



Misplaced Passion

A program for those who are tempted to take a God given desire and misplace it by giving it to someone or something that does not deserve it.

Jim Johnson and Ann Malone

#1 - Misplaced Passion – What is the Problem

- A. Passion! What is it? The dictionary describes it this way, “a strong liking or desire for or devotion to some activity, object, or concept, a desire or deep interest.” (Miriam Websters- online).
1. Passion is an intense emotion, a compelling enthusiasm
 2. Some of us are passionate about music, or Nascar, or reading
 3. Some have a passion to learn, or master an athletic skill
 4. Others have a cause about which they are passionate. Maybe politics or the environment or the antiabortion movement – and that cause reaches deep in their souls and motivates them to surrender everything for the cause
 5. Think of passion as like a fire. It is something that burns within us - an energy for life.
- B. God created us with the capacity to be passionate.
1. The Scripture is full of words of passion. Love, desire, hunger, adore, worship, wish, want, need, longing, craving, yearning, coveting, devotion – all these words of passion are found on the pages of my Bible.
 2. Plus, the Lord makes it clear that God doesn't appreciate people who lack passion. He told the church at Laodicea, *“Because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.”* (Rev 3:15-17)
- C. So God created us with a capacity and even the need to be passionate. We are sort of like steam engines that need a fire in our bellies to get us moving.
1. The person without passion, is cold and empty, like a yesterdays' campfire – nothing left but a cold pile of stale smelling ashes and a couple of charred logs
- D. Passion is good, but what happens when we take a perfectly good passion and misplace it? Nothing but trouble.
1. We are in the habit of taking a God given desire and misplacing it – giving it to another who is not our spouse, or to a salacious web site, or a lurid fantasy.
 - a. We have been passionate for the wrong things.
 - b. - Passionate at the wrong time
 - c. And we are not always in control of these passions.

I. What is the problem?

A. Big picture - Teens & Singles: (ANN)

1. Premarital Sex (Fornication) It is estimated that 90% of youth have participated in intercourse by the age of 20
2. The average age of first sexual experience is **16 for a boy** and **17 for a girl**
3. Most prevalent reason for a boy to have sex: physical pleasure
4. Most prevalent reason for a girl to have sex: proves commitment to relationship
5. A word about Virginity Pledges
 - a. 52% of those taking pledge reported having sex within the year (Rosenbaum, 2006)
 - b. More likely to engage in oral and anal sex (to honor their pledge??)
6. Cohabitation (Fornication)
 - a. Becoming part of the pathway to marriage in our culture. convenience & companionship
 - 1) being in an exclusive sexual relationship
 - 2) living together will make for a stronger marriage
 - b. **women** perceive cohabitation as a step prior to marriage, whereas **men** are inclined to view cohabitation as a step to making a commitment.

- c. Those who lived together before marriage had a 50 percent higher hazard rate of divorcing after marriage than couples who had not cohabitated (of 50% divorce rate)

7. Marrieds:

<i>Adultery</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
• Up to	25 - 34%	15 - 19% (B&B, Precursors)
• Experience of infidelity	sexual experience	emotional connection
• Reason for	sexual dissatisfaction	relational dissatisfaction
• Cultural influences:	<i>everyone's doing it keep it secret!</i>	<i>it can revive an old marriage, (myths) always leads to divorce</i>

B. Let me address the men now – Jim

1. Let's just look at online porn as a barometer. 72% of the consumers of online porn are male.
 2. More than 70% of men from 18 to 34 visit a pornographic site in a typical month (comScore Media Metrix).
 - a. There is a high probability that many of us are included in that number
 3. 47% percent of families said pornography is a problem in their home (Focus on the Family Poll, October 1, 2003).
 4. But that's true of general population – certainly not Christians– right? Wrong
 - a. In a 1996 Promise Keepers surveyed men at one of their events.
 - b. Keep in mind that these men are men who have promised to God and their wives to be faithful and true.
 - c. And yet that survey found that over 50% of the men in attendance were involved with pornography within one week of attending the event.
 - d. Men and women, that should alarm us.
 5. And yes, we see this problem in church as well. Through the years I have had to deal with a good number of wives who were utterly and profoundly shocked to have found porn on their husband's computer.
 - a. Some of those marriages are now history
 - b. STATS <http://internet-filter-review.toptenreviews.com/internet-pornography-statistics.html#time> |||| www.safefamilies.org
Statistics on Pornography, Sexual Addiction & Online Perpetrators
- T: Men have long been snared by the net. What is disconcerting that an alarming number of women are being drawn into its filth as well.

C. The state of women - Ann

1. Traditionally men have been associated with pornography, but research & statistics suggest that pornography is on the rise among women. In a recent Christianity Today poll, 34% of the Christian women responding said they intentionally access internet porn. *It's not just "them."*
 2. 1 out of 6 women (including Christians) struggle w/ addiction to porn (17%)
 - 60% of Christian women struggle with lust
 - 20% struggle with looking at porn on an ongoing basis
 3. 80% of women addicted to online porn act out their behaviors w/ real life 'partners'
- T: Misplaced Passions: It's a terrible problem.

II. Why do we have such a problem with Misplaced Passions?

A. We are needy

1. We were designed for intimacy. We were created to experience passion.
 - a. But maybe I'm single & God's Word doesn't permit me sexual intimacy

- b. Or maybe I am married but my spouse doesn't care for me in the way he or she should
- 2. Men are needy.
 - a. There is an emotional hunger in our souls. Listen to these words from a friend of Jim's who used to be in ministry. He wrote, "I found expectations of pastoring sometimes overwhelming and often I felt like a circle being forced into a square.
 - 1) It was during this time I stepped into the world of internet pornography. As my anger and disappointment in ministry, church and relationships deepened so did my addiction to porn.
 - 2) Pornography at it's core is an emotional attraction: it is about a moment in which a person is wanted, liked and accepted. It dulls the pain for a moment. (The soundman)
 - b. We men want to succeed. We want to be admired by those who are important to us. We want to be in control of our lives. We want to be desired by that woman who attracts us.
 - 1) And when these things are denied us, when we fail in our quest to obtain them – it angers us, it weakens us, it leaves us broken and vulnerable.
 - a) We are great at hiding it, I'll admit. But we are broken
 - 2) So we look for an alternative to give us that sense of success and control.
 - 3) Too many of us find that false sense of well being in the pursuit of the sensual.

B. We are deceived

- 1. Ann- ***God created us in His image, to be in relationship with Him and others***
(a diversity-in-unity, as a reflection of the Trinity:)
- 2. Therefore, We have legitimate desires to: Create, Relate, & Worship
- 3. Yet, God created diversity between men and women in how we pursue these desires (*unity* = they complement each other)
- 4. Ultimately we were created for intimacy (to be fully known by ourselves and another)

God's Design for Intimacy

(Legitimate Needs & Pursuals)

Pursuing Intimacy through...	Men tend to...	Women tend to...
<i>Creating</i>	Impact their world	Nurture those around them
<i>Relating</i>	'Protecting' highly valued	'Vulnerability' highly valued
<i>Worshipping</i>	God is object of worship	God is object of worship

Since the fall, we are in conflict with God, others and ourselves.

Therefore, because of sin, we now *also* seek our desires through illegitimate means.

Man's Response to (Fallen) Intimacy

(Illegitimate Needs & Pursuals)

Pursuing Intimacy through...	Men tend to...	Women tend to...
<i>Creating</i>	Fear of Failure (flight)	Control (fight)
<i>Relating</i>	Self-Protecting	Invalidating self/others
<i>Worshipping</i>	Self (power over others) is object of worship	Self (being in relationship) is object of worship

B2. Let's look at this another way. (Jim)

1. There is one verse of Scripture that does a great job of portraying people who had misplaced their passion. It is Jer. 2:13.
 - a. *"For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*
2. The prophet was speaking to the people of Judah, but the truth covers people of every age and culture.
3. This verse is built around two concepts that have to do with water. Living water and cisterns.
 - a. Living water is the fresh spring water that gushes forth from the mountains. Living water is a clear cool stream of refreshing water.
 - b. A cistern, on the other hand is an underground cavern built to hold and store water.
 - 1) It did not produce water, like a well, it simply captured the run off from the rains and stored it underground to be used later.
 - a) This water of course was not fresh. It was dirty and brackish
 - c. They would actually carve these cisterns out of solid limestone and then coat it with mortar to keep it from leaking.
4. Now let's plug this information into Jer. 2:13, a. *"For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*
 - a. God tells us that His people tend to make 2 mistakes
 - 1) One: They forsake Him, who compares Himself to a spring of fresh water
 - 2) And two: they dig man made cisterns for themselves; cisterns that can hold no water.
 - b. You see God is like a cool refreshing spring. He is "living water" meaning that the water is alive and fresh and flowing.
 - 1) The implication is that - the things that give us life are found in Him and in what He gives to us.
 - 2) He sufficient and breathtakingly wonderful; cool, refreshing, delightful and satisfying.
 - 3) The person who drinks this water, doesn't thirst for other waters
 - 4) They in fact are able to manage all the other thirsts of life – even those in the sexual department.
 - c. However, we foolish folks sometimes forsake that living water and carve out cisterns for ourselves instead.
 - 1) We assume that God is not enough to satisfy me and provide what I need.

- a) Plus I just can't control the rain or the flow of the spring.
- b) How will I know it will be enough?

2) So we take action and carve out another source for water. One over which we have control.

5. A cistern is something that we turn to when we believe that that God is not enough.

- a. God I am single and starved for attention – why shouldn't I hook up with someone.
 - b. God, the wife you gave me, isn't meeting my needs as she should- why shouldn't I look at internet porn.
 - c. God the husband you gave me is fine, but I need more. I need to feel desirable. So why shouldn't I flirt on line?
 - d. God I feel depressed and sexual stimulation makes me feel better – why shouldn't I indulge?
 - e. These are the kinds of cisterns we create when we believe that God is not enough
6. But the problem with a cistern is this. The water is stale. It was collected from the runoff of rainwater. It has sat in a hole for months. The water is polluted with bugs and the animal droppings. It is bacteria ridden and causes sickness.
- a. So it is with the water we draw from our spiritual/emotional cisterns. They are filled with putrid water that tends to sicken the soul rather than nourish it.
7. On top of that, these cisterns are broken and can hold not water.
- a. It was not unusual for a man to descend into his cistern to find that the mortar lining had broken and all the stale water had seeped out. There was nothing for him in that cistern.
 - b. The same is true of our non material cisterns. We risk our marriage for internet pornography. The wife leaves and we are left with nothing but a 500 dollar piece of junk with a digital image on it.

C. We are bombarded

1. ILLUS: A woman, whom Jim knows, was divorced by her husband who worked in the corporate offices of Victoria Secrets. Her lawyer told her that that there was a much higher incidence of divorce at that company than others.
 - a. It so happens that the corporate walls are plastered with larger than life posters of Victoria Secret models in their lingerie.
 - b. Is there any relationship between the posters & the divorce rate? Yep.
 - c. It is hard for a man to be content with real life, when you are surrounded by the seductive air brushed images of beautiful women.
 - d. We are bombarded today. Sex is everywhere: The movies, television, news magazines, and commercials of models in their underwear
2. One university study by S.C.Rockwell of the University of Alabama found that, *"Heavy exposure to prime time television programing featuring intimacy between unmarried persons can clearly result in altered moral judgment."* (AFA)
3. We live in a world where the healthy barriers of prudence have been torn down
 - a. Men who are so vulnerable provocative images find them everywhere

- b. And women who are so vulnerable to romance and personal intimacy find it when they open their face book page and read the overtures from other men.

D. We are greedy

1. Ann: **Perversion of the legitimate desires:**

- a. *We create in our own image:*
We demand to be in control and rage when we realize we are not
- b. *We relate to others in a demeaning way:*
We objectify others to meet our needs without thought for their well-being, and discard them when they no longer serve our purposes
- c. *We worship the self:*
We believe we have the right to pursue any and all means to meet our needs and become our own of measure of self-righteousness.
- d. *Ultimately, because we are fallen creatures, when we **create** in our own image we produce more fallenness.*
- e. *When we **relate** to others in a demeaning way, in reality we isolate ourselves.*
- f. *When we worship or prioritize self-gratification above all else,*

g. **This is demonstrated in thoughts and through behaviors that say:**

- I deserve to fulfill my desires through my own means
 - Sex before marriage
 - Cohabiting
- God does not understand my circumstances, so I will take charge and act
 - Choose a mate that is not respectful of us
 - Self gratification
- I can handle it, I am in control
 - Pornography
 - Affairs

2. Jim - Sexual intimacy is a passion and we want it and we want it now – whether we are married or not.

3. Some of us are teens, or singles but we don't care what God says. We don't care what the church says, we don't care what our mother says, we just what - what we want – and now. And if it means crossing the lines of propriety, then so be it.

4. Some of us are married and we have the benefit of having intimacy with a spouse and yet we too are sometimes greedy for more.

5. ILLUS: It's like that big thanksgiving dinner. You were stuffed. But then the Pecan Pie made the rounds. And you smelled the rich nutty flavor and you saw the glazed pecans glistening and in spite of being uncomfortably full, you took a piece and ate it?

a. Isn't that what we do? We are full, and yet we eat something more simply because it looked good?

b. The cook had not failed in the turkey department - BUT we still eat the unneeded piece of pie.

c. A persons' temptation to lust works on the same principle.

6. We might call the sex appeal used today as "eye candy." For the typical male, this world is one huge candy store with tantalizing things to view most

everywhere, yet a man is told he is permitted to look at and enjoy one lone candy bar over in one corner called a wife.

7. In a similar way, a woman enjoys being loved and cherished. She responds to the man who communicates with her and considers her.
 - a. If she doesn't get it from her husband, she will look for it elsewhere,
 - b. And even if she does, she may still respond to it when it is offered by others as well – even if it is in the form of a romance novel.
 - c. It's a characteristic of our age – we want what we want, as much of it as we can get, as soon, as possible and as often as possible.

CONCLUSION

Is there hope? Is there help? You bet there is. And we will get to that in the next chapter

#2 – Misplaced Passion – Exposing the Problem

In the last message we pointed out the depth of the problem and the reasons we have this problem. Today we take the first step towards change

STEP 1: Expose the Problem

A. Unmask the lies.

1. The first step towards re-placing our passions is to identify the lies that we use to justify our behavior.
2. King David wrote in Ps 15:1-2, *"O LORD, who may abide in Thy tent? Who may dwell on Thy holy hill? He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart."*
 - a. In this Psalm David tells us that the truly righteous person is the one who is able to speak the truth to himself, about himself.
 - b. Tough to do – even for David.
 - c. This very religious man convinced himself that it would be OK to force himself on the wife of Uriah the Hittite.
 - d. He later justified the idea of murdering Uriah to keep his sin a secret.
 - e. For 12 months he lived a lie, until the prophet Nathan ripped off the mask.
 - f. When it comes to our passions, many of us lie to ourselves.
3. **Jim** - What kinds of lies do guys tell themselves?
 - a. I am a man – I have needs.
 - b. Its not wrong if we love each other, if we are going to get married.
 - c. I don't care what the Bible says, this really isn't a sin.
 - d. It doesn't really hurt anybody.
 - e. My wife is not meeting my needs so I therefore am entitled to this.
 - f. Masturbation is better than hookin up with someone. It must be OK.
 - 1) All are lies.
5. **Ann** What about the lies that females tend to tell themselves.
 - a. I will experience unbearable loneliness if I do not make myself sexually desirable to men
 - b. I will prove I love him by having sex with him / he will prove he is committed to me by have sex with me
 - c. I must be in a committed relationship with a man to be fulfilled in life (my identity is unknown or pursued unless there is a man to be identified with) OR any connection (including abusive behavior) is better than no connection
 - d. Everyone's doing it!
 - e. It's not really sex if there is no intercourse: oral, anal, cybersex (i.e. no vaginal penetration)
 - f. It's OK to have sex if this is the man I am going to marry OR If we live together, it's one step closer to marriage
 - g. If I can't get love, I can get sex
 - h. No one knows...
6. These are the kinds of lies we tell ourselves that make it easier on our conscience when we sin.
7. Question: Do we want to change? If so there are several specific steps in this program to help you - assignments that will help you work through this.

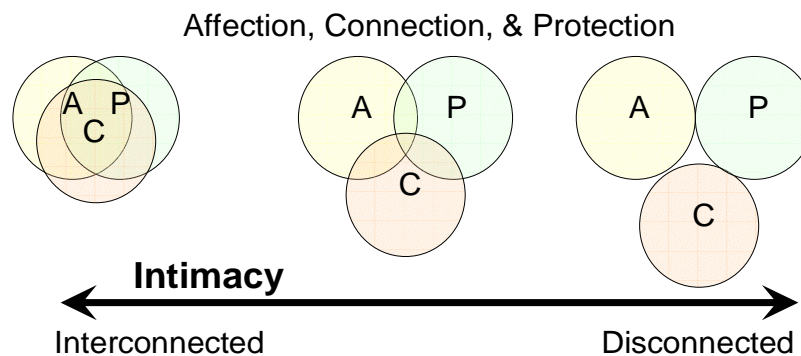
ASSIGNMENT #1: Write out an exhaustive list of the lies you tell yourself that give you the freedom to sin.

B. Give the problem a name.

1. When a guy or a girl chooses to mentally exploit a person or an image or an imagination of a person in a sexual way it is called lust.
2. James puts it this way in 1:14-15, *"But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death."*
 - a. Notice that James assumes everyone is tempted.
 - b. By the way, this is the consensus of men: The person who says that they are not tempted in this area is either a liar, or is sexually dysfunctional.
 - c. But notice that James distinguishes between being tempted, and giving into the temptation.
 - d. Martin Luther once said, *"You can't keep a bird from flying over your head, but you can keep it from building a nest."*
 - e. We need to understand that it is not a sin to be tempted or to feel tempted. It is uncomfortable, but it is not a sin.
3. But sometimes we choose to allow that bird to land on our heads and build a nest. We allow that temptation to lodge in our thinking as we think about that person or image in sexual ways.
 - a. The moment that happens - we have entered into the realm of the forbidden. We have sinned.
 - b. The Greek word for lust is "epithumia" which is often translated as "desire." Or for our purpose we could call it a passion.
 - c. In fact Col 3:5 translates the word epithumia into the word passion.
 - d. Lust is a sin, and it is a gross sin. Colossians 3:5 equates epithumia with idolatry. To lust after someone else is as disgusting to God as is idolatry.
4. **Jim** – Let's talk about guys here. A guy is primarily tempted today through what he sees. He responds immediately to images or real situations that appeal to his eyes.
 - a. This is why a guy could be extremely tired, have a headache, and yet become instantly aroused and ready for sexual activity at the sight of an enticing woman
 - b. Though the guy is primarily tempted through the eyes, the sin is birthed in his mind. Lust is a sin of the mind. Lust generates lurid imaginations and fantasies.
 - c. The eyes are the primary avenue of temptation but not the only avenue. Because sin is birthed in the mind.
 - d. ILLUS: I have a friend who went blind in his 20's. I asked him if he struggled less with lust since he had lost his sight. To my surprise he said no.
 - 1) As a blind man, he tended to be excited by the sound of a woman's voice, or the feel of a woman's touch.
 - 2) This is because lust is an exercise of the mind.
 - e. For this reason it is not impaired by age, race, disability or anything else except a life that is controlled by the Spirit of God.
 - f. Ann – what about women?

5. A woman is primarily tempted through...relational dissatisfaction (Precursors of Marital Infidelity, p 254)
 - a. Driven by the fear of being alone
 - b. If the woman is *not* receiving affection, connection and protection, she becomes needy...and dangerous!
 - c. A woman needs a combination of these three things to feel relational satisfaction
 - d. There may be a time when one receives more of one of these than another, but overall, they must be addressed

Three Needs of a Woman:



- e. Types:
 - 1) Interconnected: good balance of all three
 - 2) Disconnected: there is no regularity to any of these needs being met
 - 3) Somewhere in-between: where most of us live and grow
 - f. When someone comes along and meets these needs to a greater degree than the partner, a woman is tempted...
 - 1) She must learn to become aware of these times
 - 2) She must communicate with her partner about the temptation
 - 3) They must address the needs
 - g. If you find yourself talking to someone of the opposite sex at a consistently deeper level than your spouse, then you are in trouble.
6. **Jim:** A man's lust can be triggered by an image on a billboard. A woman's lust can be triggered by the guy at work who treats her in a gentlemanly way.
 7. Both can lust – we just do it in different ways.

ASSIGNMENT #2: Say to yourself, "I have a problem with lust"

C. Dispel the fantasy.

- a. Lust tends to be fueled by fantasy. A fantasy about who I am and a fantasy about who that other person is. Therefore...

1. We must Demystify the fantasy.

- a. We need to realize that the person or the material or the thought that tempts us is a fantasy that will never likely come true.
- b. You need to understand that the person you might desire does not necessarily desire you
- c. The man in that erotic novel is not going to come to life and ring your doorbell. The girl in that video is not going to jump off the screen.

2. Also Contextualize the person

- a. We may find some irresistible attraction to a person or material or a thought as we picture them in sensual ways.
- b. BUT in the real context of life, they are ordinary people.
- c. Picture them in real life. Picture them without the airbrushing or the romantic façade.
- d. That girl is not so enticing when she has the flu. That guy is not so enticing when he gets up each morning with his grumpy attitude
- e. Would they still seem attractive to you if you were to imagine the rejection you would experience if they knew of your fantasy? Also
- f. Picture that person in a real life context as someone's grandma, sister, father, brother or child
- g. Fantasy always seems to be more appealing than real life.
- h. So let reality takes the energy out of that fantasy

D. Wake Up - The fantasy will not bring happiness.

1. Everyday, teens surrender to the urge, people leave their spouses, singles hook up, others engage in porn believing that they will be happier when they are free to chase their pursuits.
2. The facts scream otherwise.
3. The unhappiest people in the world are those who forfeit a good healthy relationship for a squalid life in the fantasy world.
4. The pleasure is short lived, and the pain prolonged.

STEP 2: Starve the Beast

- A. Lust is a part of our sin nature. When we neglect our walk with God, the beast grows in strength and rises up and threatens to control us.
 1. Some of us foolishly choose to feed the beast by the things that we entertain ourselves with, or we have a lustful thought and we camp there.
 2. The wise person chooses to starve the beast instead.
 3. Phil. 4:8 says, "*Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.*" "
 4. This passage tells us that we have the power to choose what we think about.
 5. We are told to think about only that which is good and wholesome and godly in character.
 6. God would not expect us to do this if we were not able to do this.
- B. The clear implication of this passage is this: We must carefully guard our minds, making sure not to feed those lustful impulses.
 1. That exactly what good old Job did. In Job 31:1 he said, "*I Have made a covenant with my eyes; How then could I gaze at a virgin?*"
 - a. You see, he made a deal with his eyes. He purposed to avoid images or visual situations that could trigger lust.
 2. If Job were around today, he would avoid movies and videos and TV shows that feature sensual nudity.
 3. If Job were around today he would throw out the Victoria Secrets catalog,
 4. If Job were around today, he would install some safeguards on his computer
 5. ILLUS: (Jim) I was in Seminary at the time the movie the Witness was released. It's a story about an Amish community.

- a. I decided to take Sharie out on a date, & I bought tickets to that movie in advance
 - b. However, I have learned that I need to be very careful about the things that I see, so I decided to get a movie review from a friend.
 - c. I asked him if there was anything that I might object to.
 - d. He said, No – not at all, but then he stopped and said, well there was a 40 second scene where a woman was exposed waist up and you could see her....
 - e. I thought, well I can handle that.
 - f. But the next day the Spirit of God was hounding me. I was taking Hebrew at the time, and it was so hard that I could not remember one class to the next.
 - g. And yet I knew, I just knew that if I went to that movie and saw that woman's (well you know) I would have that image burned into my mind for the rest of my life.
 - h. I decided that I could not afford that, so I threw the tickets away and took my wife out to dinner instead.
 - i. That's what it means for me to starve the beast.
- T: **Ann**, What about a woman?
3. For a woman this means
- a. Immediately cutting off all communication with illegitimate relationships (anyone with whom I am having sex outside of marriage, or I am tempted to have sex with)
 - b. Cut off all avenues that promote illegitimate relationships (friends, media, events or places that you know the other frequents, emails, facebook, etc.)
 - c. If married, avoid private, one-on-one time with the opposite sex
 - d. Pursue open, honest communication with your spouse/boyfriend
 - e. Pursue relationships with other women
 - f. Write a list of "alternative behaviors" for when you are in the throes of temptation, and choose do one of them (have list in easily accessible place!)
 - g. Structure or schedule your time so that when you are most vulnerable to succumb, you have something to do
 - h. Be involved in a Bible Study, scripture memory, prayer cell
 - i. (If any of the ideas that Jim shared apply to you, such as "Covenant Eyes," add it to the list)
4. **RESOURCE:** By the way – here is a tool for you. It is called pluggedinonline. A ministry of Focus on the Family. They review every movie that comes out looking carefully at issues like sexual and violent content; profanity, content, violent drugs alcohol etc.
- a. They also review video games, CD's and TV shows.
 - b. It is free and it is priceless.
5. In fact check out the web sight Pure Intimacy.com. They have a host of products to help protect you and your children. Software that works with cell phones, and facebook and my space, and everything else. Pure intimacy.com

ASSIGNMENT #3: Sort your DVDs and CD's and discard what should not be there. Evaluate any other practices as well, especially your computer habits.

STEP 3: Invade the Darkness with Light

- A. They say that mold sometimes grows in the darkness of our air conditioning vents. Unfortunately these molds can make us very very sick.
1. I understand that one way to combat the growth of these molds is to put an ultraviolet light in the vent system.
 2. Mold dies when exposed to UV light.
- B. Lust works on a similar principle. It grows best in the dark.
1. This is why the Internet is such a terrible assistant to lust. There can be nothing more secretive than a computer in one's own bedroom.
 2. The apostle John tells us that the way we deal with this darkness, is to invade it.
- C. I Jn 1:6-7 says *"If we say that we have fellowship with Him (God) and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 7 but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."*
1. Our choice then is to walk in the darkness or walk in the light.
 2. When I turn on the light in my life, the darkness just naturally disappears.
- D. If we are to succeed, we need to carry a bright light into the dark places of our soul.
1. That light of course is the Lord Jesus and His truth.
 2. ILLUS: (Jim) Sharie and I were newlyweds in Ohio. We were trying to get to sleep one night, when the rowdy boys came back to roost outside our bedroom window.
 - a. Every Friday night they would get a couple of cases of beer and party all night long and shatter the beer bottles all over the place.
 - b. I needed to solve this problem, but I knew that an angry confrontation would only make things worse.
 - c. So once the boys arrived, I took my Bible and went over to the picnic pavilion where they gathered.
 - d. They were drinking at one end, and I sat reading my Bible at the other. Just me and them.
 - e. It really bothered them that I was there. They didn't know what to think.
 - f. When they found out that I was reading the Bible - that really bothered them.
 - g. Pretty soon the boys stood up put their empties back in the case, neatly arranged the picnic benches & left and never came back again.
 - h. What happened? I invaded their darkness with my light. And it was uncomfortable for them. It stole the fun out of their sin.
 3. And that is what we need to do with our own sin – we need to invade it with the light – and let the light destroy it. How?
- E. Find an accountability partner.**
1. Find someone you can trust, maybe someone who shares the same struggle and confide in them.
 2. ILLUS: Think about this for a moment. Suppose you had an enormous stone to lift, but just did not have the strength to lift it. You might have to swallow your pride and ask me if I would help. Then you put your strength to it, and I add mine, and we are able to move the stone.
 - a. Think of accountability in this same way. Lust driven habits are often harder to move than a stone. We need someone who would be willing to add their strength to ours.
 3. But how do you start an accountability relationship and what do you say?
 - a. **Ann** - Choose an accountability partner of the same gender

- b. Choose someone who you know to be actively pursuing Christ
 - c. Commit to being honest, teachable and available to this person
 - d. Share the list you wrote of the lies you tell yourself
 - e. Agree to meet or 'connect' regularly with the accountability partner
4. **Jim** : How does an accountability partner help you to change? Knowing that you are going to have report to this person about what you did this week – creates an incentive to stay clean.
- a. You are uses the possible future consequences to shape your present.
5. But how awkward!!!. What do you say?
- a. Well, it will be less awkward if your accountability partner struggles with them same issue. This way you can support each other
 - b. When you have your weekly meeting you could ask each other these kinds of questions.
 - 1) On a scale of 1-10 how well did you walk with God this week?
 - 2) On a scale of 1-10 how well did you resist your temptation this week?
 - 3) Did you fall, if so how?
 - 4) Did you confess it to God afterward?
 - 5) What will you do differently this week to avoid that trap?
6. **RESOURCE:** But what about internet abuse? All of us are only one click away from a catastrophe. So how do we bring accountability into this realm? Covenant Eyes.
- a. Covenant Eyes is a web based service that brings accountability into your computer habits.
 - 1) They sell filtering software to keep the bad stuff away
 - b. But their best product is their accountability software.
 - c. You choose an accountability partner, and Covenant Eyes sends this partner a detailed report on your internet usage for the prior week.
 - d. It is an amazing service and there are folks in our congregation that currently use it.
7. There is a similar product called X3watch. You can download it for free at xxxchurchcom.

ASSIGNMENT #4: Recruit an accountability partner.

CONCLUSION

There is hope. It begins by putting into practice these 3 essential steps towards change.

#3 –Misplaced Passion - An Immediate Response

In the last chapter we began to discover how to replace these passions and develop a pure heart before God. In this chapter we find **An Immediate Response to the Temptation**

What do you do, when an uncomfortable thought comes along? You meet a person and you find them to be quite attractive – suddenly you feel a sense of guilt about your thoughts. What do you do about that?

STEP 4: Discern the threat

A. That means that we need to distinguish between attraction and lust.

1. God made men and women so that they would attract each other.
2. If He did not, the race would have probably died out near the very beginning.
3. In fact, if you take away the passion from sex, you are left with a yucky, mechanical, biological act.
4. Therefore, it is part of our God given design that we are attracted to and can appreciate the beauty of a woman or the thoughtfulness of a man. There is no need to apologize or feel guilty about it.
5. In fact, if we feel guilty about perceiving someone to be attractive, then we end up creating a burden that we are unable to bear.
6. Let me illustrate with the OT Law. The Law was never designed to be a ladder to righteousness and yet mankind has always tried to use it that way.
 - a. We have reasoned that if we do a reasonably good job of keeping the law of God, then we can achieve good standing with God.
 - b. But the Bible tells us the purpose of the law is very different.
 - 1) God gave us the law, to draw us to Him. However the law demonstrated how incapable we are of meeting God’s standard.
 - 2) Should we try - we will fail. It is impossible to keep perfectly. And the frustration causes us to do 1 of 2 things
 - a) We will either draw near to God, seeking His mercy and grace which is what he would prefer.
 - b) Or we walk away from the Lord & His Word with the attitude “Well, if I can’t do it on my own, then forget it.”
7. There is a similar principle at work with attraction. When we decide that attraction to someone is wrong, then we have created another kind of impossible law for ourselves.
 - a. We then fail and beat ourselves up over it and that sense of failure tends to drive us even farther from God and His Word

Attraction	Lust
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Appreciating the beauty & giftings of the other (the person is seen holistically, that is as an integrated being composed of body, intellect, soul, spirit) ○ Recognizing specific beauty & qualities of the other ○ Desiring the best for the other ○ Knowing person end in itself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Objectifying the other’s beauty & giftings (the person ceases to be view holistically & is separated into their component parts = depersonalizing) ○ Needing to possess the other’s beauty & qualities ○ Desiring the other for own pleasure ○ Person becomes a means to an end

- a. It is one thing to note a man's looks or mannerisms, it is another to dwell on them in your mind...DANGER: if you start comparing your husband negatively to this other man you must immediately & begin to list your husband's positive qualities. Discipline yourself not to compare again by this same practice.
 - b. 'Men Collectors:' Purposely attracting others because it feeds your ego (by the way you dress, engaging in conversation to demonstrate your intelligence or "acts of kindness" done to show how caring and nurturing you are) is manipulative and needs to stop. It may start out with you attracting him but could end up with him being attractive to you! Learn to "catch yourself" at it and stop immediately, remove yourself from that situation.
 - c. There are also 'women collectors.' These men flatter and pursue to their own ends using words and actions meant to attract you to them. Being pursued by such men is *intoxicating*. It is like being in the romance novel or movie, but there is no substance to them, nor in their intentions for you. If you are married have nothing to do with these men. If you are single, and find yourself in the 'romance novel,' ask a godly woman's advice and heed it!
- T: That's right ladies, so watch out for diabolical men who wink their eye, like this shady fellow
1. OK, what happens when attraction turns to enticement? Suppose your Google search accidentally turns up the picture of a naked girl.
 2. Or maybe that attractive guy at the next table sends a text message asking you about the color of your panties.
 3. Now what do we do? - What do we do when we are thinking or seeing something that is stirring up a misplaced passion in us?

STEP 5: Decide to attack it

A. Intercept the Impure Thought

1. The Word of God clearly tells us that we can control our thought life.
 - a. Col 3:2 "*Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.*"
2. So we need to take control of an impure thought and do it as soon as it hits us.
 - a. Listen to 2 Cor. 2:5. There Paul says, "*Take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.*"
 - b. Take control of every thought and make it a captive of Christ. Cool
3. So how do we do that? The best way is to drag it out of darkness. Take the mold and exposing to the UV rays of the sun.
4. This is what I do, and this is what I recommend to you
5. The very moment that thought hits you say, "No" and do it out loud.
 - a. If you are alone – make it a whole sentence. Say "No, I won't think of that." Or "No I won't respond to that IM" Or "No, I won't look at that magazine"
 - b. Now if there are other people in the room with you - they may wonder when you lost your mind.
 - c. So if you have company you might want to just say the word, "No" - - but do it out loud.
 - d. Don't do this mentally – a mental protest is not strong enough to overcome the seduction of lust.
 - e. Do it out loud. This shocks the system, it objectifies the attack. It drags the mold out into the light. It is stronger than a lustful thought and it works.

ASSIGNMENT #5: Practice saying no today, when an impure thought hits you

B. Change the Channel

1. ILLUS: When something on the TV bores us, we hit the remote & change the channel.
2. We need to do this in the mental realm when it comes to lust
3. LUST operates on the principle of euphoric recall. When we lust, our brains create and release endocrine which is a derivative of morphine
 - a. In other words - the very act of lusting causes our brains to release a feel good drug to us
 - b. Lust is a habit - a drug addiction.
 - c. To break a habit we need to replace it with a habit.
4. So when tempted with an impure thought, purposely switch your mental channel.
 - a. Think about your strong interests in other areas like racquetball or music etc.
 - b. If you say no to that X rated thought, but you don't fill that vacuum with something else, then that thought will come sweeping back in.

ASSIGNMENT #6: Create a list of 5 alternative things that you could do in a time of temptation.

5. By the way – a very powerful replacement is to recite Scripture. Memorize portions of the Word of God that would give you help in this area.
 - a. After all the Psalmist said, *"Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee."* (Ps 119:11)
6. The Scripture had been compared to a Sword. Eph 6:17 tells us that "the sword of the Spirit is the word of God."
 - a. According to Eph. 6, this sword is the only offensive weapon given to the believer
 - b. ILLUS: So let's suppose that you come under attack. A lustful thought threatens your spiritual well being. You need a weapon - you need a sword with which to attack that thought.
 - c. But you are at work and your Bible is at home, and even if you had it in hand you wouldn't know where to look for help.
7. Folks the only way we are going to have that weapon when we need it, is to commit portions of that Word to heart. That is what the Bible says, *"Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee."* (Ps 119:11)
8. **RESOURCE:** Let me recommend a resource to you. It is called the **Topical Memory System** and it is produced by the Navigators.
 - a. It contains a brief instructional book and a supply of cards with verses on them. You just punch them out and go.
 - b. Commit the Word to memory

ASSIGNMENT #7: Write out and memorize 1 Cor. 10:13

"No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it."

C. Flee the Scene

1. If the temptation is related to a place or a person you are with, Paul says that we should *"Flee Immorality"* (1 Cor. 6:18)
2. Remember the story of Joseph in Gen 39:11-13? *"Now it happened one day that he went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the household was there inside. 12 And she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me!" And he left his garment in her hand and fled, and went outside."*
 - a. That's what Joseph did. He escaped temptation by fleeing.

3. **ANN:** Daniel liked to play with fire around 6-7 yrs old
 - a. Used to go in the bathroom, over the sink and hold corner of a Kleenex, light it and wave it around (pretty cool!)
 - b. Then, thought that running with it would be even more fun, so would start in bathroom, run down hall to see how far he could physically go and then blow it out
 - c. I caught him at it when he had run down hall and came into den, the problem was: the fire was not going out, and pieces were flying off (NOT cool)
 - d. POINT: Temptation is like a fire that can go out of control. It is foolish to see how close you can get to sin without actually sinning! We need a safety zone around our temptations!
4. What does this mean for the guys? - Jim:
 - a. If some filthy stuff begins to happen in the movie you are watching, stand up and walk out. (I have done this before)
 - b. If that girl is flirting with you – tactfully excuse yourself and don't ever let yourself be found alone with her.
 - c. If an image pops up on the computer. Don't take a second look. Close it.
5. What does this mean for the girls? -**ANN**
 - a. If old boyfriend from your high school days shows up on your Facebook, do not accept the invitation to include him in your group (this goes for *any* old beau!) Be very careful you know your limitations of *anyone* of the opposite sex on your Facebook. Immediately remove them from the list if you find anything flirtatious or your emotions being drawn into a more intimate relationship.
 - b. Suggestive banter with someone of the opposite sex, OR an ongoing banter with someone of the opposite sex because you want to impress him—even if it is innocent at first may lead to something more: STOP. Know your boundaries. While some may be able to tone down the conversation, others may need to stop having them altogether. Remember the buffer zone!
 - c. If you find yourself thinking often of someone of the opposite sex, pray for them whenever you *begin* to think of them (families, wives, children, etc.) & then yours (family, husband, children, etc.)

ASSIGNMENT #8: Study Genesis 39 and record your insights.

D. Tell someone about it.

1. Remember that the quickest way to disarm temptation is to drag it into the light
2. Take your cell phone and call or text your accountability partner, immediately
 - a. That alone will be enough to dislodge the temptation
3. Create a simple code word, like "Pray." That call will do 3 things for you
 - a. It will disarm the temptation
 - b. It will alert your partner to pray
 - c. It will become a subject of discussion the next time you meet with your partner.
4. I guarantee you that the temptation will dry up on the spot

E. Tell God about it

1. We cannot flee from our thoughts but we can certainly seek the help of God who seems to be delighted to provide aid.
2. In fact in Luke 22:40 Jesus us told His disciples to "...Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

3. Should we fall into temptation he told us to ask God to “*deliver us from evil.*” (Matt 6:13)
4. Remember that we are engaged in a spiritual battle. Not only is lust a powerful land mine buried within us, the devil is a powerful adversary who is constantly prodding and pushing us toward sin.
5. We need supernatural resources to fight our supernatural adversary. We access these resources through prayer
6. There have been many men and women who have been saved from the throes of lust by a simple 30 second prayer.
7. **Ann-** For what should a person ask?
 - a. Choose a verse that is meaningful to you and memorize it! Recite this when you are being tempted, as many times as needed, out loud if needed. This will help focus you on God.
 - b. Humble yourself before the Lord, invoking His protection and promises
Ps 91 14-16 I rescue all who cling to me I protect whoever knows my name; I answer everyone who invokes me, I am with them when they are in trouble; I bring them life, long and full, And show them how I can save.

Ps 94:18I need only say “I am slipping,”
and your love, YHWH, immediately supports me (JB)
 - c. Question: Do you trust that He is bigger than your temptation? (HE IS!)
 - d. Ask for courage and willpower. Pray for courage to change direction *at that moment* and the willpower to keep away from the temptation.
 - e. Call out Jesus’ name, focusing on His saving grace in your specific situation.
 - f. Pray/talk honestly to God, telling Him exactly what is going on and what you need.
 - g. Continue to seek God even after the moment of temptation is past.

ASSIGNMENT #9: Compose a 30 second prayer to use in temptation

These have been 5 specific strategies to deal with the immediate temptation to lust.

1. These strategies are tried and true. They work and they will disarm the power of lust at the moment that it threatens.
2. Should you practice these things, we are certain that you will have lots of success.
3. However, there may be times of failure as well.
 - a. Most of us have found that the way we handle failure determines whether we will succeed the next time.
4. So let’s talk about another step.

STEP 6: Deal with it if you fail

A. John tells us in I Jn 1:5-9 what it means to walk in the light

1. *“And this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; (5-6)*
 - a. The first thing we see is that we cannot live in the darkness and say that we have fellowship with God.
 - b. Sin breaks a relational connection with God.
 - c. Sin grieves and quenches the Spirit.
 - d. Sin puts a kink in the hose which supplies us with the grace and mercy and strength and wisdom of God

2. But John goes on, *"But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. (7)*
 - a. To walk in the light is to have the continual cleansing from sin that Christ gives.
 - b. It also frees us to have a great relationship with God and with others.
 3. Then he says, *"If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (8)*
 - a. Walking in the light does not require perfection. In fact the person who says he/she has no sin is a liar.
 - b. We have sinned. We will sin. To pretend that this is not true is to lie.
 4. Even worse, we create an environment for ourselves that is hostile to grace.
 5. If we really believe that we cannot and will not ever sin in this area, we are creating for ourselves a standard that is higher than the one that God has for us.
 - a. Now please hear me when I say that God does not want us to sin – and that God provides all that we need to keep us from sin.
 - b. But God is also a realist, 1 John 1:8 says *"If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us."*
 6. So what happens if we hold ourselves to a higher standard than even the one God has for us. - Nothing but disaster
 7. We put ourselves back under the law, and when we fail to keep that law, and this frustration will cause us to move further away from God and his Word
 8. No – what we really need to do is to understand that our God is a God of mercy and grace. His love for us will persevere no matter what.
 - a. And the best and only way that we can deal with failure is to confess it to him.
 9. 1 John 1:9 says *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*
 - a. To confess it is to restore the brokenness in your relationship with God, it is to take the kink out of the hose.
- B. We must make it our habit to confess our sin to God every time we fall
- C. We need to also confess it to our accountability partner and to our spouse – Yep even our spouse.
1. You see, when we deliberately engage in lust, we steal something from our spouse.
 - a. We have given the heart that belongs to them, to someone else.
 - b. We have taken the sexual energy that belongs to our relationship and given it to another.
 - c. According to Jesus words in Matt 5, we have committed adultery – in our hearts
 2. So we need to confess it to our spouse as well
- D. When we practice confession - we frontload the situation so that in the future we are less likely to fulfill the sin in the first place.
1. Confession creates a cleansing from the moment, and keeps us from being chained to that failure and pulled back to it again.
 2. Confession is embarrassing but we can allow that embarrassment to work for us – to inoculate us from future sin.

ASSIGNMENT #10: Take a moment now to confess any current sin situation.

CONCLUSION

The following letter sums up much of what was discussed in this lesson. The letter was written by a friend at the request of Jim Johnson

1. "It all started with one look. I was raised in a Godly home and accepted Christ when I was six. I was exposed to pornography through some friends when I was a boy (oh be careful little boy who you choose as your friends!).
2. From that first look onwards, I was hooked. *I gave my flesh what it wanted when it wanted it. For years that was my discipline.* When I started dating my future wife, I didn't change any of my habits. But the discipline of feeding my flesh almost ended my relationship with her.
3. While dating her, I went out with other women. I shared kisses with them all while staying "committed" to my relationship with my girlfriend. After marrying her, I was sure that would end. But about one and a half years into our marriage I found myself sharing a kiss with another woman.
4. How far down I had come since that first look...! I felt horrible that night and made a commitment to turn my life over to God. I didn't want to live like a Christian "zombie", not quite dead and not really alive.
5. To make a long story short (and it is a pretty long story!), God turned my life around. He forgave me of my sin and I started to live a life that honored Him. Yet a little later on, I caught myself dangerously close to cheating on my wife again.
6. What was wrong? God then made it clear that I had asked forgiveness from Him, but not from my wife. This was an essential step in the process of healing and freedom.
7. The day I asked forgiveness from her is burned in my mind. It was one of the worst days of my life as I was sure she was going to walk away. Being the amazing woman she is, she stayed with me and God taught her another level of forgiveness through my sin.
8. We now share a level of intimacy we never had before I confessed, and God has now called us into ministry! Yet I cannot end this story on such a bright note, for there are scars from my life of sin.
9. After spending so many years indulging my flesh, my flesh was not exactly ready to let go! When I started the process of disciplining myself to Godliness, my flesh was there to try to drag me back down. As C.S. Lewis said, "You never realize how strong your flesh is until you say 'No' to it.
10. Yet God is faithful. He continues to teach me to think on things that are pure and the Holy Spirit is constantly doing battle with my flesh!
11. He concludes: If you are just beginning your struggle with your mind, get help now! Don't think you are strong enough to go it alone. The longer you wait, the harder it will be to kick your habit of self-indulgence. *Discipline yourself for Godliness NOW!*

#4 –Misplaced Passion–Preparing for Future Battles

Temptation is a war. The war consists of resisting daily, moment by moment and never letting down the guard. The war is won by preparing ourselves in advance to meet the next assault of our enemy. How do we do that?

STEP #7: Rehearse the costs

1. It is very hard to change a pattern that is ingrained – especially a pattern of behavior that rewards us with some kind of pleasure.
2. And indeed lust driven behavior does grant some pleasures.
 - a. The female finds some connection with a guy when she has sex with him. He may be using her, but still she finds comfort in being wanted.
 - 1) She is made to feel desirable and significant.
 - b. The guy finds reward in just the physical release of sex.
3. Now herein is the problem. We are not inclined to change our behavior as long as the pleasure derived is greater than the pain.
 - a. “As long as the pleasure is greater than the pain – I am going to keep doing what I am doing.”
4. Now, if that were reversed, so that the pain became greater than the pleasure, then we may be ripe to change.
5. ILLUS: The man knows he should exercise or he will have a heart attack but he just doesn't find the will power to exercise.
 - a. Eating gives him pleasure – Exercise gives him pain.
 - b. Hey - is that picture disgusting? Good. Now you have a good picture of a person who is driven by their lusts.
 - c. But – what if this guy has a heart attack and yet survives, the pain of what he experienced and the threat that it may return finally motivates him to eat less and exercise more.
6. Pain tends to reach deep down & motivate us to change. Prov. 20:30 says, “*Stripes that wound scour away evil, and strokes reach the innermost parts.*”
7. Now, it is a fact that there are terrible consequences for the person who misplaces their passion. HIV, a broken marriage, STD's, prison time and so on.
 - a. When you taste this kind of pain you tend to look back with regret upon your sin
 - b. But it's too late to do anything about it, when you are running around with HIV.
8. BUT, But what if, what if we could reach into the future, & grab that pain and bring it back to the present so that those future consequences begin to shape the decisions we make today? Is that possible? You bet.
9. Let's do that right now. Let's consider the kinds of things that could and would happen, if we were to continue to pursue lust driven sin. Number 1...

1. Giving in to lust can form the basis of condemnation to hell.

- a. If we have not been redeemed by the blood of Christ, then our lust driven behavior will be a part of the indictment that sends us to hell.
- b. 1 Cor 6:9-10, “*Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*”

2. Giving in to lust invites God to discipline me in this life.

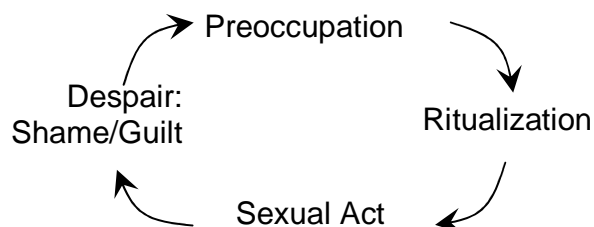
- a. God is a Father, & like our earthly father, he will use discipline, sometimes painful discipline to get us to change our behavior. (Heb. 12:3-11; Acts 5:1-12)
- b. There was a situation going on at the church in Corinth: Incest! This prompted Paul to write, *"I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.* (1 Cor 5:5.)

3. Giving in to lust causes me to **forfeit** reward in the future.

- a. Those of us who know Christ will undergo a time of judgment.
- b. Those who have done well will be commended and rewarded in fabulous ways. Those who have chosen to indulge in sin will be passed by.
- c. Paul put it this way, *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."* (2 Cor 5:10) also see (2 Cor. 5:11-13; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 1 Cor. 9:24-27)

4. Giving in to lust will contribute to an **addiction**

- a. Most sins start out small, but as with all hungers. Greater and greater stimulation is required to produce ever diminishing gratification.
 - 1) You start as a boy with a dirty magazine you find in the trash, but then you graduate to internet stuff, and then experiment with people you meet through the net.
 - 2) Lust driven sin is a habit one thinks he controls and yet it almost always ends up controlling him. And it escalates into more and more.
 - 3) I am going to ask Ann to describe this cycle.
- b. **ANN:** We have said that we must take control of an impure thought and do it as soon as it hits us. This is because impure thoughts are not only the first step towards sexual sin, they are also the first step towards *recurrent* sexual sin which could lead to sexual addiction.
- c. Cycle of Sexual Sin (Patrick Carnes, *Contrary to Love*, 1994 ed., p 68)



Preoccupation: thoughts focused on sinful behavior
(*pornography, romance novels, person*)

Ritualization: regularly followed methods to prepare for sexual act
(*isolation, arranging time, place, person*)

Sexual Act: sexual release
(*masturbation, adultery, fornication, cybersex*)

Despair: shame & guilt over sexual act
(*which causes emotional pain that only the preoccupation of sex leading to the act will relieve*)

- d. There are two chances to intervene before committing the sin
 - 1. When you first have the impure thought
 - 2. When you begin to make arrangements for the sexual act to occur

5. Giving in to lust will steal vitality from my **other relationships**.

(Jennifer Schneider, "Effects of Cybersex Addiction on the Family")

- a. A study done in 2000 found that 68% of the couples where one of the partners was involved in cybersex lost interest in relational sex. 52.1% lost interest in sex with their primary partner, as did 34% of the partners. Some did not have sex at all for months or years.
 - 1) The partner cannot compete with the image or idealized other man/woman (whether real or "airbrushed")
- b. Adverse effects on non-partner relationships (children, parents, siblings, friends)

- 1) exposure at some point to pornography, illicit partner (objectifying women/men)
- 2) lack of attention to the relationship because time is consumed by growing preoccupation and acting out of sexual sin
- 3) For children specifically: involved in of conflict parents and potential divorce

6. Giving in to lust creates shame before Jesus.

- a. In my opinion, the saddest verse in all the Bible is 1 John 2:28. It was a warning given to believers. *“And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.”*
- b. His point is this – Jesus is coming back someday. Some of us will greet Him with great joy, others will shrink away in shame because of our sin.

7. Giving in to lust damages my sense of self-esteem.

- a. Generally speaking, sins of passion (and the cycle of sexual sin) are fueled by low self-esteem.
 - 1) remorse for the sins “proves” that you are bad
 - 2) which in turn can paralyze any efforts for reconciliation with others and God
 - 3) leading to an ever lower level of self-esteem
- b. The person who has engaged in sexual sin, experiences guilt, self condemnation, humiliation, despair and more
- c. So basically even though we pursue these things in order to boost the ego, it actually diminishes it!

8. Giving in to lust creates a guilt that is hard to shake

- a. We *should* feel guilt over our unaddressed sexual sins, this is appropriate, this is the Holy Spirit convicting us that we have offended and grieved God
- b. When the sin is left unaddressed, it *will* reoccur! This leads to more sin and more guilt. This in turn leads to *inappropriate* shame, meaning I experience self-condemnation and/or believe Satan’s false accusations
- c. I tell myself things like:

No one would love me as I am.
 If I cannot accept myself, no one else will either.
 I have sinned too grievously, even God cannot and will not forgive me
 I may just as well continue in my sin, there is no hope for me
 These are lies.
- d. If you believe these lies, you begin to isolate yourself from others (so they don’t find out) which prevents you from seeking the help and support you need
- e. And is exactly the opposite of what will bring truth, victory and healing into your life!

9. Giving in to lust will cause me to lose the trust of those who matter to me.

- a. Can you imagine the hurt on the face of your little girl or boy when they find out about your online affair?
- b. Can you imagine the shock when your fiancé finds your stash of porn?
- c. Everyone in your life would be affected; your spouse, fiancé or steady, children, church family, parents and grandparents

10. Giving in to lust erodes my standards of thinking.

- a. It seduces me into denial of sexual boundaries made clear in scripture
- b. Dolf Zillman, a prominent pornography researcher at the University of Alabama, has found that prolonged exposure to pornography influences men to grossly overestimate the popularity of unusual sex practices; causes them to be less likely to judge pornography as offensive and influences them to recommend

pornography to others, even minors. (Pornography, Sexual Callousness, and the Trivialization of Rape; Journal of Communication, 32(4):10-21, 1982.)

- c. Quote from recovering sex addict: “The more porn I viewed, the less sensitive I [was and] am to certain porn that I used to find offensive. It’s so easy to click on certain things out of curiosity in the privacy of your home, and the more you see them, the less sensitized you are.”

11. Giving in to lust puts my family in jeopardy

- a. I have seen couples extend forgiveness to each other for a multitude of sins.
 b. Sins of passion, however, are a whole different category. Occasionally there is forgiveness from a spouse, usually there is not.
 c. ILLUS; I know a man who involved himself in sexual sin. His college age son found out, and decided then & there to never more associate with his dad. It’s been 20 years. The boy married and raised a family – and his father has missed every bit of it.

12. Giving in to lust can steal my job or send me to prison.

- a. I personally know of a number of folks who have lost their jobs because porn was found on their computers or because they had an inappropriate conversation with a fellow employee.
 b. I know a former deacon who served time in a Federal Pen for child porn.

10. Sin always has its consequences and they are always more dreadful and painful than we can imagine.

11. So let’s take that future potential pain, bring in into our present, and use that pain to shape our choices today. Here is how we do that.

ASSIGNMENT #11: Make a personal list of the possible consequences of your sin

12. Write out a comprehensive list (25 entries or more) by finishing this sentence - “**If I consistently give in to lust, these are the consequences I may face in the future.....**”

- a. Think of how this sin would affect you and family, friends a church and your God. Think of as many of the costs of sin that you can.
 b. Use the names of the people that you will affect.

13. Let me warn you that this is a disturbing exercise.

14. ILLUS: (Jim) I was at an FBC men’s retreat and I asked each of the men to compose a list of 25 possible consequences. We shared our lists with the group after.

- a. Many of our men were weeping as they rehearsed the potential costs of sin.

15. Once you have your list, put it in your Bible and review it once a week. Let that potential pain work for you

16. **RESOURCE:** Read the transcript of **Fatal Addiction**. This is the story of Ted Bundy, who was raised in a Christian home but as a kid he found some porn in a trashcan in an alley. One thing led to another and he eventually became a serial rapist. Fatal Addiction is his interview with James Dobson on the eve of his execution. Find it at **boundless.org**, type in Bundy. (video is posted on Youtube)

STEP #8: Identify Your Triggers

1. (Ann) When the cycle of sexual sin has occurred several times (I’m talking as early as 2-3X!), there are certain things that that person will associate with the sexual act.
 2. They are called “triggers.” (Trigger is the term used for something resulting in addictive-type cravings.)

- a. Triggers may be external: people, places, times and things
(*friends, home alone, payday, after work, at a computer, passing by a movies theater*)
- b. Triggers may be internal: feelings or emotions; a state of being
(*anger, depression, embarrassment, boredom, excitement, happiness*)
- c. Triggers are anything that cause someone to crave a sexual act that is not with their spouse
- d. We ought to know ourselves at least as well. If we could understand when and why we are most vulnerable to temptation, then we can guard ourselves against it. For instance...

ASSIGNMENT #12: Identify Your Triggers through journaling

- 3. Keep a journal related to your experiences with temptation.
 - a. Is it associated with a certain place, or time of day?
 - b. Does it come on the heels of defeat, depression, or maybe loneliness?
 - c. Is there any common thread from experience to experience?
- 4. When you discovered your pattern - you will then be forewarned and therefore better prepared to fight the temptation.

STEP #9: Neutralize your triggers

- 1. Becoming comfortable with threatening situations is the first and perhaps most fatal step towards sin.
- 2. ILLUS: (Jim) When I was a kid I had a good friend. He was a great guy but his house stunk. His mother wasn't such a great housekeeper and therefore there was always a stench at his house.
 - a. It was always curious to me though. The longer I spent at his house the less the house smelled.
 - b. But then I went home and came back the next day and smelled the stench again.
 - c. You see, when you are surrounded with stench long enough. You just get used to it. It smells normal to you.
 - d. Some of us have been surrounded with the stench of lust so long, it seems normal to us. Break out of that.
- 3. Stay away from those places that stink. Put distance between you and the risks.
- 4. Neutralize your triggers
 - a. Avoid trigger people, places, times and things; be aware of your emotional state
 - b. If you can't avoid those triggers - decide how to change them up to make them safe again
- 5. Don't allow yourself to be alone with a member of the sex to whom you are attracted.
 - a. Affairs most often start with an emotional intimacy long before there is any physical intimacy. Let your spouse be your confidant, not another.
- 6. Don't frequent stores that sell pornography.
 - a. Stay in hotels that don't carry porn or have it locked out when you check in.
 - b. Don't attend movies with language and nudity that provoke the passions.
 - c. Rent your videos at places that don't carry porn.
- 7. Communicate with your spouse so that you are always aware of where each other is and what you are doing.
- 8. If you find that you are tempted to lust at certain times or places then arrange your life by scheduling out those times and removing yourself from those places.
- 9. By the way Boredom is the breeding ground for sin.

- a. If you find that you have a lot of free time on your hands, you are a sitting duck for sins of passion.
- b. Do yourself a favor and get busy. Take up a hobby or join a club or get more involved at church.

ASSIGNMENT #13: Come up with a plan to neutralize your triggers.

10. Think through a plan to help you pre-manage those triggers
 - a. What will you do if you get a suggestive email from a co-worker?
 - b. What should you do if a pop up contains a racy image?

STEP #10: Sanctify Your Social Networking

1. The internet can be a dark and dangerous playground.
2. **ANN-** Consider some stats:
 - a. Role playing: (Jennifer Schneider, "A Qualitative Study of Cybersex Participants...", 2000)
 - 71% changes their age at least occasionally
 - 38% changed their race
 - 5% their gender
 - It is quite possible that much of the teen activity online may be adults pretending to be juveniles.
3. **JIM:** The web is an enormous tool for good and a hideous tool for evil.
 - a. Men have long been suckered by the easy-to-access sultry images
 - b. But over the last few years, countless women have been ambushed and drawn into sin through social networking.
4. In the old days, if a guy tried to steal the heart of another man's wife – you could see him do it – today, however, it happens in the privacy of Facebook.
5. Folks - We need to treat online relationships as if they were face to face relationships and apply the same standards of behavior to them. For instance.
 - a. **Make sure that they know you are married**
 - 1) In a face-to-face, that person would know that you are married by the ring on your finger. They can't see your finger online –so tell them
 - b. **Speak well of your spouse**
 - 1) The way we talk about our spouse tends to clue people as to how they may talk to us. Mention your spouse in your communications and make it clear that you are devoted to him/her.
 - 2) Perhaps you are single. You can deter inappropriate conversation by letting that person know that you deeply love the Lord Jesus
 - c. **Don't allow yourself to be alone with him/her.**
 - 1) Most of us are careful not to carry on a face-to-face with a person of the opposite sex when the 2 of you are alone. Make this your online practice as well. Do not communicate to this person unless your spouse is nearby. If the party tries to make contact, ignore it and tell them that you can't talk now.
 - 2) And make sure that your computer is in a public place. Get rid of wireless in your home. It is convenient yes, but too convenient for the formation of sin
 - d. **Beware of frequent contact**
 - 1) Rarely do two people randomly meet and then fall into sexual sin. Typically - contact is made, intimacy is developed, and sin is birthed.

- 2) Intimacy is fed by frequency. Avoid frequent on line contacts with a person of the opposite sex. If that person persists in contacting you, cease to respond, or tell them up front that you are not able to talk as often as they would like.

e. Beware of intimate conversation

- 1) The nature of the virtual communication is that it tends to strip away inhibitions. For some reason we feel that we can say things online that we would never say in person.
- 2) Understand that and put up your virtual dukes. When an online conversations moves toward the intimate, stop it immediately. Close out the program

f. Share your accounts.

- 1) Include both yours and your spouses name with your online accounts.
- 2) That will fend off lots of intrusions.

ASSIGNMENT #14: Sanctify your social networking

CONCLUSION

We would like to conclude with a story again. This is a true story about a family that was caught with their guard down. Ann listened to and recorded their story that we might learn from their mistake.

Once upon a time there lived a husband and a wife with their children. They loved each other very much and each thought of the other as their best friend. The father was fulfilled in his work, the mother was busy teaching her children the things children need to learn and taking care of the house. They were faithful to their Lord, active in their church community and committed to teaching their children about Jesus Christ.

Over time, they each became busy with their own responsibilities (as happens to couples who are in the midst of career-building and child-rearing). Time together was harder to come by, yet they made sure they had their weekly date-night.

To help overcome the long days, the wife enjoyed connecting with her friends on Facebook. She was careful and wary of men asking to be “friended.” (Others told her she was being too conservative.) One day she received a request from a man that went to high school with her. He was an old friend but someone she had she never dated. Curious, she accepted the request. At first they exchanged what life was like for each of them at present. He told her of the exotic places and fascinating people he worked with in his singing career. She told him of her life in Longview raising her two children and a husband that was very busy and working long hours. He responded that he had had some hard times relationally also...a wife that cheated on him...he was now alone and divorced. He told her he had always thought of her even after all the years that had gone by. He told her he saw her pictures on Facebook and that she was still as beautiful as ever. He told her things that flattered her, made her feel special. That out of all of his friends and fans that she was who he thought about.

Feeling disconnected with her husband, she looked forward to hearing these words. The truth was, she was doubting her husband’s approval of her. What if she wasn’t measuring up to whom he wanted her to be? In all his busyness, did she have a place? She remained silent, afraid of her husband’s rejection. So...she consented to having a secret email account with her friend, at his request, so that all of his other Facebook friends and fans wouldn’t be part of their special relationship.

After a few weeks of almost daily correspondence, he told her he wanted to come to Longview so he could see her, and she agreed that this was something she wanted. After they agreed to plan a private meeting together, her husband accidentally saw an email from him

and discovered their relationship. To be clear, the wife had betrayed her husband's trust in confiding in this man, telling him thoughts and feelings that should have been reserved for her husband alone, and even telling this man that she loved him.

While, she did not engage in "sex talk". Her guilt was emotional adultery. The husband immediately sent an email to the man and told him that their "affair" was found out. He instructed the man to never contact his wife again. The "friend" responded, insisting that the relationship was innocent. When the husband revealed he knew about all the secret emails and that he had read most of them, the man responded by telling him that his wife started it all and that he had better watch out because she was ripe for an affair —his ex had done the same thing to him.

I wish I could tell you that they will live happily ever after. They are working through the issues that have erupted from this incident. They are seeking out the Lord and each other along with Godly advice and counseling. It is tragic that it took something like this to get them talking in the depth of honesty. They now must have to work through the pain. It is God's grace and mercy shown to them and to each other that will determine the ending.

A follow up to the story

- In sharing with close female friends, the wife discovered that four out of five of them had had similar experiences
- They have all gotten off of Facebook (except for one)
- They use private blogs to keep up with each other
- They use each other for support and accountability
- They call each other when temptation is present, for prayer & presence if need be
- They too now have deeply honest conversations with each other, creating an intimacy not experienced in this friend group before (wouldn't it be wonderful to reach this kind of genuineness before??)

It is good to know that God's grace and mercy is enough to redeem the most broken of situations. Better, however to avoid them. We need to prepare for future battles, so that we can avoid messes like this.

#5 – Misplaced Passion – Protecting Each Other

- A. We must protect each other from the malady of misplaced passion.
1. If you are married, you in fact have a responsibility to do this.
 2. Consider Paul's words in 1 Cor. 7:2-5. *"But because of immoralities, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. (3) Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband... (5) Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again lest Satan tempt you because of your lack of self-control."*
 - a. The passage clearly tells us that God gave us marriage to protect each other from immorality.
 - b. The primary way we do this is by cultivating a rich relational marriage that culminates in a healthy expression of sex.
 - c. Both must be present - a rich relationship and the healthy expression of sex.
 - d. When this is not happening.
 - 1) It stretches the self control of the individual to the breaking point.
 - 2) And gives Satan a ripe opportunity to tempt.
 3. So how do we do this?

STEP #1: Maintain a healthy marriage.

1. We have already mentioned previously that it is possible for a person to have a rich relationship and healthy sex life in their marriage – and yet still struggle with sexual temptation.
2. However, if there are problems at home, your spouse is almost **certain** to have a serious struggle with the temptation to stray.
 - a. Unmet needs create gaping holes that scream out to be filled.
 - b. If you are not willing to do that for your spouse, someone else will
3. Ladies, we'll start with you. Your husband needs your respect and honor. He needs your support. He also needs you to be physically available to him.
 - a. Not just available, but passionately interested in being physical with your husbands. This is the intention of 1 Cor. 7:1-5 by the way.
 - b. You may not be wired that way, but he is, and he needs this from you
 - c. I have a couple that I have interviewed. We will call them Ben and Ella. Ben once had a big problem with adultery. He related to me how he and his wife were able to repair the damage and how she became the primary person of his desire.
 - 1) And ladies isn't that what a wife wants – to be the person of her husbands desire?
 - d. Ben listed several factors like:
 - 1) Ella gave him the freedom to talk to her about what was attractive to him.
 - 2) She worked at being more physically available to him. He said "Without a doubt, this took the edge off his sexual urge that formerly would cause him to look outside the marriage."
 - 3) Ben's wife learned how to flirt with him. When she took an aggressive interest in sex he said, *"It filled his mind before the act and long after the act."* He said, in essence, that she was always on his mind. She became the object of his desire.
4. How can a man care for his wife's needs?

- a. Three Needs: Affection, Connection and Protection
 - b. **Affection:** acts demonstrating your care for and care of her *doing the dishes, changing the dirty diaper, cooking a meal, filling up the car with gas*
 1) **Also includes:** *hand-holding, hugs, kisses, verbal affirmation or praise*
This is what men think sex means for women—it it not!
 - c. **Connection:** spending time with her towards an ever-increasing knowledge of her and her world *conversation, shared experience, loyalty (commitment to relationship)*
 - d. **Protection:** providing a safe environment physically, emotionally and spiritually *Headship, financial support...*
5. **RESOURCE:** Do you want to know what your spouse needs. The book **His Needs, Her Needs** is right on the money.
6. **ASSIGNMENT #15:** Read His Needs/Her Needs together with your spouse.
7. It's amazing how rich a marriage can become when we work at it. Jaron Summers wrote about his marriage. He said, "My cell phone quit as I tried to let my wife know that I was caught in freeway gridlock and would be late for our anniversary dinner. I wrote a message on my laptop asking other motorists to call her, printed it on a portable inkjet, and taped it to my rear window. When I finally arrived home, my wife gave me the longest kiss ever. "I really think you love me," she said. "At least 70 people called and told me so." (GCFL) (P___)
- 8. PROTECTING OUR KIDS**
- a. Though we are primarily talking about protecting our spouses. Let's add something for the kids.
 - b. One of the best things that you can do to protect your children against sexual impurity is to maintain a healthy marriage to your spouse.
 - c. There is too much to explain here but just let me say that in a healthy family – boys tend to identify with dad and girls with mom
 - 1) Therefore, when dad loves and cherishes his wife, his daughter also feels loved and cherish
 - 2) When mom respects and honors her husband, her son also feels respected and honored.
 - d. The young lady who feels loved and cherished by her father will not quite as hungry for the attention of some teenage jerk
 - e. The young man who feels respected and honored by his mother does not have the need to pump up his self esteem through sexual conquest.

Step #2: Shield each Other

- 1. We need to help intercept the fiery darts that the devil intends for our mates.
- 2. But because we do not understand the triggers of our mates, we sometimes inadvertently contribute to their temptation.
 - a. I wonder how many women drag their husbands to see chick flicks like Titanic.
 - b. If you did this, then you have brought the image of a beautiful naked competitor into your marriage.
- 3. My friend Ben says he and Ella used to rent videos like Titanic and after she would go to bed, he would view it again and focus on the salacious parts. He also admitted that when he and his wife would relate physically, he would often have the image of a starlet in his mind.
 - a. One Christian man said, "*I could not reconcile my technicolor fantasy life with my more mundane experience of sex in marriage.*" (Leadership, pg 37)

4. Biblically speaking – we are instructed to focus only on our spouse. Prov 5:18-19 says, *"Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth. As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; be exhilarated always with her love."*
 - a. The point of the passage is that a man needs to narrow his focus to his wife
5. So ladies, help your men. Make sure that your home is free from movies, TV shows, videos, and print images or any other kind of media that contains sensual nudity.
 - a. ILLUS: (Jim) Sharie and I have a satellite TV package called the Family package, which means that we do not get any channels that are not kid friendly
 - b. I am so glad that I do not have to wrestle with temptation every time I turn on the TV.
6. Another crucial way to shield each other is to run interference
 - a. Ladies you think you understand men but you don't. Men you already know that you do not understand women.
 - b. We can, therefore, help our naïve spouse by telling them what we see.
 - c. My wife helps me by saying, "Jim, you need to be careful about so and so. She seems be a little too friendly with you."
7. How a Husband Can help Shield His Wife (Ann)
 - a. ILLUS: Several years ago, one of the men in our singles' group dropped by our house needing to talk for "a few minutes" during his weekday lunch hour. This was after multiple phone calls to us, sometimes requesting to speak with Todd, usually with me. He was struggling with some relational issues having to do with a female from his past and a current relationship.
 - b. Although Todd and I felt there was nothing inherently wrong with him stopping by, Todd questioned his motives. He just could not reconcile that the man dropped by our home specifically when he knew Todd would not be there.
 - c. I thought he was seeking me out because I am a counselor and he wanted help dealing with some past hurts that were resurfacing. Besides, I thought, it was just for a few minutes (20), we stood in our front hall with the door open (I was being careful!), and one of my children was home for lunch at the same time.
 - d. It happened a second time.
 - e. Todd insisted that something was not right, that I needed to not allow myself to be alone with him again and any interaction needed to be with Todd present.
 - f. Todd did not say this because he was jealous. He did not say this because he did not trust me. He said this because he was protecting me (and us) from someone that raised red flags for him. Even Todd did not know from what, but he felt very strongly that caution was called for.
 - g. As you might guess, I was not convinced that something was wrong, but I honored Todd's request. I submitted without any reservations. Todd tried to deepen his relationship with this person in order to become the primary counselor.
 - h. Whenever he called the house after this, Todd would be the person to answer the phone. If Todd was not at home, I did not answer the phone, but made Todd aware that he had called, and then Todd would be the one to call him back. I was still actively involved in working with him, but only with Todd present.
 - i. Soon after, he was no longer active in the singles group. We found out a year or so later that he had problems of a sexual nature with other women – he was one of the women collectors that I mentioned a few Sundays ago.

- j. I have thanked Todd multiple times since! I am so glad he said something and insisted that I cut off any contact with him that didn't include Todd. My trust in Todd's care of me grew exponentially because of this. I feel very cared for and protected.
- k. POINT: What I learned at a whole new level: I was clueless! Men know men. Women know women. We need to listen to our spouse's concerns regarding supposed "innocent" advances from someone of the opposite sex. (P___)
- 8. Affection:** When I called to tell Todd what the man came by to talk about, he asked clarifying questions about the conversation and logistical questions regarding time, people, and place. He was fact gathering and cared enough to ask before sharing his concerns and reaching any conclusions.
- 9. Connection:** Todd was able to be honest and tell me his concerns. He let me in on the struggle he was feeling: although nothing wrong or suggestive had occurred in the conversation or in the physical circumstances, he couldn't shake the feeling that this person had crossed a relational boundary with his wife. Together, we agreed on what steps needed to be taken.
- 10. Protection:** Todd was willing to risk looking like he was overreacting and potentially alienating someone from the ministry because his desire was to protect our marriage and my physical and emotional safety.
11. Men know men. Women know women. We need to listen to each other when they warn us.

ASSIGNMENT #16: Give your spouse permission to shield you from temptation

12. PROTECTING OUR KIDS;

- a. As for kids, it is a parent's responsibility to shield them from evil. Evaluate the music they listen too, and the movies they wish to see.
- b. Check out the friends with whom they associate

STEP #3: Create Accountability through Sharing

- a. One theme that we have repeated is that this kind of sin thrives in the darkness. It is energized by secrecy. When we drag this sin into the light, it loses its power over us.
 - b. One of the best ways to achieve this in a home is to make sure that everything is shared. Create an environment where it is impossible for a husband or wife to keep secrets from the other.
- 1. Share the same computer.**
- a. His and her computers make it too easy to carry on a sinful habit. Use the same computer and make sure that the computer, and the DVD player, and cable TV and other avenues of temptation are in the room with highest traffic. (e.g. not the bedroom, but the family room.)
 - b. Again – be careful about wireless.
- 2. Share the same online accounts:**
- a. Email, Facebook, My Space etc. If both of you have access, it will inhibit the temptation to stray.
 - b. It also keeps predators at bay, knowing that your spouse will be looking in at that account.
- 3. Share the same cell phone plan**
- a. Make sure that both have the authority to access cell phone records.
- 4. Share the financial oversight of the home**

- a. Sin costs money. If a person is involved with phone sex, or visits to porn sites– it will show up, sooner or later - in the phone records, credit card statements, and checkbook balance.
- b. Keep one checkbook & make sure that both access the financial records
- 5. There should be no part of a person's life that is not shared with their spouse.
 - a. No man caves or getaways where a spouse is not welcome.
 - b. Keep in touch with each other about your schedules and whereabouts
 - c. No separate vacations
 - d. If away on business – agree to check in with each other on a daily basis.
 - 1) ILLUS: I had a friend who had to do a business trip in Las Vegas. He asked me to call him at a certain time each day to create some accountability for him. We could do that kind of thing for spouse
 - e. Share your entertainment together. His watching late night videos or TV while you are asleep is not likely a good thing.

ASSIGNMENT #17: Merge your online accounts and financial records

6. PROTECTING OUR KIDS;

- a. Every one of these items are very critical for kids. Teenagers often want to separate themselves from the family. Don't let that happen.
- b. Make sure that your life is openly shared with them, and that you expect them to shares theirs with you - including online accounts, cell records & the rest.

STEP #4: Encourage Vulnerability

1. Let's go back to Ben & Ella. Ben decided he needed to confess his sin to her.
 - a. Ella wrote, *"When I found out...first I felt hurt that he would go somewhere else to gratify a need that I was supposed to take care of. I also felt diminished. I felt like I had to compete with what he had filled his mind with."*
2. No one wants to hear a confession like his. In fact I suppose that there are some of us here that would prefer not to know
 - a. And yet Ben said that his confession to his wife *"was liberating"* and that it has become a factor that now inhibits him from sinning again.
 - b. He witnessed the pain it caused his wife and he doesn't want to create that condition again.
3. A person needs to be able to talk to their spouse when feeling particularly pulled towards sexual temptation.
 - a. A person needs to be able to say "Dear, you need to know that I was feeling particularly pulled toward temptation today"
 - b. When there is the freedom to do this...
 - 1) It helps to disarm the temptation by bringing it into the light.
 - 2) It gives him/her someone to help them see objectively.
 - 3) Ben says it also "takes the fun out of it."
 - 4) It also enables the spouse to help disarm some of the sexual tension through meeting physical needs.
4. You need to be a person that your spouse can come to when he or she is tempted.
 - a. One Christian man who was struggling with temptation had just fallen. He said, *"I yearned to flee and go home to my wife, to demonstrate to her my fear, so that she could shelter me and mother me and keep me from following where all this was leading."* (Leadership, Fall, 82, pg. 35)

- b. Ella also says that a wife should help by periodically asking her husband how things are going in this area. She warns not to nag or gripe or let anger take over, or use this issue as leverage.
5. Affirm your spouse when they have made right choices in tough situations.
- a. Ella says, *"I lose respect for him each time it happens, but I gain respect when I know he has made the right choices."*
6. Please understand that the key to victory rests with the Lord, but a spouse can be a great helpmate in the battle, if there is freedom in the relationship to be honest
7. How can a husband create this kind of vulnerability? (Ann)
8. Your wives will feel free to confide in you if you work at building a broader intimacy in your marriage.
- a. Affection:** She wants to feel loved and cared for by you.
- 1) **Be sensual with her:** touching, hand holding, hugging, and caressing, with the goal of mutual relaxation and enjoyment, *not* sexual intercourse. If this kind of activity only happens when you want to have sex, it might feel like manipulation to her.
 - 2) Don't presume she knows how you feel about her, tell her. Tell her often!
 - 3) Gift her with things she will enjoy—this might be anything from a diamond necklace to a 2-line poem you wrote for her or a surprise picnic in the backyard for just the two of you, or specifically *including* the children in a special family time you plan. (Todd gave me an evening I will never forget when he proposed to me at the top of Reunion Tower with all my children present and in on the surprise!)
- b. Connection:** She wants to feel oneness with you.
- 1) **Be sexual with her:** Talk to her spend time helping her around the house or with the children
 - 2) The more she feels that you partner with her in everyday life, the more oneness she will feel. The more a wife feels this oneness with her husband, the more she wants to give herself emotionally and physically to her husband.
- c. Protection:** She wants you to be her protector.
- 1) **Be sincere with her:** open and honest communication builds trust. She will learn to trust you more and more if you tell her what you are thinking and feeling.
 - 2) Do not be shy or reticent about your headship. Although no woman wants a dictator for a husband, a woman becomes "dangerous" if she senses there is no one in charge. She will be greatly tempted to assume headship or find someone else who will! (This could be with full knowledge of what she is doing or subconscious.) Gen 3:16
 - 3) Be aware of both of your feelings: be alert and aware of thoughts and feelings you have about your friendships. Openly communicate with each other about your interactions with same and opposite-sex friends. Mutually set limitations in terms of the kinds of activities or amount of time you spend with friends. Establish appropriate boundaries in each unique situation. Come to a united decision about any matter of concern and commit to it. (*Authentic Human Sexuality, Balswick & Balswick, p 216-217.*)

ASSIGNMENT #18: Tell your spouse that you want to hear from them when they are struggling.

8. PROTECTING OUR KIDS

- a. Your children will struggle at times and fail in this area. It is important that you have the kind of relationship with them that permits them to talk about these struggles.
- b. If not, you force them to retreat into the darkness and you do not want that.
- c. ILLUS: Sarah's story, with the drive by kiss

STEP #5: Stop Creating Temptation

1. We may be contributing to the frustration of the opposite sex.
2. So let us share some uncomfortable truth here that applies to all of us; young/old. Married/or single, male or female.
3. Let me begin with the ladies.
 - a. Ladies: Please understand first that - at no time is a girl responsible for the thought life of a guy.
 - b. It is nevertheless true that the way a woman dresses or carries herself can either discourage a lustful response or provoke it.
4. As you know Eve was cursed because of her sin. God said this to her in Gen 3:16, "*...And you will desire to control your husband...*"
 - a. Well, believe it or not, women have learned very well how to rule their husbands and other men as well, and they do through their female charms.
5. Ladies - if you want to help your average American Christian guy, consider this: **Avoid dressing in a way that unduly accentuates your sexuality.**
 - a. Right or Wrong, when a woman accentuates her sexuality, a man tends to regard it as an invitation to look and to long for.
 - b. This may not be what she intends - but it is what the man interprets.
6. Now, of course, sexual attraction is a relative concept.
 - a. A woman who removes her veil in Iran excites a man there.
 - b. While a bare-chested woman in Africa goes unnoticed
7. In our culture most males are not disturbed by modest, feminine and attractive styles.
 - a. BUT most males are disturbed by (and listen closely ladies) guys are disturbed by clothing that reveal the breasts / skirts that are significantly above the knees / plunging backlines / exposed midriffs / tight fitting clothes / dresses with slits up the sides / exposed panties from low cut jeans / excessive make-up / and swim suits that hug, reveal and accentuate.
 - b. I also need to say this: A guy hopes and prays that he might be safe at church. That's not always the case. 100% of men say that they pulled toward purity related temptation even at Church.
8. God, in His wisdom, gave us only one dress code and it is found in (1 Tim 2:9-10). "*Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.*"
 - a. A woman who dresses modestly does not need to fear that she is the object of a man's unbridled imagination.
9. What can a guy do to minimize temptation for females. (ANN)
 - a. Jim and I have talked and I have had several conversations with other women. We have agreed that men do not exert the same kind of temptation on women as women do men.
 - b. It can take very little to provoke temptation in a man, but it almost takes a deliberate effort by a man to provoke temptation in a woman.

- c. Jim says, "In this respect men are the weaker sex."
- d. This is mostly because men are triggered through the visual whereas women are triggered through the relational.
- e. Therefore the only advice we have to men is this. **Beware of building the kind of relational intimacy with a woman that belongs to her husband.**

ASSIGNMENT #19: Ask your spouse (or if single a friend) to give you a modesty audit.

10. PROTECTING OUR KIDS

- a. Set some rules for modesty in the home. Lust is no respecter of persons.
- b. Please - review this material with your teens as they come of age.

T: A final way we can protect each other against impurity?

STEP #6: Forgive the offense

1. Forgiveness is sometimes tough. Ella wrote, *"The most damaging thing was my loss of respect for my husband. Why would someone I love and respect think so little of our marriage and me?. Why would he trade a clean conscience for such a dirty thrill? I didn't understand it."*
2. Forgiveness is tough and yet the Scripture is quite clear on this point. Eph 4:32 *"And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."*
3. If your spouse comes to you with a confession then you need to forgive your spouse
 - a. If your hurt and pain keeps you from forgiving and releasing, then the next time an incident occurs, you will not know about it.
 - b. You will have pushed the problem into the dark instead of helping your spouse drag it into the light.
 - c. Besides, I have yet to see a marriage problem or any kind where one person is 100% guilty and the other 100% innocent. Even though your spouse has failed, you have most likely contributed to the problem.
4. If your relationship is such that he/she can confess their failure and you are able to forgive - then that exercise itself will begin to inhibit his sin.
 - a. Your spouse will find the experience humiliating, and perhaps that potential humiliation will come up and throw cold water on future temptations.
 - b. Ella says, *"The truth is, purity isn't a math problem that you solve once; it is a daily battle for all men. They must choose every time they see a Cosmopolitan cover at the grocery store."*

ASSIGNMENT #20: Grant a complete pardon to your spouse

CONCLUSION

We need each other in the battle. Couples need each other; children need their parents, singles need their peers. When we look out for one another, we all succeed.

Solomon put it this way in *Eccl 4:9-12*, *"Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him."*

Two is so much better than one, but let's not fool ourselves, we ultimately need the Lord on our team as well. Which is why Solomon ended that passage saying, *"A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart."*

REINFORCEMENTS IN THE BATTLE FOR PURITY

COUNSELORS (in whom Jim Johnson has confidence)

Puryear, Johnny* – 903 – 736-3825

Bronson, Gene* – 903 918-3626

Lockhart, Jon* (psychiatrist) – 903 295-8990

Reeder, Sonya – 903 759-2402

Smart, Ellen* - 903 297-4403

Bruce Edstrom (in Dallas) 1 214-987-1776

* denotes that the person worship at FBC.

FBC Mentoring Network: FBC currently has a number of folks who are willing to come alongside another to help them forward in their spiritual journey. Contact Joe Coppinger at the church office for more information.

Filtering the Web

Filtering ISPs and Software

Filtering Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and software work by blocking sites and e-mail containing certain words or pictures. They help to break the cycle of addiction, but are only aids—and aren't foolproof. These filters aren't meant to replace human accountability and responsibility.

Integrity Online: One of the largest filtered ISPs; www.integrity.com

Setting Captives Free: Offers both a filtered ISP for \$17.95 per month and filtering software for a one-time charge www.settingcaptivesfree.com/home/scf_isp.php

ChristianLiving.com: Offers filtered and unfiltered Internet service for \$17.95 per month, or filtering for a current DSL, LAN, or cable service for \$14.95 www.christianliving.com

Accountability Programs

These programs track websites you visit and send a list of them to a person of your choosing.

Covenant Eyes: Offers online accountability starting at \$6.95 per month (endorsed by Focus on the Family and Promise Keepers) www.cvnt.net

X3watch Accountability Software: Free program sponsored by xxxchurch.com, an antiporn site aimed mostly at teens: www.x3watch.com

Bible Memorization

Topical memory System; Navigators

Mainstay Ministries (MainstayMinistries.org) **Little Scripture Pack: For Practicing Purity**

MEDIA REVIEWS

Pluggedinonline.com; (free) from Focus on the Family. Reviews movies, TV shows, video games and so on

Screenit.com; (fee) Reviews movies

PROGRAMS/MINISTRIES

A number of organizations offer confidential help. Check out their websites

Woodmont Hills Counseling Ministry: Offers workshops and a private counseling center that specializes in sexual addictions, especially in women 866-464-HEAL (toll-free)

www.bethesda workshops.org

Faithful & True Ministries: Ministries for sexual wholeness, counseling, and consultation 952-903-9208 www.faithfulandtrueministries.com

National Council on Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity

Offers information, resources, and referrals www.ncsac.org

Pure Intimacy (Focus on the Family): Offers information on pornography and sexual addiction

www.pureintimacy.org

Pure Life Ministries: Aimed mostly at helping men, but some women have found help through their programs directed at breaking free from sexual sin - www.purelifeministries.org

Setting Captives Free: Offers online programs to help believers break free from addictive sins, including pornography www.settingcaptivesfree.com

BOOKS

Pure Desire- Helping People Break Free From Sexual Struggles; Ted Roberts; Regal
An Affair of the Mind; Laurie Hall; Focus on the Family Publishers. One woman's story of how she coped with her husband's sexual addiction.

Christians In the Wake of The Sexual Revolution: Randy Alcorn: Multnomah Press

Everyman's Battle; Arterburn and Stoeker; Water Brook Press

Every Young Man's Battle; Arterburn and Stoeker; Water Brook Press

Every Man's battle Guide; Arterburn and Stoeker

Every Man's Marriage; Arterburn and Stoeker

Preparing Your son for Every Men's Battle; Arterburn and Stoeker

Every Woman's battle; Arterburn and Ethridge

Every Heart Restored: A wife's guide to healing in the wake of a husband's sexual sin; Arterburn and Stoeker and Yorkey

His Needs/Her Needs, Willard Harley

Sex Matters, Waylon Ward

The Song of Solomon, (Audio or Video Recording) Tommy Nelson

Men and Women, enjoying the Difference, Larry Crabb

Fighting For Your Marriage, Markman, Stanley, Blumberg

Torn Asunder: Recovering From an Extramarital Affair, Dave Carder

Intimate Allies, Allender, Longman

[Addicted to Love](#) by Stephen Arterburn (Servant)

[Every Woman's Battle](#) by Shannon Ethridge (WaterBrook)

[No Stones: Women Redeemed from Sexual Shame](#) by Marnie Ferree (Xulon)

[Hidden Dangers of the Internet](#) by Gregory Jantz (Harold Shaw)

[Faithful and True: Sexual Integrity in a Fallen World](#) by Mark Laaser (Zondervan)

[Breaking Free: Understanding Sexual Addiction and the Healing Power of Jesus](#) by Bob Davies and Russell Willingham (InterVarsity)

