# **SOTM Pt 24 What do we do with Lust?**

Pastor Carl Van Vliet / General

Sermon on the Mount / Lust; Purity; Adultery; Sexual Immorality / Matthew 5:27–30; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–8

**Matthew 5:27–30 NKJV**

27 “You have heard that it was said to those of old, *‘You shall not commit adultery.’* 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

The last couple messages stemmed from the 10 commandments, specifically the 6th commandment [Exodus 20:13](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ex20.13) “13 “You shall not murder.” and we found Jesus taking this narrowly taught - via the commands of the Pharisee's and Sadducee's that narrowed any internal root of the law and took it to focus on the act itself. Jesus put an end to that by pointing to the nature of sin which is not rooted in action, it is rooted in the heart.

We have a “sin nature” which focuses on the fact that sin has corrupted our entire nature. The term “sin nature” provides a clear contrast between that root nature and its fruits (which are particular acts of sin) [Romans 5:12](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ro5.12) “12 Therefore, just as **through one man sin entered the world**, and death through sin, and thus death **spread to all men**, because all sinned—” nature is what is in us, a nature to sin because all sin. This is important to realize sin is not in the actions, it is in the nature and actions only flow out of the nature.

Today’s message really is a message about the sin nature expressed as it flows out. We have been free’d from this wretched nature but often find ourselves living within our old nature instead of the nature of Christ who lives in us, those who believe.

I just want to start out before we dive into this passage by saying that many Biblical Principles are sometimes taken as "Hard Medicine" like the old idiom "A Hard Pill to Swallow" this is seen because of a number of things:

1. **The tension inside of us between the flesh and the Spirit** ( [1 Corinthians 2-3](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.1Co2-3)) (three types of people, the lost, the saved and the carnal) Paul describes it in [Romans 8](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ro8) like this: “the carnal mind is Enmity against God” Enmity means “a deep rooted hatred” often times referred to as “war” but I think sometimes war is actually a weak translation because while war is violent it may not be caused by this kind of deep rooted hatred.

2. **Current cultural norms that are contrary to Biblical principles and values**

3. **Our own life situations where perhaps we have fallen into a place of disobedience and sin in regards to Biblical principles**, and let me just say here: this is one place the enemy has waged a great war and in many is seeing great victory. He uses guilt and shame as vehicles to cause man to abdicate adherence to biblical truths often resulting in abandonment of those truths!; or

4. **Someone we love is entangled in unbiblical behavior and sin and we struggle with how to address it and help them.**

Julie Andrew's in 1964 in her role as Mary Poppins sang this little diddy "just a spoon full of sugar helps the medicine go down, the medicine go down, the medicine go down..." well now that I have this old show-tune running through your head this is what grace is like.

What is that “spoon full of sugar” for believers as we begin to navigate areas that that are difficult, that many have struggled with or even are struggling with?

It is the Grace of God. Grace is beyond Salvation alone. Grace is also sanctifying (Grace that makes us Holy) and sustaining. These types of grace are at work in our hearts when we hear a difficult word within the tenets of faith allowing to receive the truth and understanding that forgiveness and the Blood of Jesus does not negate the principle but rather brings us in right standing before God from it and able to continue forward in it. Paul describes grace’s work and how we leave those things which are behind exactly that, behind, under the blood, and we then press on toward the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13-14 “Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, **forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus**.”

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Jesus begins to do the same thing here as He did in the last passage, pointing to the Ten Commandments, now pointing not to the 7th commandment found in [Exodus 20:14](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ex20.14) “14 “You shall not commit adultery.” but rather from the teaching “you have heard it said” which narrowed the bounds of sexual immorality to be confined to physical behavior only and specific behavior at that.

Jesus language here is not **narrow its broad**. Jesus wants us to know that this issue of purity and a Biblical sexual ethic is not narrow at all, it is broad.

John Stott - “Jesus’ allusion is to all forms of immorality. To argue that the reference is only to a man lusting after a woman and not vice versa, or only to a married man and not an unmarried, since the offender is said to commit ‘adultery’ not ‘fornication’, is to be guilty of the very casuistry which Jesus was condemning in the Pharisees. His emphasis is that any and every sexual practice **which is immoral in deed is immoral also in look and in thought.**”

Not narrow, but broad.

So lets begin to unpack this:

[Matthew 5:28](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.28) “28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

What does Jesus mean here “looks at a woman”? The word “look” and the preposition “to” with the word lust Jesus speaking of one who “looks at a woman with the desire, or fantasy of immorality” the present tense participle in the grammar refers to one who continues to look rather than just casting a passing glance.

Jesus is not calling out seeing someone of the opposite sex who is attractive. Jesus is calling out “the double take”, “the longing look” the lingering look” that leads to “desires or fantasies in ones thoughts”

The one who looks in that manner has the fullness of sexual immorality within them regardless of action. This is the depth of lust it roots in you and encompasses the whole of immorality.

Studies have found that the prevalence of adultery among church members is similar to the general population, with an estimated **20 to 25 percent** of married individuals, in the church, admitting to having engaged in extramarital affairs. **But there are no studies on how many Christians struggle with lust and lustful thoughts.**

Here are some things we do know:

The Number of years it took for a product or service to gain **50 million users**:

• Airplanes: 68 years

• Cars: 62 years

• Phones: 50 years

• ATM's: 18 years

• Cell Phones: 12 Years

• YouTube: 4 Years

• Facebook: 3 years

• PornHub: 19 Days

This afternoon the Chiefs play the Ravens for the AFC Championship and the chance to go to the SuperBowl. In 2022, the National Football League (NFL) generated a total revenue of approximately **18.6 billion U.S. dollars. The NBA, 10.5 Billion and the MLB, 10.3 Billion.** Pornhub's annual revenue is more than the NFL, the NBA, and the MLB combined.

Lust is a huge economy because lust is a sin that is hidden in the shadows and is not too often brought into the light.

68 % of churchgoers admit to regular viewing of pornography. 68%.

Statistically, 54% of Pastors view pornography. Sex scandals rock every denomination including the SBC. Pastor’s trust in the world is at its all time low where just 32% of people believe pastors are trustworthy, honest or ethical. The MBC Annual Pastors Conference held a special session this last year on this very issue pastors porn use and sexual immorality.

Parents listen up, **Children are exposed to porn as early as 5 years old** statistically and children **begin viewing porn on a regular basis** statistically at age 11. **73% of teens 13 to 18 admit to viewing pornography at least monthly**.

Lust is big business because it is big sin and it is an epidemic. And it is deeply effecting families, our friends, our children.

Parents, hear me today, do not believe the lie we tell ourselves “not my child, not my teen” Take steps to parent your children. Use technology to manage their devices.

Get Covenant Eyes and install it on all your children’s devices! If you struggle with Lust and pornography put Covenant Eyes on all your devices! Scan this QR code to get started!

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[Job 31:1](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Job31.1) “1 “**I have made a covenant with my eyes**; Why then should I look upon a young woman?” Look here in Job has the same meaning as Jesus use here in [Matthew 5](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5), “looks at with the desire, or fantasy of immorality” Job knew the intensity of Lust and covenanted that He would not even so much as look because he knew what that look would do.

So serious is the state of lust in sexual immorality that Jesus continues with severe hyperbolic language:

[Matthew 5:29–30](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.29-30) “29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.”

› Does Jesus really want me to pluck out my eye or cut off my hand?

Jesus is not saying self mutilation is proper for addressing sin. He is saying that one should go to extreme measure to rid oneself from sin!

• If your TV causes you to sin throw it out!

• If you cant stay off your smart phone without it causing you to sin get rid of it. get you a flip phone!

• If your computer causes you to sin get rid of it! (remember Fireproof scene)

[1 Thessalonians 4:3](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.1Th4.3) “3 For this is **the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;**”

[1 Corinthians 6:18](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.1Co6.18) “18 **Flee sexual immorality**.

What do I do if I struggle with lust and sexual immorality?

1. **Recognize it - We have to first recognize that lust IS sexual Immorality. Jesus reminds us these are root issues in our heart, not action oriented sins.**

2. **Confess it and repent of it**

3. **Be connected to the Body of Christ** - Find someone with whom you can be vulnerable with and ask them to help you and hold you accountable with your struggle.

4. **Renew your Mind -** [**Romans 12:1-2**](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ro12.1-2)**,** [**Philippians 4:8**](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Php4.8)

5. **Take extreme measures to “Flee from sexual Immorality”** [**1 Co 6:18**](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.1Co6.18) Get it out of your house and away from your access!

The devil I am to resist and he will flee from me, but the lusts of the flesh, ***I* must flee**, or they will surely overcome me.

**Charles Spurgeon**

**Matthew 5:27–30**

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