

Command #4: Do Not Lust

Matthew 5:27-30 // Jerry Barber & Greg Singerle

Condensed Version

Read Matthew 5:27-30 and discuss these questions with your disciple(s):

1. What reason is given in verses 27-28 for followers of Jesus Christ to remove lust from our lives?
2. What reason is given in verses 29-30 for followers of Jesus Christ to remove lust from our lives?
3. Read Matthew 4:1-11. What enabled Jesus to have victory over temptation (which also will help us overcome our temptations)?
4. What do you admire about Jesus as you reflect on Matthew 4:1-11?

Study (answers follow below)

NOTE: Sex within marriage is God-ordained and beautiful.

There is nothing AT ALL dirty about sex itself. There's even an entire book in the Bible, the Song of Solomon, devoted to the joys and uninhibited delight of sexual union between husband and wife. Jesus is talking about lusting after someone that is NOT your spouse. But adultery was a serious offense because of the way it severed the marriage relationship that was used as a picture of God and his people. When the people of Israel ran after other gods than Yahweh, that was described as adultery (Ezek 16:32, Hos 4:13). Marriage means exclusive devotion to your spouse, but its bond can be damaged through physical actions as well as lustful looks.

1. Meditate on Matthew 5:27-30. Before answering the questions below, make 3-5 observations about the passage.
2. What reason is given in verses 27-28 for followers of Jesus Christ to remove lust from our lives?
3. What reason is given in verses 29-30 for followers of Jesus Christ to remove lust from our lives?
4. Does Jesus want you to literally poke out your eye and cut off your hand if you have a problem with lust?

Answers:

1. (many answers possible here)
2. It is the core of adultery (27-28).
3. As sin, it leads to final judgment.
4. No, this is figurative language which is used to convey literal truth by a figure. For example, someone might use figurative language to say, "That line was a mile long." They are not trying to communicate that the line is literally 5,280 feet long, but that it is REALLY long. The point Jesus is making by using this language is this: forcibly remove the source of your temptation. Take drastic action!

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Worship

Aside from pride, there might not be a more pervasive sin for mankind than lust. Hebrews 4:15 tells us that Jesus was tempted in every respect as we are, yet without sin. Although it is not specifically recorded in Scripture, certainly Jesus faced this type of temptation. Let's take a look at the temptations that Jesus did face that are recorded to glean from them regarding how He overcame temptation and what we admire about Him in doing so. Please read Matthew 4:1-11. Contrasting Luke 23:32-34 with John 2:14-17 and Matthew 21:12-13, what are the differences between righteous and unrighteous anger? (Examine when and where Jesus got angry and at whom and why did He get angry?)

1. What single weapon did Jesus employ to defeat Satan?
2. Is *knowing* Scripture enough to defeat Satan and overcome temptation? Look at Psalm 119:11. Where does it say that a person is to put Scripture that he or she might not sin against God? What does this mean?
3. What do you admire about Jesus from these verses? (Some examples might be: I admire His steadfastness and strength; I admire how He trusted in God's Word in every situation; I admire His greater hunger for God's Word even at a time where His physical hunger must have been unbearable ; I admire that He passed the test; Jesus is tough!)
4. What does Scripture teach us to do when we encounter Satan? (Hint: Jesus modeled it here and it is found in James 4:7)
5. To sum everything up, what was it that enabled Jesus to be victorious over temptation and therefore will enable us to have victory as well as we emulate Him?

Answers

1. The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.
2. Knowing Scripture is certainly critical. But there are many who know what God's Word states and it is completely useless – Satan in this passage being the prime example. We must hide God's Word in our hearts – meaning our affection is set on God and His Word, leading us to do it and not simply know it intellectually (James 1:22).
3. Answers will vary but come up with as many as possible. The purpose of this part of the guide, possibly the most important part of the exercise, is beholding Christ and thereby being transformed into His image as we see Him as He is.

4. Fight, resist, stand firm!
5. Jesus wanted to please God and do His will above all else and without exception, even at the cross, and he yielded to the Father's will when temptation came. Do you share this desire?

Obey

10 Tools to Overcome Temptation:

1. Use the same weapons Jesus did (Matthew 4:1-11): Scripture and the sufficiency of God.
2. Depend on the power Jesus gives you: the indwelling Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-17).
3. Take sin seriously.
4. Get rid of sources of temptation (including media, internet pornography, etc.).
5. Establish accountability.
6. Think long-term, not short-term (Colossians 3:1-5).
7. Use this phrase: "not mine."
8. (Men) Focus on her person, not her body.
9. (Women) Dress and speak to be attractive but not seductive.
10. (Wives) If married, help your husband through physical intimacy.

Train

1. Be vulnerable and transparent (while still taking care to be appropriate) with your disciples, sharing your struggles in this area and any ways God is helping you.
2. Discuss the 10 tools for overcoming temptation listed above in the "Obey" section and elaborated on in Pastor Jerry's sermon of 8.6.16.