worship disorder. We must answer the question, will we worship our own self and desires or will we worship the one true and living God? A Jesus Christ centered perspective is needed if the person desires real and lasting change.

*John 8:34-36 “Jesus replied, I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”*

Who or what are you worshiping? Consider the seriousness of this question and realize you cannot fool God with your answer. If you would like to surrender your life to Jesus Christ talk with a pastor or trusted friend about how to do this. Your goal is to develop a dynamic and sincere relationship with the God who created you.

## **BIBLICAL AND PRACTICAL HELP FOR YOUR LUST**

The title to this booklet is “God And *Your* Lust”. *Your* is emphasized to show you must accept responsibility and the consequences for your sin. Admission, confession and repentance are the first steps in turning from lust. John Owen, in his classic work On The Mortification of Sin in Believers says, “be killing sin or it will be killing you.” In other words, you cannot simply fight lust on your own terms by avoiding it, hoping to wound it and let it go away. You must get to the root and destroy it by fighting with the spiritual weapons God has provided.

### **SO, how do I kill sin and live according to the Spirit?**

John Piper in Future Grace says,

“The fire of lusts pleasures must be fought with the fire of God’s pleasures. If we fight the fire of lust with prohibitions and threats alone – even the terrible warnings of Jesus will fail. We must fight it with a massive promise of superior happiness. We must swallow up the littler flicker of lust’s pleasure in the conflagration of holy satisfaction... our aim is not merely to avoid something erotic, but also to gain something excellent.”

### ✪ Fight with Saturation

God is to be feared because he is holy. However, this fear is not to make you scared as much as it is meant to increase your intrigue of him. God, the Creator of heaven and earth has created you to saturate yourself in him. Don't miss this! Therefore, I pray the imaginations of your mind, the affections of your heart and the desires of your will be awakened to true and everlasting joy in Christ. This can happen by saturating yourself in the Psalms and cultivating a life of prayer. Time with God, or lack of, will shape your appetite for lust and pornography.

- ◇ *Psalm 16:4a,11 "The sorrows of those will increase who run after other gods. You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."*
- ◇ *Psalm 34:8 "Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him."*
- ◇ *Psalm 90:14 "Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days."*

### ✪ Fight With Scripture

God gave the Bible so we can know Him and be equipped for life. As mentioned, fighting lust is not just a physical battle but a spiritual one. Therefore, you must use the proper weapons. When Jesus encountered temptation he used Scripture to defend and attack against the pervasiveness of sin.

- ◇ *Psalm 119:9,11 "How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I have hidden your word in my heart that I may not sin against you."*
- ◇ *2 Peter 1:3-4 "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."*

### ✪ Fight With Strategy

Addictions must be fought with a hard determined look at reality. Those who struggle with lust can track where, when and how they have failed in order to anticipate when temptation is arriving. We must set and keep boundaries that God has designed for our joy and protection.

- ◇ *Psalm 16:6 "The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance."*

- Strategy of removal and limiting the opportunity to sin. Keep your computer & television in a public location. Do not use either alone, especially at night when you are physically and emotionally exhausted from daily activities. If you travel then block specific channels at the hotel.

*Matthew 5:29 “If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.”*

- Strategy of reporting to a close friend. Have your friend hold you accountable by asking you pointed questions which you must answer honestly.

*Proverbs 27:6 “Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.”*

- Strategy of repenting immediately after failure. This should not neuter the power of all the above principles, yet it should empower you to move forward growing in grace every day. Repentance helps put on godliness as much as it puts away sin. See Ken Sande’s “7 A’s of Confession” below.

*Titus 2:11-13 “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for our blessed hope – the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ”*

- Strategy of relishing in the gospel and fill your imagination with the pleasures of God. Jesus says a man is made up of what is stored inside his heart and mind (Matthew 12:33-35). Therefore you must saturate yourself with God and the promises from His word. The reality is that we all sin and the only, absolutely only, power we have against our fight against sin is the gospel with the promises from God’s Word. Relish and renew your fellowship with God. Seek reconciliation and restoration with those whom may have been offended by your actions (ex. spouse, loved ones, etc.). Remember, the same gospel that saves is the one that sustains your spiritual growth to overcome sin.

*Psalm 119:9,11 “How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I have hidden your word in my heart that I may not sin against you.”*

*2 Peter 1:3-4 “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.”*

## **Repentance/Confession Outline**

(From Ken Sande, Peacemaking for Families: A Biblical Guide to Managing Conflict in Your Home)

### **Address everyone involved.**

To whom do you need to confess?

### **Avoid “if, but, and maybe.”**

What excuses or blaming do you need to avoid?

### **Admit specifically.**

What sins have you committed? What biblical principles have you violated against a holy God?

### **Apologize.**

How might others feel as a result of your sin?

### **Accept the consequences.**

What are the consequences of your sin? How can you help reverse the damage you have caused?

### **Alter your behavior.**

What changes do you intend to make, with God’s help, in the way you think, speak, and behave? Results are immediate, verifiable, and unconditional.

### **Ask for forgiveness and allow time.**

What might make the person whom you have wronged reluctant to forgive you? What can you do to make it easier for that person to forgive you?