

Jesus and Sex

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MAIN VERSES

[Matthew 5:27](#) • [Matthew 5:28](#) • [Matthew 5:29](#) • [Matthew 5:30](#) • [Matthew 19](#) • [Genesis 1](#) • [Genesis 2](#) • [Exodus 20](#) • [Jeremiah 31](#) • [1 Kings 11](#) • [1 Kings 12](#) • [1 Kings 13](#) • [Proverbs 5](#) • [Proverbs 7](#) • [Job 24:15](#) • [James 1:15](#)

Do you ever find yourself searching for something bigger than you? For a community to be a part of? A place founded on truth and love. A place to worship the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, and the Son of God. Welcome to Founded in Truth, where we're more than just a fellowship. We're a family, so welcome home.

About Sex and Sexual Desire

We're going to talk about something that the Bible speaks a lot about, but in our fellowships and in our small groups and in our churches and synagogues, we do not. It's a topic that Yeshua had a lot to say about, and that was sex and sexual desire.

We started last week going through the Sermon on the Mount, and how Yeshua kind of opens up this dialogue and this bold message to everyone who wasn't listening to all of the other rabbis on this mount. He begins to kind of invoke this idea of becoming people that reflect God's love and mercy and covenant from their hearts. He's speaking about [Jeremiah 31](#) people—people that reflect a relationship with God that is not like the relationship that was broken when we seek autonomy from God. It's a relationship with God built on His forgiveness. It's a relationship with God whose foundation is God's love and God's mercy.

Our relationship with this God is based on the fact that He said, "I know... I know that you've walked away from me, and I know that you have sought after and ran after sin and transgression, but I am going to wipe that away. I am going to wipe away the iniquities, and I will forgive you." This is exactly what [Jeremiah 31](#) speaks about—this rebirth of this covenant. It's very, very, very bold.

Walking Against the World

So just go ahead and turn with me to Matthew chapter 5, verse 27, and we'll see what Yeshua has to say about sex.

As you turn there, Yeshua calls us to do something very, very difficult in this world. He calls us to not walk the way that this world says is okay or kosher, to not walk in the direction where this world is pushing us to go. Turn around and don't walk the same way that the world tells you is okay. Walk against it. Walk in the direction that you know is right. Walk in the direction of what God has put forth before us.

He says what's going to happen is the world is not going to like this, and you will. You will, if you dare to follow me, collide with the world around you, and you will collide with the ways of this world. It may look like a complete wreck, but that's okay. Because we need to turn around. And if we all do this, imagine the impact that we can have.

The Shock and Awe of the Sermon

So Matthew chapter 5, verse 27, he says this:

Here's Yeshua, sitting in the same posture as Moses, just as we spoke about last week, quoting Moses and then giving a deeper, more meaningful interpretation of Moses. Yeshua doesn't hold back the shock and awe here. He tells you to rip out your eye.

What's fascinating is he goes straight for jolting the audience around him with pure hyperbolic language and exaggeration. At one point he's talking about—guys, we need to watch what we see—to grabbing your eyeball with your fingernails and yanking it out. Did I just kind of force some imagery in your brain that you would have rather not? Did Yeshua just force an image in your brain that you would have rather not?

Yeshua is setting up the standard of seriousness that he wants you to take about this topic. It's not simply, "Oh yeah, these thoughts in my heart sometimes." It's better if you rip it out, and the agony that that will—it's better. But I'll be blind. Oh, but what a blessing it will be. It would be better. Amazing.

Renovating the Heart

Yeshua is not coming to tell us how to modify our behavior with this Sermon on the Mount, which He's pitching toward this group of people and encouraging them to follow Him and to live out this birth of this new covenant or new relationship with God. He's not just talking about behavior. People understood how to control their behavior. He's saying that he is here to

work to renovate the core, inner, deep issues that reside within us—that we as humans can be molded to the type of person that truly and honestly carries the image of God that we claim we serve.

That was our calling from the beginning, to become truly human in our vocation to be the image of God. We have fallen from that to something that I like to call the human condition. This is what we see Yeshua laying out in this sermon on the mountain.

Yeshua spoke about how anger in our hearts can cause us to commit murder through our fantasizing of harm and dehumanizing others. Was that an impact for anybody last week? Reminded of how often and easy it is to do that.

Has anyone ever—I mean, do we have any murderers in here? No? Just a couple? Just a couple. That's good. Bless you guys. Because that's a struggle. It's so easy to allow thoughts and frustrations and anger to come into your heart about other people. Wish they weren't here. We're playing traffic. That'd be great. Murder. It's so easy to do.

Lust and Sexual Desire

Now Yeshua is speaking about something that is often something we don't speak about. Lust. And this is how he's starting out his sermon.

This sermon goes for about three chapters according to Matthew. This is the very beginning, and he's talking about anger, and now he's talking about sex and sexual desire, which means that he's laying a foundation for the things he knows plagues us, whether we want to acknowledge it or not.

Before we go into the topic of lust and sexual desire, we need to start with what the Bible says about sexual desire. Because lust is not sexual desire. It's not synonymous with sexual desire. It's the abuse of it. It's the abuse of it.

Sexual desire is not a bad thing. Quite the opposite. Quite the opposite.

And in the biblical narrative, there are two reasons for sexual desire that leads to the sexual experience according to the Bible. One is, of course, the reasoning why God put this in our hearts and designed our brains to engage with these types of things is for what? What's the main reason according to the Bible? To procreate, right? To have children, to have offspring, progeny.

And the second, the second reason—we're about to make this topic very awkward by talking about what the Bible says. The second is pleasure with your covenant partner. Shocking, I know.

We can never—I can't believe Matt just said sex was meant for something more than just having children. No, it was designed. We see this all in Scripture. It's not a secret. It's not a secret.

And the two are supposed to complement each other. In fact, there is an entire book in your Bible right now that's made up of erotic poetry testifying to this fact. An entire book in your Bible. Erotic poetry. That's the genre. It's erotic poetry.

Anyone know which book that is? Everybody's read it. Let's just say Song of Songs or Song of Solomon. Song of Songs or Song of Solomon.

The Book of Ancient Passion

And if you want to see a beautiful portrayal of what sexual passion and desire looks like when it is depicted in a committed and covenant relationship, it's amazing. This is the book that shows you how beautiful and intimate this is within the bounds of a covenant relationship that is committed.

And if you read this book, you will also discover very quickly that it is quite awkward. Very awkward.

So I have selected some verses to read from this ancient poem. The reason why I do this is because I love history and anything old and ancient—I just love to research and look at old tablets they found here and there in Babylon. This is not something that was written last month. This is something that was written thousands of years ago.

It's a man and a woman speaking about their covenant partners in a way that most churches would deem inappropriate. And so we're going to read some verses here. You guys ready? Okay, it's Song of Songs, chapter 7, if you want to turn there.

I'm not going to read the whole chapter. It starts like this:

"How beautiful are your feet in sandals, O noble daughter! Your rounded thighs are like jewels, the work of a master hand. Your navel is a rounded bowl that never lacks mixed wine. Oh, your belly is a heap of wheat encircled with lilies. Your nose... It's like a tower of Lebanon which looks toward Damascus."

Men, poetry is great. Do not try to incite romance with your covenant partner, your wife. Oh, baby, your belly's like a heap of wheat. But what's funny, what's funny is this wasn't a laughing

matter when it was written. This was dead serious, dead serious.

Can you imagine? This is the most romantic poetry that was written to describe your lover and the passion that you have for him or her. When I quit chuckling, I'm in awe that we can even have this available to us to reflect on—the passion. You can feel it.

And the author goes on to speak about the rest of her body parts, which I am not going to read here because it would just make it more uncomfortable than it already is speaking about this topic here with you today.

So Song of Songs, you can go home and read it. It is the word of God. It speaks about intimacy and it speaks about the taste of the lover's lips like wine and different experiences. The book is about sexual experiences. Don't sugarcoat it. It's fascinating.

We can see this later in the chapter in verses 9b and 10, where the man stops speaking and his lover, she starts to speak and she responds: "Your mouth like the best wine, it goes down smoothly for my beloved, gliding over lips and teeth," talking about the intimacy of a kiss between covenant partners and what that represents.

A Covenant Celebration

I am my beloved's and his desire is for me. It's a celebration about one person that you are committed to and have a covenant with and they desire you just like you desire them. And it's a beautiful thing and it's exciting and it's poetic and it's part of God's plan.

And when we read this poem, it portrays the sexual desire in a way that almost seems foreign in our culture, right? We almost have to take a look at it and be like, this is beautiful. The reason why we're so apt to laugh at it is because today our culture says that sexual passion and desire is dirty, and it's sinful, and that actually makes it more appealing to the secular world, and it's seen as vulgar whenever it's spoken about. That's why we chuckle when we read Song of Songs. God created it to be beautiful within set limits, set boundaries, and it's when the boundaries begin to crumble that this thing begins to be destructive.

Fire in the Fireplace

How many of you have a fireplace in your home right now? A couple? Yeah. Two people. That's great. Times have changed. What goes in the fireplace? Gas goes in the fireplace. Ours too. What goes in the fireplace? It's the place for what? The fire. The place for fire. Fireplace.

And the fire is in the fireplace, and what can you do? You can gather around it, and it keeps you warm, and it's nice, or it makes that nice crackling sound that everyone loves to fall asleep to in the wintertime. Or you can hear it roaring, or maybe you cook with fire. It warms your food. This is a good thing. It's a good thing. Until you put too much wood in there. And the wood begins to pop and shoot sparks out onto your carpet and burn holes in your carpet.

No one else. Okay, we have experience with this. That was fun. Yeah, my dad loved to make fires. He loved to make bonfires, like huge fires, that you'd go over to someone's house with and pick up trucks. But he would make it in the fireplace. And the evidence was seen at the burn marks around the fireplace and the carpet. When the fire leaves its boundaries, it's now in an area where it's bad. It causes destruction. It can burn the whole house down. It can kill. It can destroy everything. Sexual desire.

Solomon's Trap

Solomon, the one who's typically attributed to writing these wonderful poems for us, despite his early yearnings of wisdom in 2 Chronicles and his privilege to build the temple in 1 Kings, he falls into a trap with sexual desire very quickly in [1 Kings 11-13](#). We see this. And it's so easy to do. This man that had all the wisdom, had all the money, had all the power, all of it is sacrificed for this one thing and this one pursuit.

This is why Proverbs has like chapters 5 and chapter 7 in our Bible. It warns young men, watch yourself. Do not fall prey to taking the boundaries down of this God-given blessing and gift. It will destroy you and it will destroy everything around you and it is a trap. Guard yourself. Unbound sexual desire will produce justification and rationalization of turning your passions and your desires into a black hole that will infect every ounce of your life and destroy every relationship that you have.

The Adulterer's Concealment

Job speaks about this in [Job 24, 15](#). It says, The eye of the adulterer watches for dusk. He thinks, no eye will see me. He keeps his face concealed. This is speaking about someone who yearns to take sexual desire outside of the bounds and the limits and the place that it has. And look at the personality of this person. It's not simply this person has an issue. This is changing the attitude and the pursuit and the character of this person.

No one will see me. I'm on guard. I've got to hide it. No one will see me. I'll go out after night. I won't go out in the daytime. I'm going to go after night. I'm going to do this. I'm going to hide

this. Scheming. And they justify, no one will see me, so I can continue having this in my life because no one will see me.

Understanding Lust

And lust, when we speak, lust is one of those words that we really don't tend to use in day-to-day speaking, right? I mean, not typically. It's one of those religious words, like we spoke about last week. It's up there with a blessed, blessed, blessed be. No one says that unless they're reading the Bible, and then our language vocabulary just changes, right? The thing is, lust is not simply desire. Lust is the desire for something that you are not entitled to. Lust is the desire to have something you're not entitled to. It's covet, coveting, right?

So in the Septuagint, in the Torah, when the Ten Commandments are given, covet another man's wife, it's the same word that Yeshua speaks in the Sermon on the Mount, coveting. And here Yeshua is speaking about thinking about sex with someone that you're not entitled to. And he's speaking about being a thief with someone else's body in your mind and your heart. Objectifying another human being. And the thing we need to get out of the way is, as we've already spoken, it's not about sex. It's not about sexual desire. It's about lust. It's about taking the bounds off.

Yeshua's Interpretation

And in this section of Scripture, Matthew doesn't record Yeshua speaking about marriage or covenantal relationships. That doesn't happen until about [Matthew 19](#), when he's arguing with the Pharisees about divorce. And Yeshua goes to define what biblical marriage is, and he goes back to where? [Genesis 1](#) and 2. And Yeshua is referring back to the story of Adam and Eve, where God creates a man and a woman to become mankind. Co-heirs in this mankind, as image bearers. And God speaks about them becoming one, becoming one in Genesis.

And there's all the different ways you can pull the context out, but just the literal, become one. And what is the purpose of them to become one? What is the function of this fire in this fireplace? It's so that they can build a family. And then that family can build a community. And that community can build a nation and that nation can build a kingdom and this is the story of the garden. This is the function behind it.

And this model of marriage is God ordained, committed to something that God made for us and it's something that's very special to Yeshua as we can see. And Yeshua has this attitude that anything that would fracture or affect the integrity of this model is seen by Yeshua as a

distortion of God's plan in the world. It's seen as a distortion of God's mission to humanity and Yeshua seems to take it very seriously. Very seriously.

How Does This Happen?

And Yeshua starts out by addressing this situation where a man is in bed with a woman who is not his wife, which we call adultery. And this man has shattered the reflection of what an image bearer is by shattering the perception of covenant that was God-ordained. This is Torah. This is [Exodus 20](#). This is what God told us. And then Yeshua takes a step further and he addresses the heart of the issue, and he's like, how does this happen during his sermon? How does this happen? How does this happen?

I've known men who have traded everything, everything for this pursuit. Education, they've traded their entire careers, they've traded their family, they've traded their children, they've traded their reputation and their integrity for this short-lived pursuit. And their lives are wiped away. How does this happen? Do they wake up in the morning and be like, this seems like a great idea? No. Yeshua is asking, he's saying, let's hit the rewind button. Back, back, back, back, back. Keep going back. How does this happen?

What is the pathway? How is it that when you get married to a woman, you have the witnesses, and you have these oaths before God, and you exchange vows and rings, and you've come to this place? And Yeshua seems to say, he says it goes all the way back to your heart. That's where this whole process began. And it was because you fostered something that ought not be. And there were things in your heart that you never took care of. And there were things in your heart that you continued to think and dwell on. And there were situations that came about that you refused to handle and take care of. And now you're here.

Breaking the Commandment Through a Gaze

And this, we'll read it again just for good measure. So Yeshua is confirming Torah and the Old Testament. And Torah speaks of adultery. And at the time of Yeshua, it's fascinating because adultery was committed by taking another man's wife and physically sleeping with her. And Yeshua then asserts this new authoritative interpretation of this commandment in Torah. And he's like, yeah, like you've heard it said, don't sleep with a woman that's not your wife. But I say, and here we go, this is when everyone's ears perked up, like here's this radical rabbi in town giving this new interpretation in Torah.

And he says, you can also break this commandment of physically sleeping with another man's wife. You can break this commandment given by God by taking the bounds off sexual desire and looking at a woman that you're not entitled to, and you can break this commandment by fertilizing lust through a gaze. A gaze. Or as John Christensen said, kindling the fire within you. That thought was so accurate.

If there's anyone in here that has ever experienced a type of lust in their life, I'm sure it's not common. John Christensen, he speaks of it as kindling a furnace. Not turning it on, kindling a furnace. Put a few sticks in first, and you light those, and you add more, and you add more, and the more you gaze, and the more that you foster these thoughts, you add more until it's this raging fire ready to destroy and devour anything. So accurate. So accurate.

And you see, at the time, at this time in Judean history, it was seen as a woman's fault if a man sinned.

I know in 2018 we don't encounter anyone who would be so audacious to assert that, but women were demanding—listen, you need to cover your hair, you need to break up the form of your body, you need to be modest, which is a good thing. Everybody say amen. Modesty is good. You need to be modest so I don't sin. Okay? There are still some countries that by law have this as their standard. A woman gets raped and it's her fault. God couldn't help himself. If she wasn't there, she wouldn't have gotten raped. What? What? And in the first century, they would segregate men and women in the synagogues so that the men wouldn't be tempted to lust and imagine themselves having sex with women while they're reading the Bible. So go away so I don't see you while I'm reading the Bible. You don't need to be around me because I might lust after you. Fascinating.

But Yeshua is not blaming women here—if you notice in the text, that's something to take note of. Yeshua is saying the ultimate responsibility lies on the man. Guys, ultimate responsibility is on you, ultimately. Yeah, but I just can't. But you need to—yes, you can. But I just couldn't help myself. No, you need to, you can. And it's your responsibility, your responsibility.

We as men need to have a renovated heart to see another human being when we look at a woman, and another image of God when we look at someone else—not an object for our abuse and our desire. And women, it's the same thing. How many times do we look at someone else and we do not see a fully human being that God said, "This is a person who will reflect my image"? I'm not just talking about lust here. So what if you look at someone in a different social class than you? Do you look at them differently? What if you look at someone with a different skin color than you? Do you look at them differently? Someone who is poorer or richer than

you, driving in the car that you want or the car that you don't think anyone should drive? Do you think differently about other people? Or do you sit there and say, "This person is an image of God," and start out assuming the good and who they could be and who they were created to be, and then reassess after you meet them? They may be a jerk, but that's not... How many of us are guilty of that? Of looking at people as anything other than an image of God? This is the heart issue that Yeshua is speaking about here.

The Image of God and Our Hearts

And it hurts because we know it's true, and we know he's speaking about us here 2,000 years later. We're intelligent human beings. We've got iPhones. We've progressed in humanity. We have evolved in this new stage of human existence. And yet, here we are. It's so much easier to ignore the simple things that affect us the most. And Yeshua is inviting his disciples and his followers to follow him and to take a hard look at their hearts and the things that their hearts produce.

He's saying that if you are truly committed to discipleship, following this rabbi Yeshua, there is no such thing as desire for another person without love and commitment and covenant. He's inviting you, changing your perspective so that there is no such thing as desire for another person without love and commitment and covenant.

And Yeshua says, "Anyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Now, Yeshua is speaking to men, obviously, in the story. But what is he talking about? What's he talking about? The heart. Okay. Do both men and women have hearts? Fantastic. So this can apply to everybody. Some of you thought you were out of it. Oh, okay, good. I'm out of this conversation. This is great. He's not talking about women only. No, you have a heart. It's an issue. It's an issue. Ladies, don't ignore the words of the master due to this. Because you and I both know—you all got heart issues too.

You know how I know that? Because you're a human being trying to find a Savior, pursuing a Savior, pursuing the salvation of God, pursuing the mercy and forgiveness of God, just like me. And we're all affected by one thing, and that is the human condition and the drive to be molded to something else, to someone else.

The Greek Word for "Looks"

Yeshua talks about looks. If you look at another person, this is the moment—this is the moment where the process begins. And it's fascinating because the Greek phrase to anyone who

looks... I really want to learn Greek, more than Hebrew. I want to learn Greek, what the Gospels are written in. It's fascinating. When he uses this phrase in the Greek, it doesn't emphasize merely looking. Some of us are like, "Fine, we can't even look at a woman. What if I have to make eye contact with a woman at the cashier or Harris Teeter? I can't even look."

No, what he's saying here, the emphasis isn't on a duration, right? It's not a casual glance. The emphasis is on leering. It's not simply glancing, and it's not based on time. It's based on intent and agenda, the phrase that he uses.

And so if anyone looks, glances, stares, or takes a quick peek—I've never seen any guys do that, right? One thing that you see guys do a lot, I've seen some ladies do it, is they notice that someone is standing around them, maybe attractive, and they glance. And then it's almost like you have a replay button, right? No one's ever done that, right? And sometimes for guys, it's almost subconscious. We're catching ourselves going back and we're like, "What are you doing? Stop it."

It's that second glance. Because that second glance is no longer just, "Oh, there is someone in my space"—there is another human being here around me that I don't really care to talk to, but I glanced because it caught my attention. That second look is fostering that—that's when you begin to stare or take a quick peek with lustful intentions and an agenda. This is the moment. This is the moment that Yeshua says you have broken Torah, just like that. Done. Did it. You broke the commandment.

The Consequences of the Heart

You have distorted the world that God reigns in by doing that one thing. You have fractured God's reign in this world. You have pushed heaven away and you have fueled a piece of hell in this world in your heart. "I didn't commit adultery though." You did. You did. No one could see it because you did it in your heart. And sin doesn't just stop at your heart. Yeshua knows that it will eventually lead to something else. The brother of Yeshua, James, speaks of this very thing in [James 1.15](#).

Yeshua goes on to advise how we should prevent this from happening. And this is the part that fascinates me—just the boldness. Like, who is this rabbi from Nazareth? Take your fingers and stick them in your eye socket and twist and pull and sever what you can with your fingernails and pull it out and throw it away if it causes you to sin. If it's your right hand, get a machete and hack and hack and hack and hack until it is severed and use your other hand to pick it up

and throw it away if it causes you to sin. It's better for this to take place than for your whole body to go into hell.

Okay, Yeshua, too far! Too far, Yeshua! Too far! It's not too far. Yeshua is asserting a hyperbolic metaphor here, exaggeration on purpose, with the intent to shock every single person that hears these words. Did he succeed? We think that ripping our own eyes out is extreme. Yeshua is saying that it's not as extreme as the issue for a believer to have unchained lust engulfing their whole body in life and hell because of something they didn't want to deal with, which is more extreme than the violent action that he just spoke about.

Maybe guys never really thought about it that way. We think of heart issues and we're like, "Yeah, I mean, yeah, I think—no one's gonna know, it's not that big of a deal." To him it was a big deal. Very big deal. And was Yeshua's mission to bring hell to earth? Or was Yeshua's mission to bring heaven to earth? You are perpetuating hell by allowing these things to happen in your heart—that's what Yeshua is saying.

Seeing People as Image-Bearers

God created male and female to be his image-bearers, the reflection of his goodness, his mercy, his reign, his justice, his love. And the moment that you gaze at someone in order to foster a sense of entitlement from their body, you objectify an image of God. You take what God made to reflect heaven and you distort it to reflect the selfish desires of your heart. You strip the status away that was God-given to someone else. It's better to cut off your appendages than allow this to keep happening.

Now, is Yeshua really saying to turn to self-mutilation as a good response to this situation? This is one of those times where we talk about how not to read the Bible. No, he's not saying go cut off your hand or pluck out your eyeballs or cut anything off. What he's saying is, what is the issue here? What's the issue? The heart. The heart. He's not talking about self-mutilation. Cutting off your hand is not going to resolve the problems of your heart. He's making a contrast—making a contrast, just so everybody's clear.

I've read about people who have engaged in self-mutilation. Okay? No. Self-mutilation is not going to resolve the heart issues. You're going to look weird, and you're still going to be the same corrupt human being that you were before. Yeshua is saying that the time has come for the heart people of this reborn relationship of God, spoken about by Jeremiah, to be cultivated, birthed, and rise up in a world to show the fullness of God.

That's what Yeshua is speaking about here. And this is what has to change in order for that to happen. This is why his sermon is so potent. This is what has to happen in order for you and the people around you to see and experience the kingdom of God manifest on earth, heaven manifest on earth. This is what has to happen in order to let go of the anchor attached to the old man. This is how you surpass the righteousness of the Pharisees. And Yeshua has already unleashed this new kingdom reality into the world, and now he expects these kingdom realities to be lived out by his disciples or his followers. Here, right off the bat in his sermon, he's addressed anger, and now he's addressing the kingdom reality of sexuality and sexual desire. It was kind of a big deal because of the placement in the sermon. And he lays out what the world has been okay with and what the world has called acceptable as far as sexual desire goes is no longer acceptable. No more. No more.

Kingdom Reality of Sexuality

And let's talk about the elephant in the room. 2018, here we are. Images and videos intentionally produced to fuel and foster sexual desire and lust are more accessible than ever before. You click a button on your phone and gain access and fuel this furnace in your heart whenever and wherever you want. Easy access. Our children will be fighting a battle that we had no concept of, and that scares me. Pornography has finally found a way to infiltrate the eyes of men and women everywhere. Porn use has become so rampant. This is fascinating in a weird, bad kind of way. Porn use has become so rampant that it is actually to the point where researchers and scientists are actually putting time and money into researching the effects of pornography on society. Back in the 1860s when it first started, it wasn't that big of a deal. The 60s and 70s birthed this, what some would call the golden age of pornographic material. And even then it was like, yeah, that's bad, but it was like—

The Escalation of Pornography

80s and 90s, a digital evolution took place. You could get on your dial-up internet, try to look at photographs or movies, whatever you wanted. Still not that big of a deal. It takes a long time, you get disconnected, and it's just a big mess. 2018, it's to the point that society has demanded that we put energy, time, people build their careers, and money into researching what exactly does this do to people. And the results? Frightening is not the word that I'm looking for. Devastating. Devastating. It's horrifying. And it's not just you guys out there. So what we found out with studying pornographic exposure on society is one in three visitors to adult websites that contain pornography, one in three are women, and it's rising. Over 30% are women, not

just guys. This is something that is infecting every aspect, every demographic. Gigs up. This is what science is revealing about lustful thoughts fueled by images of sex and sexuality. And they've actually discovered some pretty neat stuff, I guess you could say, about the human brain and how it works. Like how our brains are not just primarily wired for sexual desire. They found out that our brains are actually wired for long-term, rugged, thick or thin, committed relationships along with them. And they're discovering that our brains were developed and they're made to work alongside each other. Committed, rugged, thick or thin, no matter what happens. I don't like you today, but I still love you. Committed. Committed relationships. Loyal relationships alongside sexual desire.

How Commitment and Desire Work Together

I heard a hallelujah of commitment. I didn't hear how they work together. They work together because your brain was wired and meant for these two things to work together. And our brain is pretty neat. So as a result of various skin-to-skin contact or sexual intercourse with your covenant partner, the brain releases something called dopamine. How many of you guys like dopamine? You don't know you like dopamine. You guys like dopamine. So dopamine is a hormone that is released during skin-to-skin contact or when you're holding your spouse or covenant partner, sex, lots of dopamine. It's the same thing that's released when you get that big old Snickers bar at the QT gas station and munch it down all at once and you're like, yes. That is what happens in your brain. It's the same thing. It's a pleasure hormone. And how dopamine works is that when it's released, it literally, literally carves out and creates pathways in your brain, like tunnels. And the tunnels tell the subject that's experienced this euphoria that, hey, we're basically digging these tunnels so that next time you hit that green button or you buy that Snickers bar or you have that sexual experience with your wife or spouse or husband, it'll be easier to do this, and we can let the dopamine flow quicker and faster and more. And by these tunnels being ingrained in your mind, physiologically, you want to do it again. You need to do it again. It's that little voice in the back. I'm sure men have never, ever had struggles with this, about the voice in the back of your head. Come on. No one's looking. Come on. Your parents aren't home. Come on. Your wife's not home. Do it. Do it. Do it. It's those brain tunnels that have been carved in by letting the fire out of the fireplace. And it's amazing if these tunnels point to your spouse. It's a good thing, amen?

When Pornography Damages the Brain

And when you look at pornography or engage in erratic sexual encounters, your brain physically creates this system that urges you to do it again and again and again and makes it easier for you to do it again and again and again. It basically, the filter that you would have of maybe I shouldn't gets weaker and weaker and weaker and your brain stops putting the filters up. In addition to dopamine, your body also releases something called oxytocin. I think I pronounced that right. And vasopressin. And oxytocin, anyone ever heard of that? That's called the love bug or the love hormone, right? And oxytocin is pretty cool. I'm a fan of it. Whenever you hug your spouse, right? Or have you ever had a child that you hugged? A baby, a toddler, and you hug that child? And your body does something like you lock up. And you freeze in this moment. It's like this full peace and this full shalom comes over you. And it's almost euphoric how the love—that's the only way you can describe this feeling, this love for this human being. And you think about letting go and it hurts and your muscles are locking up. I don't want to let go. That's the result of oxytocin. It's pretty neat. For those of you who have pets, who love dogs and cats, the same thing happens there. But yeah, I love my dog. It's the same thing. It's how your brain reacts to skin-to-skin contact and pleasure sensors. And these hormones, when they're released, they release a very primal signal throughout the brain. And for a woman, it tells the woman that this man belongs to her. That's what activates in your brain. This is your woman. And for men, it tells you that this woman that is causing these hormones to shoot out of your brain belongs to you. Your brain now feels entitled to this person or this human being. The problem comes when the boundaries around the fire are put down and that person is not yours to feel entitled to. Not yours.

The Brain Operating Outside God's Design

And what does this do? Your brain is working normally, by the way. Your brain is working completely like God designed it. God designed it to work that way. And it's a beautiful thing when it works in the plan that God designed. But what happens if you take it out of that plan and you begin to pursue sexual encounters or you begin to pursue pornographic material online as a way to foster such things? Your brain is going to work exactly how it was designed to work. And it's going to be devastating because it's going to be in the wrong circumstances. And it's awful. And it's hell. Because you get sucked in, you get locked in, you have a sense of shame, you have a sense of inadequacy, you feel a sense of being incomplete every single day, you get depressed, and the whole while, everything's just clucking away, working like it should. It's awful. It's hell. It's hell. What are you willing to do to get out of hell? And Yeshua is here saying that you need to do whatever it takes, whatever it takes to sever this destructive lifestyle, because it isn't just a private matter. It is a matter of distorting the plan of God's will and

mission in your life and in the lives of others. And we need to do whatever it takes to restrain the convulsive actions that we've trained ourselves to do and to retrain our minds and our hearts to look at other human beings as human beings. That's the issue. Created by God, image bearers, these human beings that were created to bear the image of God and reflect His light. And if you can train your brain to look at another living person in that way by default, men and women, it will change your life. It will change your life. Oh, look, it's another image bearer. It's another person created in the image of God, breathing life into the world. Peace. And we need to come to a place when we no longer turn these God creations into objects, simple objects to fill a damning desire in our hearts. What Yeshua is saying is that you were made to be better than that. You are better than that. And Yeshua speaks of renovating our hearts so that we can become a fully human being that reflects the intention of God through our bodies and through our actions. And we need to learn to put that fire back in its place, the fireplace.

A Hard Topic

And this is a hard topic. It's difficult. Not because it's awkward, but because we make it awkward. No doubt, I believe. Several families probably did not come today because they saw the topic we were going to be speaking about.

I bet they're online though, so hey guys. I called it. We make it awkward. Why? Because sex is portrayed as shameful and dirty and something you only desire if you're evil. And that's stupid. It isn't true. But when sexual desire turns into lust, or anything turns into lust, turns into coveting, we unleash hell in our own lives and in the lives of everyone around us. And I don't know where you're at today, but if you're traveling down a path that is towards these things and not towards Yeshua, don't leave today without addressing them. Don't. Tell somebody. Tell somebody.

Tell Somebody

You know who the leadership here is? Jason in the back, Gideon, Pete, myself. Tell somebody. Tell somebody. If you're not here today to tell anybody, email us. We'll get in touch with you. Start the process of severing whatever it is in your life.

And worship team, you guys can come up. We'll go ahead and conclude services here shortly. And I want to take a minute to speak of a great resource that we have actually used pretty successfully here in the fellowship. And I took the liberty to put it on your pamphlets. So there is no excuse. And it's a resource called fightthenewdrug.com. It is a secular resource specifically

bent on fighting the porn industry. And it's all ages from teens to adults. And they have a great book called Fortify. And this is a science-based approach of how to retrain your brain from being addicted to sex or pornography. And it's pretty fantastic. And it's completely secular, science-based.

Start the Process

And I would invite you, if that's you today, check it out. Start the process. Start the process. Don't think that this is going to go away without a fight. It will not. It will not.

And we can get the prayer team up, the prayer team just off to the side. We have a prayer team available just as we do every week. And maybe you're not at a place where you're struggling with lust. Maybe you're at a place where you are encountering depression or loss or tragedy or anxiety in your life. Maybe something has taken root in your life, or maybe your marriage is failing right now, or maybe you're harboring unforgiveness that has become so heavy in your heart, it's too heavy, and you need someone to lift you up in prayers, someone to speak to, and someone to hold you in prayer so you can let that go today.

The prayer team, this is what they do. This is what they do. And so I encourage you, take advantage of this time now as we conclude services. This is what we do. We are a community that thrives to live out what an image bearer of God looks like, reflecting his good creation. And that starts with the decision to take a step from what is private to what is holy.

Get It Out

And so please stand as we conclude services with worship, and that these words would stay with you. They would resonate in you and be life-changing. The words of Yeshua: Get the hell out of your life. Get it out. Yeshua makes the claim that you can do that if you come to Him.

Shalom. I'm Matthew Vandrells, and I hope you enjoyed this message.

Founded in Truth exists to cultivate a fellowship of image bearers that live the redeemed life only Yeshua can give. If this ministry has been a blessing to you, we would love to hear from you. Send us an email through the contact form on our website and tell us how God has used this ministry to edify your faith and relationship with Him. If you'd like to see more messages like this one, subscribe to our YouTube channel by clicking [here](#). If you'd like to donate to this ministry and be a part of what God is doing through it, you can donate through our online giving portal [here](#). We thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to next time.

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