



My True 180

Aware of the preaching series on the Sermon on the Mount, a member of the LPC church family shared some thoughts in anticipation of the message from Matthew 5:27-30.

We share those thoughts with you here in hopes that God may use them to help another. For the purposes of this message the member will remain anonymous, but will gladly contact anyone wishing to know more about the strength for recovery he has found in the grace of Christ.

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

(Matthew 5:27-30 ESV)

I've been reading this Sunday's scripture and praying about it. It's a verse so dear to my heart. It describes my true 180. Turning from lust to God's love. I really feel a burden to share what I've been freed from. And yet it's such a taboo topic that I cannot shout it from the rooftops!

I tried for years to stop looking at women with lust in my heart. I could stop (pluck out my eye) for some periods of time, a few weeks or even a few months, but then would fail. For me lusting led to compulsive practices which I so desperately wanted to stop. (I believe it was the gift of conviction that God gave me to want to stop in the first place).

I tried daily scripture reading, and intense prayer. Again this worked for short periods, but I would be overcome by temptation and fall. I began to feel suicidal after my slips. It took that much pain to be willing to ask for help.

That was when God put some Christian friends in my path who confidentially shared with me their own struggles with lust. That is where the breakthrough came for me. That was the key missing ingredient. I believe these accountability friendships were, and continue to be, the answer to my fervent prayers. I am alone no more.

May 25th 2011 was my 16th year anniversary of successful recovery by the Grace of God. In my fellowship of support our definition of sobriety is no sex with self or outside of marriage. I say by His Grace because it is my belief that it is only by His grace I've been granted a daily reprieve from acting out on lust.

A recovery principle we stress in our accountability group is to pray immediately at the first lustful thought. ("...take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:4-5.) Indulging lust and letting it run is the problem and will always lead to acting out in some way. However persisting in prayer at the first lustful thought will always allow God to take it away. And sometimes the answer to that prayer comes through an open honest conversation with an understanding friend where we share our mutual vulnerability. When I call my accountability partner or he calls me we leave a voicemail saying where we are that day with 1) lust 2) resentment 3) fear 4) joy and gratitude. Sharing the burden cuts it in half, sharing the Joy doubles it!

Where we are weak He is strong. "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Lust Surrender Tips

Tangible Ways to Pluck Out an Offending Eye or an Immoral Hand

Do images on television and movies bring lust? Don't watch them

- Don't scan the channels
- Better yet, don't turn the TV on
- Try a 30 day fast from movies or TV (cut them off!) to experience how addicted/dependent you may be, and how full life can be without them

Is the internet a problem?

- Do you need to turn off your internet service?
- Refuse use at home, (change the password on the home computer so you don't have access)
- Submit to an accountability partner (apply www.covenanteyes.com to all devices – cell phone, laptop, home computer – so you will have an accountability partner for all internet use). Accountability is essential in the Christian life

Invite God into the time of temptation

- Through prayer ("Count it all Joy when you are tempted" – James 1:2)
- Through meditation on scripture ("All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness." – 2 Timothy 3:16)
- Through open, honest accountability friendships These are friends you can call when tempted, and friends that can call you when they are struggling, too. ("Let a righteous man strike me – it is a kindness; let him rebuke me – it is oil for my head; let my head not refuse it. Yet my prayer is continually against their evil deeds." - Psalm 141:5)
- God's presence through prayer and accountability are the antidote to lust.

One on one against lust (single handed combat), lust wins; we lose. BUT, with God's help Love conquers lust, one day at a time.

Is lust interfering with your job, your marriage, your life? Do you want to stop but cannot? Help is available here at LPC, and or nearby churches, accountability groups that are successfully addressing this issue with God's help meet daily. Every man's battle? Perhaps. Jesus is telling us we need not battle alone!

Taking the action of asking for help may feel like plucking out an eye or cutting off a hand, but it's the solution Jesus has provided. It IS true that "no temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it." (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Surrendering lust, plucking out our eyes and cutting off our hands, and following Him is the path to Peace Love and Joy. Love overcomes lust....

If you would like to know more about how God's love can help you overcome lust or other sexual addiction issues, please contact Pastor Bill Teague (bill.lpc@verizon.net). Your contact will remain absolutely confidential and will be forwarded to the LPC member who has shared this 180 Turn with us and who is able to provide additional resources and help.