

Sexual Temptation

Gary Fisher

Introduction:

- I. Terrible danger: What did the wisest (Solomon), the strongest (Samson), and the holiest (David) men in the O.T. have in common? Weakness for women
- II. Many ways to approach this subject
 - A. Some would cite statistics and deal with it as a national and a social problem
 - B. What I will do is more direct and personal: Let us talk about it as my problem, your problem, and as a problem with those that we are trying to help serve the Lord
- III. My own experience in talking with people suggests that this is a serious challenge
 - A. Young men's leadership camp statistics (14-18 years old)
 1. Nature of the camp: Bible study camp, not recreational
 2. Survey in last two years with guaranteed anonymity
 - a. Have you ever looked purposely at things you shouldn't on the internet? (96 said "Yes" and 32 said "No" (some did not have Internet access)
 - b. About how often in the last three months (honestly)?
 - 1) 31 once or twice
 - 2) 3 rarely
 - 3) 7 three to five times
 - 4) 9 ten times to daily
 - 5) Some didn't answer
 - c. On a scale of 1-5 (5 being the worst) how big a problem is lust/sexual purity in your life?
 - 1) 12 one
 - 2) 37 two
 - 3) 36 three
 - 4) 28 four
 - 5) 11 five
 3. One man came to me and apologized for having lied in previous year(s)
 - B. Subjective experiences
 1. Many, many open conversations with young men
 - a. By 11 to 15 good boys have found TV porn, internet porn and masturbation
 - b. Most have been hooked at least for a while
 - c. Sooner or later they find girls themselves
 - d. They have talked to and admitted it to no one
 2. Adults

- a. Many adult Christian men at least fall in the areas of pornography and masturbation
- b. Many preachers
- c. I would be quite surprised if there weren't several here who are doing poorly in these areas

Body:**I. DEVELOPING THE BIBLICAL CASE****A. Genesis 2:18-24**

- 1. Sex is a part of the marriage relationship expressing union, commitment, love
 - a. It is not for selfish thrill
 - b. It is empty when it is selfish, never will satisfy
 - c. It unites us with our spouse
 - d. Should be only used in a committed covenant of marriage
- 2. It is pure, righteous and holy when used properly
 - a. Black, rich dirt is beautiful in garden or farm
 - b. But it is ugly and repugnant in a glass of pure water

B. 1 Corinthians 7:1-6: Sex in marriage is a way of giving ourselves to the other

- 1. It is not appropriate for married folks to live celibate lives (7:2); should 'have' spouse
- 2. Sex is a part of the marriage 'debt' (7:3)
 - a. Not conferring of a favor
 - b. Neither party is to withhold what is due to the other
- 3. Must give oneself to one's mate (7:4)
 - a. Actually is true in all aspects of marriage
 - b. Love is a willingness to give oneself in seeking the best interests of the other one
 - c. By the marriage vow each relinquishes their rights and seeks to serve the other with their bodies and in every other area
 - d. Emphasis is on giving, not receiving
- 4. Refusal is fraud (7:5-6)
 - a. Lawful abstention only under three conditions
 - 1) Mutual consent (no unilateral withdrawal)
 - 2) Spiritual purpose
 - 3) Temporary
 - b. Lest Satan tempt
 - 1) Humans are not superhuman
 - 2) Goal would be nullified if Satan gained the upper hand through your effort to be 'spiritual'

- c. But the abstinence for prayer is a concession, not a command

C. 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

1. Answering their arguments
 - a. “All things are lawful for me”
 - 1) Their slogan (10:23)
 - 2) But what are the consequences
 - a) Too often argue on the basis of what is lawful
 - b) What is the advantage? Why do it?
 - 3) Must not allow ‘liberties’ to control us
 - b. “Food is for the stomach, the stomach for food”
 - 1) The idea that sexual immorality is normal, natural urge that must be fulfilled
 - 2) Corrects in two ways
 - a) Body is not for fornication, but for the Lord
 - b) Body will not be done away with, but will be raised
 - c. “Every sin that a man commits is outside the body”
 - 1) Underlying idea
 - a) Sin doesn’t really involve me
 - b) It is just my body
 - c) We try to distance ourselves from the wrong things that we do
 - 2) Corrects
 - a) Other sins may be simply by means of the body
 - b) Fornication assaults and defiles the sanctity of the body itself
 - c) Both the object and the instrument of the sin
 - d) Sexual immorality is profoundly self-destructive
2. Deeper insight into the reason not to be sexually immoral
 - a. Takes the members of Christ and joins them to a harlot
 - 1) We are members of Christ, one spirit with Him
 - a) Think about our position in Christ
 - b) Bad to take away members from Christ
 - 2) In fornication become one with harlot!
 - a) No such thing as casual sex: more than just the fulfillment of a fleshly urge
 - b) Any person who commits fornication is a harlot
 - b. Desecrates the temple of the Holy Spirit
 - 1) Dishonors God in His own temple

- 2) Nothing that would be wrong in God's temple is right in Christian's body
- 3) You don't belong to yourself
- 4) Body is place where God is to be glorified

D. Ephesians 5:3-14

1. Avoid self-indulgence and sensuality (5:3-4)
 - a. Must not be done or even discussed
 - 1) Believers must distance themselves from these things even in conversation
 - 2) Talking about sexual sins creates an atmosphere which indirectly can promote them
 - b. Thanksgiving is the antidote for sin
2. Consequences of immorality (5:5-6)
 - a. Spiritual inheritance is not suited for these people
 - b. Must not be carried away by philosophies that suggest that God is too kind to punish sin
3. Must live in the light (5:7-14)
 - a. Must not participate in, go to, rent or read!
 - b. Our state is totally different from theirs
 - c. Our behavior should correspond to our position/identity
 - d. Must seek to please the Lord, the ultimate standard
 - e. Darkness is vain, empty, unproductive
 - f. Shamefulness of these vices could influence Christians if they continually talk about them, even in a disapproving way
 - g. Light exposes evil and transforms good

E. Colossians 3:5-7

1. Must kill these sins
 - a. Vigorous painful act; like amputating a limb caught in a machine
 - b. Don't cage them, kill them
 - c. Don't attack the symptoms, but the root
 - d. Don't just paint over the rust
2. The wrath of God will come

F. 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8: Strong incentives

1. Must continue to be marked by progress (4:1)
2. Commandment by the authority of the Lord Jesus (4:2)
3. Will of God (4:3)
 - a. Not just prudence or a church rule, it is what the Lord wills
 - b. We must be concerned about the will of God in all that we do

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4. Abstain (4:3)
 - a. Not merely show moderation
 - b. Must completely stay away from
 5. Possess own vessel in sanctification and honor (4:4)
 - a. Our own vessel refers to our bodies, or possibly our sexual organs
 - b. Our very bodies must be dedicated to God
 6. Distinction from the Gentiles (4:5)
 - a. Self-indulgence vs. self-sacrifice
 - b. Unrestricted passion vs. self-control
 - c. Lack vs. presence of knowledge of God
 7. Lord is avenger in these things (4:6)
 8. We previously solemnly warned you (4:6)
 9. God's call to sanctification (4:7)
 10. Rejects God (4:8)
 11. God gives His Holy Spirit to us (4:8)
 - a. Word order emphasizes 'holy'
 - b. These sins insult God's presence in our lives and dishonor His holy temple!
 12. Very weighty motives to remain pure

G. Proverbs

1. **2:16-19**: True wisdom delivers from wicked woman
 - a. Delivers from the words: man with biblical wisdom in heart will not be persuaded by smooth, flattering speech from such a woman
 - b. She leaves her marriage covenant
 - c. Her house is a deadly path
 - 1) One should mark the rocks on which other ships have been destroyed
 - 2) You will reach life's end faster if you take the route through this woman's house
 - 3) Escape for your life!
2. **5:1-23**: Warning against adultery
 - a. Call to hear (5:1-2)
 - b. Warning against adultery (5:3-14)
 - 1) Danger of adulterous woman (5:3-6)
 - a) May also refer to woman Folly
 - b) The son must pay careful attention to father, because her words are seductive
 - 1] Draw victim toward mystery, excitement, delight

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- 2] Temptation is not just sexual
 - 3] Her flattery is more important than her sexual availability
 - 4] She inflates his ego
 - 5] Conversation is the beginning and the key
 - c) Consequences
 - 1] Wisdom considers not the immediate gain, but the end
 - 2] No human activity should be evaluated merely on the basis of the initial result, but of the ultimate consequences
 - 3] Wormwood is very bitter
 - 4] Those who get involved with her share a premature trip to the grave
 - 2) Things one loses by nearing her house (5:7-14)
 - a) What he says deserves utmost attention
 - b) Stay far away from her
 - 1] The farther the temptation is from us, the surer we are not to yield
 - 2] The door of her house is the point of no return: a new and deadly world
 - c) The losses: everything he holds dear
 - 1] Strength
 - 2] Long life
 - 3] Money: pays her, pays off her husband, pays child support, etc.
 - 4] Physical health: STD's?
 - d) Self-reproach
 - 1] Mental anguish; pangs of remorse
 - 2] Knowledge that comes too late
 - e) Loss of standing in the congregation
 - 1] Brings shame, humiliation, loss of respect
 - 2] Still ruins political careers
 - c. Delights of married love (5:15-20)
 - 1) Comparison with (5:3-4)
 - a) Sexuality is portrayed in liquid images
 - b) Deadly honey and oil vs. life-giving well
 - c) Harlot's honey goes bitter vs. wife's water stays sweet
 - 2) Wife protects from adulteress
 - a) Best way to resist sexual temptation is to have a loving relationship with one's wife
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- b) Physical pleasures of marriage are innocent and pure
 - 3) Must keep sexual desires within bounds
 - a) Own cistern vs. the street
 - b) Sexual exclusivity is basic to our well-being
 - 4) Sexual delight in marriage is God-given
 - a) The two should enjoy each other's bodies
 - b) He must keep his eye only on her
 - d. Final warning against adultery (5:21-23)
 - 1) Lord's omniscience: He will see
 - 2) Lord's justice
 - a) Rebel becomes a victim of his own rebellion
 - b) People think they are free to sin, but sin takes away freedom
 - 3. **6:20-35**: Avoiding adultery
 - a. Value of parental instruction (6:20-24)
 - 1) Morality must pervade daily life in every area
 - 2) Guards from speech of adulteress: flattery, flirtations, coarse speech, invitations, descriptions of pleasure, assurances of impunity and discretion
 - b. Danger of the adulteress (6:25-35)
 - 1) Avoid avenues of temptation (6:25)
 - a) Sin starts in lust and imagination
 - b) Desire comes into the heart through eye contact
 - 2) Price of adultery is severe (6:26-31)
 - a) Prostitute only requires a small payment, but the adulteress costs one's life, perhaps
 - b) Fire burns
 - 1] Play on word 'feet' which can refer to sexual organs?
 - 2] The pleasurable touch of v. 29 leads to painful blows of v. 33
 - c) Contrast with the thief
 - 1] Hungry thief is regarded with more pity than contempt, but still must repay sevenfold!
 - 2] Full restitution
 - 3) Wronged husband will avenge (6:32-35)
 - a) For a moment of gratification, he places his very life in jeopardy
 - b) No payment can buy off the rage of the jealous husband
 - 4. **7:1-27**: Snare of the adulteress
 - a. Call to hear (7:1-5)
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- 1) Must regard as precious the words of the Lord
 - 2) Smooth talk is always a characteristic of the adulterous woman
 - b. Description of the subtle tempter and her victim (7:6-23)
 - 1) The victim (7:6-9)
 - a) Solomon had a great opportunity to view without being seen
 - b) Young man wanders into temptation because he is aimless; she is not!
 - c) If you want to avoid the devil, stay away from his neighborhood
 - d) The dimwit was not cautious, unaware of the danger
 - 2) The huntress (7:10-12)
 - a) “Behold” creates a you are there experience
 - b) She is active, busy, restless, aggressive
 - c) She shows she is available by how she dresses
 - d) She has hunted plenty of game in this territory
 - 1] Prowls the streets looking for new victims to conquer
 - 2] The corner by her house doesn’t provide her sufficient game
 - 3] She lies in wait -- compare robbers of 1:11
 - 3) The tactics (7:13-21)
 - a) Shock treatment (7:13)
 - 1] The two meet and before he realizes she has smothered him with kisses
 - 2] Overpowering through seduction
 - b) Circumstantial story (7:14)
 - c) Flattery (7:15)
 - 1] Singled him out to be the honored invitee for this special occasion!
 - 2] He is the right one because he looks brainless!
 - d) Sensuous appeal (7:16-18)
 - 1] Smells of love: (Song of Solomon 4:14)
 - 2] Until morning -- they will enjoy love’s delights with no commitment to anything more than one night
 - e) Reassurance (7:19-20)
 - 1] What extraordinary luck!
 - 2] Separates the deed from the consequences
 - 3] Like Satan to Eve
 - f) He cannot resist her words (7:21)
 - 4) The kill (7:22-23)
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- a) He followed her; suddenly takes the plunge
- b) Allowed his glands to do his thinking for him
- c) Stupid animals see no connection between traps and death
- c. Call to hear (7:24-27)
 - 1) Stay clear of adulteress (7:24-25)
 - 2) Reason why (7:26-27)
 - a) Learn from the victims who have gone before
 - b) Her bedroom is a battlefield where corpses are strewn about

II. GOD OPPOSES SEXUAL PLEASURE OUTSIDE OF LAWFUL MARRIAGE

A. Adultery And Fornication Are Sins

1. Against God: Genesis 39:9; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10
2. Against others: Proverbs 6:34-35
3. Against oneself: Proverbs 5:10-11; 6:26; 29:3
4. Adultery includes remarriage after divorce
 - a. Marriage should be permanent: Romans 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 7:39; Matthew 19:4-6
 - b. Divorce is sinful: Matthew 19:6; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11; Matthew 5:32
 - c. Remarriage is adultery: Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:2-3
 - d. Unless one divorces for fornication: Matthew 19:9
 - e. Forgiveness requires repentance: Luke 13:3,5; Acts 17:30; 2:38
 - f. Repentance demands separation: 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
 - 1) Herod: Mark 6:17-18
 - 2) Men in Ezra's day: Ezra 9-10
 - 3) In general: Matthew 21:28-29
 - g. Cannot continue in sin: Romans 6:1-2; Colossians 3:5-7; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (such **were** some of you)
 - h. One more thing: because brethren often debate this point, it should be noted that the victim (the unjustly put away person) commits adultery when he/she remarries: Matthew 5:32
5. Notice the seriousness: Hebrews 13:4

B. Homosexuality Is Wrong

1. Clearly condemned in the Old Testament: Leviticus 18:22; 20:13
2. But it is also condemned in the New Testament: Romans 1:25-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
3. We must stand for the truth on this point despite it being unpopular
4. We should distinguish between the temptation and the sin

- a. Some people are more vulnerable to anger temptations
- b. Some people are more vulnerable to heterosexual temptations
- c. Some people are more vulnerable to temptations to homosexuality
- d. But in each case, there is a choice to give in or not to give in to the desire that is tempting us
- e. To be tempted to get angry, to fornication or to commit acts of homosexuality may be unavoidable, but the sin can be avoided!

C. God Opposes Seeking Sexual Pleasure Mentally And Visually

1. Matthew 5:28; Job 31:1; Philippians 4:8; 2 Samuel 11:2-4
2. Is a means of exploiting the image for personal sexual fulfillment
3. Viewing pornography would fit in this category

D. I Believe That Masturbation Is Sinful, At Least As It Is Normally Practiced

1. In the vast majority of cases is associated with sexual fantasizing (lust)
 - a. Think about when it usually happens ... often after seeing or during seeing or thinking about something sexually stimulating
 - b. The images in the mind are usually improper
2. Even when not, it is an effort to gain sexual pleasure without the benefit of marriage
 - a. It seems to me that what we know from the Scriptures would lead us to see no authority for the gaining of sexual pleasure outside of marriage
 - b. Various passages condemn uncleanness, sensuality, lasciviousness, and such like: Galatians 5:19-21
3. It is not wrong to have wet dreams or to be physically aroused, though these things may be the occasion for temptation

III. SOME HELP FOR OVERCOMING SEXUAL TEMPTATION AND SIN

A. Adultery

1. Guard the heart: Proverbs 4:23; Matthew 15:19; James 1:13-15
2. Keep the eyes under control: 2 Peter 2:14
3. Avoid the touch: be careful not to be a stumbling block in this area to someone else
4. Personal encounters: Some things are an awfully lot like a date
5. Be careful about conversation
 - a. Proverbs lays heavy emphasis on
 - b. Talking about personal subjects
 - c. Developing a special connection with them
 - d. Talking bad about one's own spouses
 - e. Any conversation that develops a special feeling and bond of closeness
 - f. Be very careful about any time spent together

6. Improve relationship with spouse: Proverbs 5:15-20
7. Be careful to be discrete and wise in counseling: 1 Timothy 5:2; Romans 12:17
8. When you realize that you have gone too far
 - a. Stop contact with them cold turkey: Proverbs 5:8
 - b. Don't tell them about your special feeling for them
 - c. "Once the Line is Crossed"
9. "Daddy Won't Be Coming Home"

B. Pornography

1. Psalms 101:3; 119:37
2. Must bounce our eyes, reflexively divert our gaze; David didn't in 2 Samuel 11
3. Fill mind with good; must not leave a vacuum: Matthew 12:43-45
4. Radical surgery: Matthew 5:29-30
 - a. Take away the source of the temptation: internet, TV, going to the store
 - b. Amazing and shocking what we allow in our living room!
 - c. Avoid getting close
 - d. We are gifted at playing games with ourselves
 - e. We sin when we don't flee
 - f. Make rules and lines that stop you well short of the sin
5. Accountability
 - a. Admitting the problem
 - b. Double life is so common
 - c. Find someone who will be tough on us
 - d. "Covenant Eyes"
6. Seeing it as serious enough: addictive
 - a. This will consume us
 - b. It will get worse
7. Turn toward God, not away from Him
 - a. We will not have motivation to study and pray when we are in sin
 - b. We will not like being around brethren
 - c. Properly diagnose the problem
8. Books that help: I like *Every Man's Battle*, and *Every Young Man's Battle* by Arterburn and Stoeker

C. Sins Of Dating

1. So typically there develops emotional and physical intimacy without friendship and this leads to constant strife and yet no break-up

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2. Put the Lord at the center of the relationship; focus on Him
 3. Song of Solomon 4:12-15; 7:13; 8:8-10
 - a. Should not mess with her garden
 - b. She should save all her fruit for her wedding night and after
 - c. Should be a wall, not a door
 - d. Older siblings, parents should be responsible to warn and care for younger ones
 4. Flower illustration
 - a. Must love her
 - b. What would you want done with your future mate
 - c. Need strong physical limits
 - d. What will you do for an encore if you quickly go to your ultimate limit
 5. Don't make provision for the flesh: Romans 13:13-14

D. Young People

1. Some things to promote spiritual strength in general
 - a. Good Bible study --they can learn a lot
 - b. Thoughtful prayer
 - c. Good network of spiritual kids
 - d. Focus on spiritual things
 - e. Don't underestimate their depth even when they are young
 2. Typical pattern
 - a. They fall, feel guilty, don't talk and leave the Lord
 - b. Lying
 3. How to avoid sexual sin
 - a. Need to avoid places where sin is done
 - b. Need to avoid being alone
 - c. Fleeing the thought -- replacement, bounce the eyes and thoughts
 - d. Avoid idle time
 - e. Pray a lot
 - f. Singing spiritual songs in the shower, or in other tempting locations
 - g. Overconfidence and discouragement: just take one day at a time
 - h. Don't use hands
 - i. Private areas should be covered and untouched
 - j. Is always unwise to rev up the motor with nowhere to go
 - k. Become accountable
 - l. Beware: 1 Corinthians 10:12; Peter in Matthew 26; it can happen to me
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Conclusion:

- I. **Flee sexual immorality:** 1 Corinthians 6:18

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