

Lust (PORN)

Another Name For

ADULTERY

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord Jesus shocked the people of His day when He equated lust to ADULTERY! His actual words from Matt. 5:28,29 are:

“But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed **ADULTERY** with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into **HELL**.”

Please note the serious consequences of lust (mental adultery). According to Jesus, it’s possible to end up in Hell over this! Therefore, this sin must not be taken lightly, as many people do.

An example of taking lust lightly occurred on one of my radio interviews. The following dialog transpired between a phone caller [Archie] and the host [Gil] after the host presented a hypothetical situation involving lusting over a woman while driving. This is what Archie referred to when he told Gil that he used his “example of driving in the car.”

Archie: “Gil, you used my example of driving in the car.”

Gil: “Oh, so you been looking at [lusting after] women, too, huh?”

Archie: “Oh, yeah, all the time.”

Gil: [an outburst of laughter].

The chief aim of this article is to provide the facts regarding “lust” as used in Matthew 5:28. While some downplay the serious consequences of lust, others wrongly think the slightest and quickest visual contact on another’s body is always adultery. The latter will be greatly relieved to learn this is not so! Similarly, remember this: Temptation in itself is not a sin. Jesus was tempted, yet Jesus never sinned. Therefore, temptation is not a sin. It only becomes a sin when you yield to it.

The Greek word rendered “lustfully” (Matt. 5:28, NIV) is found elsewhere and translated in such a way as to help us know what the Lord equated to mental adultery. This same exact word is found in Lk. 15:16 and Lk. 16:21. It’s also significant to note that Jesus gave us these other usages. Hence, he chose to use the



same exact word in these other teachings as he chose to use in Matt. 5:28! Respectfully, those verses say:

“He [the Prodigal] **longed to** fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.”

“And [Lazarus was] **longing to** eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.”

The facts surrounding the sad circumstances of the Prodigal and Lazarus, two other places where Jesus also used the word rendered “lustfully” as mentioned in Matt. 5:28, help us to better understand its meaning. Regarding its usage by the Lord in Luke’s gospel, it seems evident that this word carries a meaning with it that makes it much deeper than just a casual glance at a woman, as some wrongly think. To substantiate this, Strong’s Concordance defines this word as “to set the heart upon, i.e., long for.” Again, a casual glance at the opposite sex is not being referred to in Matt. 5:28. However, when actual lust does occur, that is, when one “longs for” another, then adultery is actually committed! To deny this teaching is to indirectly doubt the Lordship of Jesus Christ! This also clearly refutes the statement I’ve often heard—“It’s okay to look [meaning lust], but not to touch.” **Jesus never taught lust was okay! Nowhere is this form of adultery, though solely mental, less serious than other forms, although many treat it as such! Remember, Jesus said it can send one to Hell (Matt. 5:29)! Could He be wrong?**

How awesome to ponder this fact in regard to all of the pornographic literature that can be found in this country. It recently surprised my wife and me to learn that one can indulge in pornography by way of their personal computer using CD Rom or modem! Mental adultery is rampant! Truly, this is an “adulterous generation,” as Jesus said.

Recently, while waiting to see someone with whom I had an appointment, I heard his office radio tuned in to a secular station which had a “Penthouse Pet” on as a guest. This woman posed 60 times for Penthouse magazine, yet was hailed as some great celebrity and heroine. She showed no remorse for those sinful acts. Only on Judgment Day will it be revealed how many millions of men committed adultery with this whorish woman. **What a fine servant Satan has in that woman, who shame-**

fully is the envy of many women in our country!

Men committing mental adultery should also be a sobering thought for women who profess to be Christian and desire to please their Lord. Paul wrote that women are to dress “modestly” (1 Tim. 2:9), yet at the same time, Paul was a grace teacher in the truest sense. So this isn’t “law” as some accuse, but simple obedience! To disregard the way you dress might possibly be stumbling another into adultery! (The same applies to a man and his dress, for women can lust too.) Read what Jesus said in Matt. 18:6 about stumbling another into sin and marvel at this! Furthermore, regarding this whole matter of mental adultery, **a woman who dresses with the intent to make men lust after her is on a par with a prostitute!**

In our generation, TV is the prime way people commit mental adultery. Even while watching the news report sometimes one is exposed to spiritually unwholesome scenes which the devil is pleased to present. These spiritual pollutants flood into homes across our land, then people wonder why they are having trouble with lust! I personally believe that more adultery is committed before the TV set than anywhere else!

Furthermore, it’s a sad day when people who profess to be God’s servants are ensnared by their TV as their precious free time is spent never to be regained! Our generation will have to account for this incredible waste of time at the Judgment. Please note I mentioned “our generation” since television has only been available commercially since just after World War II. (TV as a means of distraction and temptation, is something which the Twelve never had. Moreover, there will be no TV’s in Heaven!) Remember this: Before the invention of TV, Christians got along fine without ever watching it! You can too! In fact, since my wife and I stopped watching all TV of any kind, including the Super Bowl, we get along much better without it! By this I mean we have much more time to labor for the Kingdom in one form or another besides the other advantages of not being tempted to lust or adopt the world’s values in the first place.

If you are having trouble with lust or know someone who is, the remedy, in part, is to cut off the source of temptation! It’s that simple. If literature is the temptation, then stop going near it. If it’s TV or movies, stop watching them. This is what you are to STOP doing. Paul wrote: “Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature” (Rom. 13:14). **Also, remember sinful desires such as lust (adultery) are warring against your soul (1 Pet. 2:11). You must war back or be conquered. A fight is a fight and not a “bed of roses”!**

Furthermore, to get victory over lust, you should START spending more time in the Bible meditating on and memorizing certain verses! Hiding God’s word in your heart will stop those mental temptations. The unnamed writer of Ps. 119 both prayed and hid God’s word in his heart so he would not sin against God: “Do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you” (Ps. 119:10, 11). We all need to humbly follow this example.

In summary, victory over sin is not just what you do but also what you don’t do! In other words, starve your sinful nature (by not thinking about how to gratify it) and feed your spirit with God’s word (by meditating in Scripture). Your voluntary thoughts, that is, the thoughts you choose to ponder when free to think about anything you want, are extremely important. Relevantly, Rom. 8:5 says, “Those who live according to the sinful

nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.” The following poem states it beautifully.

Two natures beat within my breast.
The one is cursed, the other is blessed.
The one I love, the other I hate.
The one I feed will dominate!

Similarly, Paul wrote, “The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life” (Gal. 6:8).

In the Old Testament, we also read of lust in passages like Prov. 6:25,26: “Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes, for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread, and the adulteress preys upon your very life.” Again, lust leads to disaster! Therefore, do not take this sin lightly.

By the way, the word rendered “lustfully” in Matt. 5:28 is used in a good sense in 1 Tim. 3:1 and Heb. 6:11. This latter verse reads: “We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.”

Unlike the Calvinists, Paul emphasized free will and human responsibility. (He did this without contradicting his own grace message.) He wrote, “Keep yourself pure” (1 Tim. 5:22). Undoubtedly, many will have to make major changes to obey this command! Victory over TV will benefit you and others in this life and throughout eternity, but get ready for the battle regarding it!

Job was the most unique man on earth in his day—being blameless, upright, a man that feared God and shunned evil (Job 1:8). **This man said of himself, “I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl” (31:1).** This is also very important in our day in light of Matt. 5:28,29 and the rampancy of pornographic literature, movies and commercials in our vile country.

Paul wrote, “Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry” (Col. 3:5). Please note: it’s your responsibility coupled with the power of God (Rom. 8:13) that is the victory over lust.

It might surprise some to learn that Jesus used the word from which we get our word “pornography” in Rev. 22:15, and stated that along with some others, such are “outside” the city of New Jerusalem. (In that verse, the word is rendered “the sexually immoral,” NIV.) If we compare Rev. 21:8 to this same verse, we know their specific location is clearly the **lake of fire!**

For more information on the subject of **pornography**, please go to <http://www.evangelicaloutreach.org/pornaddict.htm>



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