

# Jesus at the Center of the Kingdom

## Lust • Message 5

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### A. Introduction

Last week, we talked about anger... and those of you in the room raised your hand and said *yes, I struggle with traffic, anger, messing up food*, and we established we've got some anger to deal with ... today, we are talking about lust and sexual desire... so in fairness, how many of you are just overrun with lust and sexual desires... I'm joking, don't raise your hand...

But last week, we did talk about anger... and today, we are talking about lust as Jesus is dealing with heart issues... listen, we preach the whole Bible here because we believe the whole Bible makes a whole Christian, so we aren't going to pick and choose subjects.

And many of you know this has been a struggle of mine... and I want to share some principles that really helped me find freedom...

### B. Lust

#### 1. You don't have a LUSTING problem you have a LOOKING problem.

(Matthew 5:28. C/R: Job 31:1)

*"But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."*

**Matthew 5:28 (NIV)**

Think about this, lust is a heart problem... looking is with your eyes... the way to deal with your heart is to control what you look at.

So, stay away from beautiful people. Jesus is going to go on to tell us to surround ourselves with some unattractive people.

How many of you have ever heard this advice? *The first look is free*. This is terrible advice.

People said to me when I was in high school, *the first look is free*.

They would say things like *the first look is free but the second will cost you...* The problem with this is I just took a very long first look...

Listen, if you are struggling with lust or pornography, or you feel overrun with sexual desires, what you have is looking problem. You have let your eyes and your mind wander in territory that it never should have. Jesus Himself speaks to this because He says just because you don't commit a physical act of adultery doesn't give you a license to imagine and lust or give you a license to let your thoughts run wild.

Why? Because, at its core, lusting really is a looking problem.

Think about it. Notice in the next verse Jesus says this...

*“If your right eye causes you to stumble, 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. And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.”*

**Matthew 5:29-30 (NIV)**

What does He mention first in this text? The eye or the hand? The eye, because the eye is where our sight is while the hand represents action. So, to deal with our actions we have to first deal with our sight. Think about it, you can cut off your arm and still lust... there are some saints that have literally taken this verse to emasculate themselves but they've missed the point... lust begins with the eyes.

*“I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman.”*

**Job 31:1 (NIV)**

Notice, he made a covenant with his eyes... he watched what he was looking at...

Jesus is not saying lust and adultery are the same, but He is saying both are sin.

## **2. You must KILL the wrong appetites.**

Years ago, I was doing a wedding for someone, and this moment is still seared into my mind... he came to me and said, *will you pray for me and my marriage...* and then he said, dead serious ... *will you pray for the flight...* and he doesn't say anything else... and I said, *is there a reason...* He said, *I've been waiting for my honeymoon for my whole life, and I want to make it safely there.* He said, *think about it, we get to have sex all the time...* I thought, *you young and foolish man...* and I told him, *give it six months...*

I say this to say have you noticed how certain people think marriage will solve all their problems... emotionally... but also physically... people think that once you have sex, you will never struggle with porn, lust or sexual desires again. And the amount of people who get married and then find out that it doesn't solve all their problems is overwhelming. Marriage won't fix all your issues, especially sex... Let me show you this.

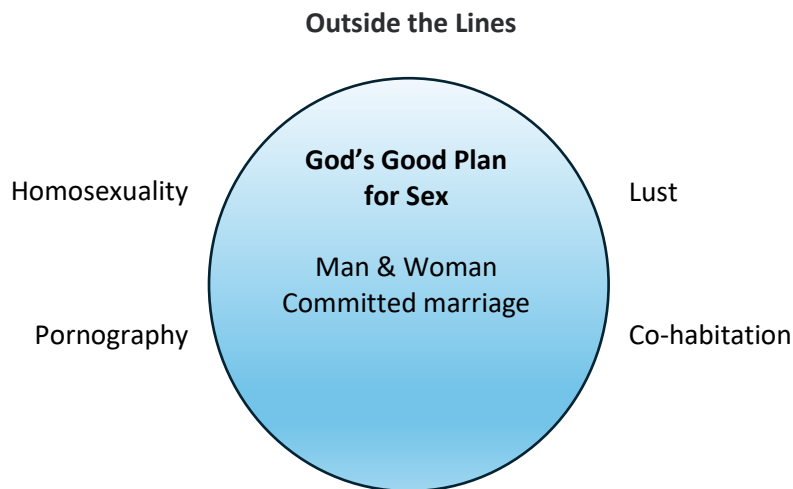
First, there are good appetites. God is the giver of sex...

Now, I want to say this whenever we speak about sex and lust...

First, God is the author and creator of sex. I find it interesting that culture tries to label God as some buzzkill, or killjoy... God gave us sex. And as the giver of sex, He knows how it's to be best experienced. So, we must teach our kids sex is good, but it's got to be experienced how God created it.

### **God's Good Plan for Sex**





So, while God created sex, and He has plans for it. Some people have created an appetite for something God never intended. I see this happen all the time. Someone struggles with pornography, and they think marriage will fix it. So, they get married, and they still feel lust and pornography urges. They think the issue is with their marriage or their spouse. It's not! Listen, I want to be very practical here... people who are about to get married will say, *we love each other, why should we wait... why do we need a piece of paper?* Because, when you have an impure sexual relationship, you get an adrenaline rush for sneaking around...and you are creating an appetite for him or her to sneak around... that's why people get married, and they say, *I don't feel the same as I did before...* and he will begin to feel like he once did with another woman. And he associates those feelings with love...

Some of you have memories that are seared into your mind from the past... because it's an appetite you weren't called to have.

Porn is the same way you are creating an appetite and adrenaline for sneaking around...

The issue is they created an appetite God never intended them to have ... and they are called to starve that appetite. It's not from God.

How you do that begins with your eyes. You have a looking problem...

Studies suggest that the brain in this phase is much like a brain on drugs. MRI scans illustrate that the same area lights up when an addict gets a fix of cocaine as when a person is experiencing the intense lust of physical attraction

**3. You must DEAL with lust or it will DEAL with you.**

(Matthew 5:29-30; James 1:14-15. C/R: 2 Samuel 11-13; 2 Timothy 2:22)

Small things will overtake you if they aren't dealt with.

Too often, we think the small things just stay small, but they don't. Those little looks and thoughts grow and grow, and they end up consuming us.

Tissue infection... it spread... *what's hotter, a hot tub or volcano...* when I finally came to my senses, the guy looked at me and said, *What were you thinking? This thing was going to spread and spread. You should have dealt with it a long time ago...*

Friends, those looks and lustful thoughts are going to keep spreading and spreading, and you need to deal with it.

*Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.*

**James 1:14-15 (NIV)**

Sin Cycle

*Temptation comes from our own **desires**, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.*

**James 1:14-15 (NIV)**

- **LOOK = Desires (v. 14)**

*Temptation comes from our own desires, which **entice us** and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.*

**James 1:14-15 (NIV)**

- **Look = Desires (v. 14)**
- **LINGER = Entice us (v. 14)**

*Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and **drag us away**. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.*

**James 1:14-15 (NIV)**

- **Look = Desires (v. 14)**
- **Linger = Entice us (v. 14)**
- **LUST = Drag us away (v. 14)**

*Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give **birth to sinful actions**. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.*

**James 1:14-15 (NIV)**

- **Look = Desires (v. 14)**
- **Linger = Entice us (v. 14)**
- **Lust = Drag us away (v. 14)**
- **ACT/LEAP = Birth to sinful actions (v. 15)**

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- **CONSUMED = Gives birth to death (v.15)**

Notice, how do you deal with this? It's a looking problem, and if you don't deal with it, it will consume you... It's not going away which leads me to my next point...

Lust is something that will take you out spiritually if you don't kill it.

Fire is a great thing in a fireplace, but set free in the wrong place it's destructive. Sex and lust are the same...

I've said this before, but you are told to fight every sin in the Bible except for 2... any idea what they are?

- 1.) Lust
- 2.) Love of money

The way you deal with these is to run from them... you flee from them. That's how you kill them. Because a spirit of lust is always thinking about how to get back to that place...

And let me tell you, there is a time when you can run... and there is a time when it's too late. If you're watching something on TV that's triggering you, get up or turn off your phone... If you are scrolling on your phone and see something, put your phone down... If you're talking to a co-worker or someone of the opposite sex and something feels off, run... If you're dating or engaged, kiss standing up... nothing good happens on the couch or after 10 pm...

There is a lie from the enemy that we need to be strong and put ourselves in these situations, and then the Spirit will help... Well, the Spirit will help when you flee from it...

*Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts.*

**2 Timothy 2:22 (NLT)**

That's why Jesus tells us to get rid of the things that affect us... Listen ...

Shame—if you made a mistake... you are not a mistake... Listen, don't let shame bury you and overtake you...

If you are saying, *I know it's wrong, but I can repent after*, that's a dangerous place to be...

If this is a sin you are going to continue, you need to check your salvation... it's possible God hasn't given you a new heart.

And let me just say this as well... sexual sin doesn't just affect you, it affects your family... if you leave the door open, I really do believe, you pray about it, but you are leaving it open for your family...

**2 Samuel 11 – David falls sexually.**

**2 Samuel 12 - He's confronted.**

**2 Samuel 13 - His kids fall.**

You want to be a man? Get a heart that loves Jesus; break the generational sin that plagues so many families... Pass down a legacy of loving and following Jesus. I believe God is raising those men up in our church; join us.

So, how do you really deal with this practically...

Men, if you are struggling, bring it to your spouse... listen they probably already know.

**Women are like God; they see all and know all...**

But let me say this to women and men... but especially women.

If your spouse has a problem with this, it doesn't mean he doesn't love you... Don't shame him... it means they have an appetite God didn't mean for him to have.

If you freak out it, it's just going to cause him to keep it buried... Steph will tell you this: in our marriage, I had to help her with this...

Struggle together... it needs to be brought into the light. They are trying to honor your marriage... If you can't bring it to your spouse bring it to someone...

### **OFFENSE**

You need to fall in love with Jesus. The best defense is a good offense. Spend time with God... devotionals... let the Spirit strengthen you. You need new power, and some might need a new heart.

How is your heart with God... you need to be filled with the love and power of God.

### **DEFENSE**

*"If your right eye causes you to stumble, 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. And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.*

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... but it is to run from those things.... TO CUT THOSE THINGS FROM YOUR LIFE. It's to stop making excuses...

You need to bring this into the light. Stop burying it. Limit being on the computer or phone or being around that person... but you need to bring it to the light. The only way to not be overrun with lust is to be overrun by the Spirit.

What do you need to cut out of your life?