



Matthew 5:27-30
A New Economy of Righteousness:
Fleeing Lust
November 6, 2011
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Let's remember the context prior to our reading our text for the day:

- This is God in the flesh speaking authoritatively on matters of life and salvation.
- In the Beatitudes, Jesus describes the character and nature of those in the Kingdom of Heaven
- Using salt and light, Jesus describes the purpose of those in the Kingdom of Heaven
- In contrast to the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus fulfills the law as God intended and becomes the only means by which one can enter the Kingdom of Heaven
- Now Jesus uses six examples to demonstrate God's intent in the law

Read Scripture Passage:

²⁷“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.²⁹ If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell.³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.¹

Attention:

What is at stake here:

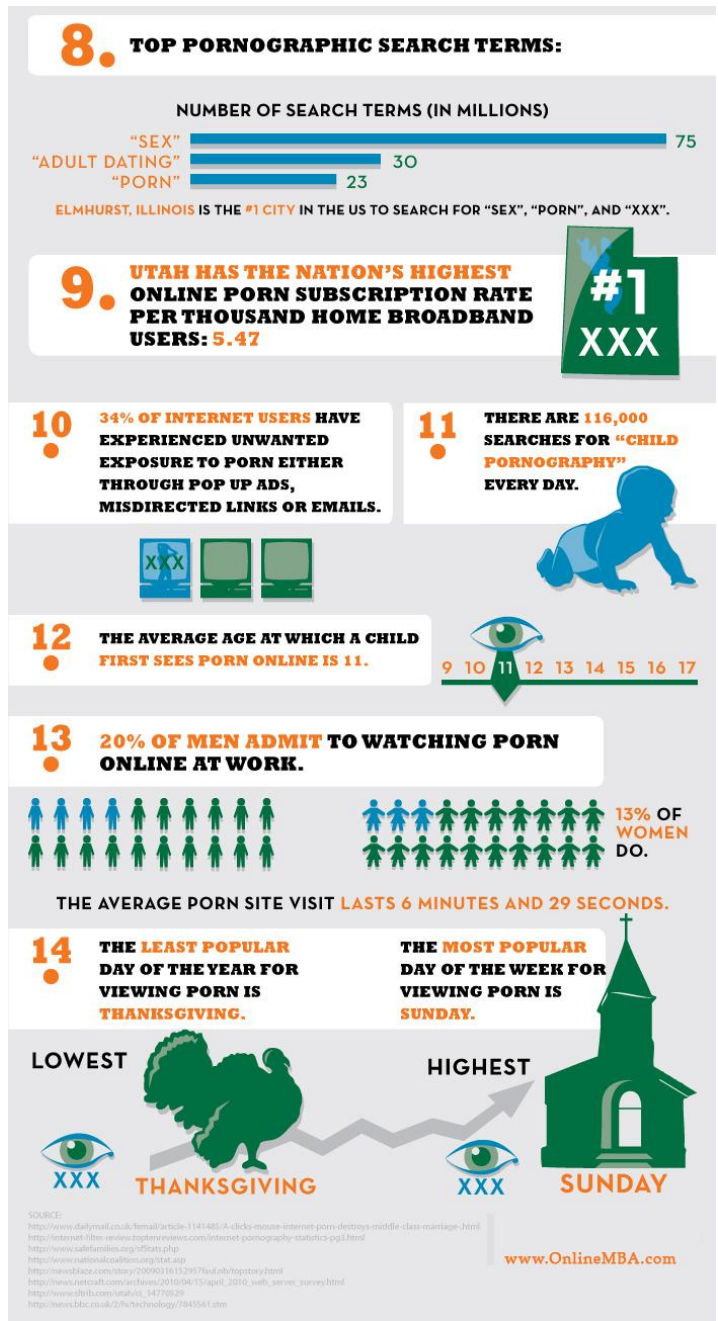
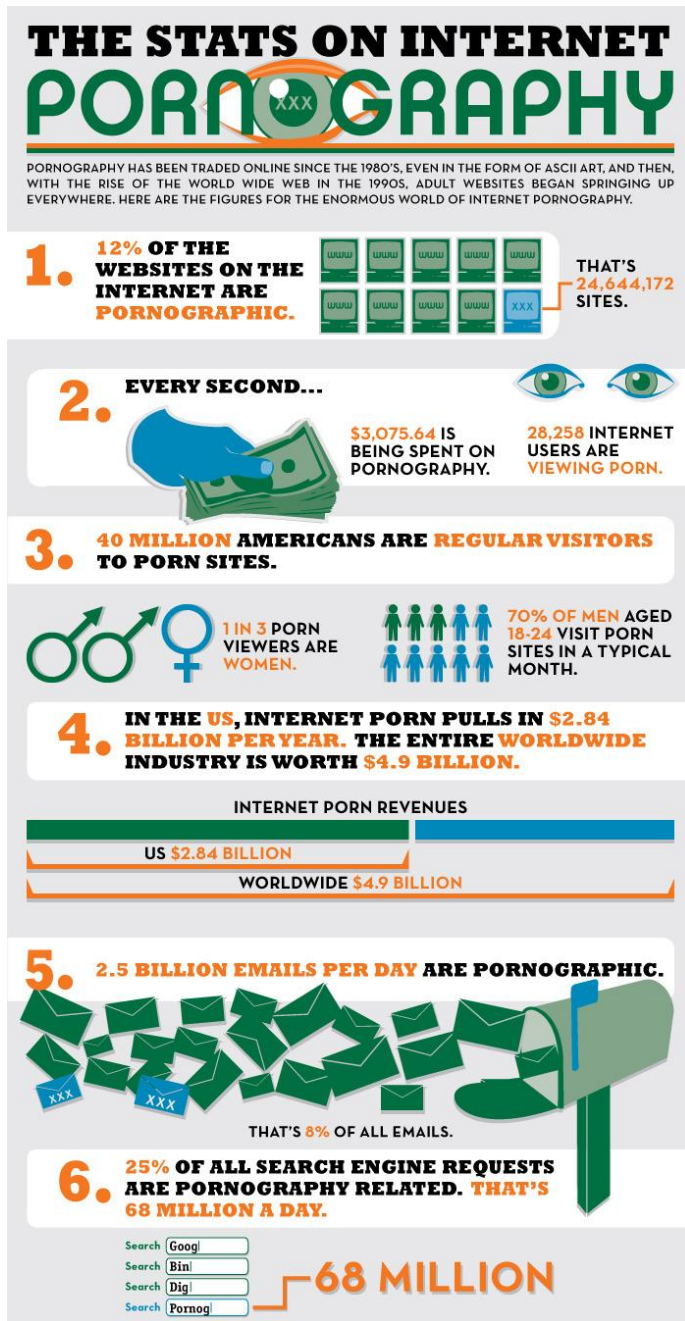
In 1947, a man named Dr. Carle Zimmerman wrote a book called *Family and Civilization*. He reviewed the decline of multiple civilizations and empires, and found eight patterns of domestic behavior that signaled the decline of a civilization:

- 1) Marriage loses its sacredness; is frequently broken by divorce.
- 2) Traditional meaning of the marriage ceremony is lost.
- 3) Feminist movements abound.
- 4) Increased public disrespect for parents and authority in general.
- 5) Acceleration of juvenile delinquency, promiscuity, and rebellion.
- 6) Refusal of people with traditional marriages to accept family responsibilities.
- 7) Growing desire for and acceptance of adultery.
- 8) **Increasing interest in and spread of sexual perversions and sex-related crimes.**

Sound like any civilization you know? But that is the 35,00 foot view. What about the 100 foot view?

¹ *The Holy Bible: English standard version*. 2001 (Mt 5:27–30). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

The 1,000 foot view:



Now that we know what is at stake, let's understand the textual idea for today:

Textual Idea: Adultery, lustful thoughts and disrespecting marriage reveal a wayward heart far from God and a life in violation of the seventh commandment.

- 1) The prohibition of adultery is rooted in the creation of **MEN, WOMEN** and **MARRIAGE**. V 27
 - a. You have heard it said – you have been taught by religious leaders that you trust and now you have come to understand that adultery is such and such:
 - b. “You shall not commit adultery” – Exodus 20:14

- c. How was adultery as prohibited by the seventh commandment understood?
 - i. Sexual intercourse between a married woman and a man other than her husband
 - 1. Notice the emphasis on the woman
 - 2. Women were considered property in many ways
 - ii. Punishable by death for both parties
 - 1. ESV | [Dt 22:22](#) “If a man is found lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman. So you shall purge the evil from Israel.
 - iii. Does not include fornication (although prohibited elsewhere in OT and NT)
 - iv. Does not include sex between man (married or unmarried) and slave woman who was married
 - 1. ESV | [Le 19:20](#) “If a man lies sexually with a woman who is a slave, assigned to another man and not yet ransomed or given her freedom, a distinction shall be made. They shall not be put to death, because she was not free;”
 - v. Does not include sex between a man and the wife of a non-Israelite.
 - vi. In Greek and Roman Law – unconditional fidelity is only required of the married woman
 - vii. Rome - Only the increasing moral disintegration of the imperial period led to legal measures by the state. Augustus passed the Lex Julia de Adulteriis.²⁶ This declares adultery a capital offense, punishes offenders by banishment and forbids the husband to pardon or to quash the matter. He may be punished himself if he continues the marriage. The law was not followed by an improvement of the situation. Divorces were very common.²⁸ The infidelity of wives was almost an accepted fact.²
- d. So, adultery was understood by the hearers of the Sermon on the Mount to mean that a married woman should only have sex with her husband. A man was not so restricted in the common practice of the day.
- e. What they were missing was the background to the commandments to begin with:
 - i. ESV | [Ge 2:20](#) For Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. [21](#) So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. [22](#) And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. [23](#) Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” [24](#) Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. [25](#) And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

² . Vol. 4: *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*. 1964- (G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley & G. Friedrich, Ed.) (electronic ed.) (732–733). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

1. **NOTICE THE ONE FLESH UNION – husband and wife are one and anything that violates that, assaults God’s intention of marriage!**
 2. **NOTICE THE UNASHAMED INTIMACY – come back to this later but for now, notice that anything that causes guilt between husband and wife assaults God’s intention for marriage!**
- ii. ESV | [1Co 6](#): The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. [14](#) [15](#) Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! [16](#) Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” [17](#) But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. [18](#) Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. [19](#) Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, [20](#) for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.
1. **NOTICE THAT SEXUAL SIN IS AGAINST GOD – “the body is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord” – members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute?**
 2. **NOTICE THAT SEXUAL SIN VIOLATES THE ONE FLESH UNION OF MARRIAGE – becomes one with the prostitute**
 3. **NOTICE THAT SEXUAL SIN IS AGAINST ONE’S OWN BODY - Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.**
 4. **NOTE THAT SEXUAL SIN IS VERY SERIOUS – against God, spouse, self = flee and glorify God in your body.**
- iii. ESV | [1Co 7:3](#) The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. [4](#) For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. [5](#) Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.
1. **NOTICE THE EMPAHSIS ON THE POWER OF SEXUAL DESIRE – context – burn with passion, let them marry – do not withhold sex so that you may not be tempted**
 2. **NOTICE THAT HUSBAND AND WIFE HAVE AUTHORITY OVER EACH OTHER’S BODIES – so, what I look at or do with my hands outside of that authority is an assault on God’s intent for marriage.**
- iv. ESV | [Heb 13:4](#) Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.
1. **EVERYONE RESPECT THE MARRIAGE BED**

- a. Husband and wife
 - i. Dr. Juli Slattery – boundary around your marriage strong and very closed – that you protect your marriage from all kinds of images and information that is not supposed to be there. – not worry about what others do or what is normal but that we grow with each other intimately within the safety of this strong boundary – and that we have very strong intimacy- no boundary between us -because of the strong boundary around us.
- b. Single man and woman – protect from wrong thoughts and experiences
 - i. Draw the boundary around you and your future mate now. Don't let wrong thoughts, lustful attitudes and sexual experiences corrupt your future marriage.
- c. Culture – mocks marriage and sex within marriage as unfulfilling and infrequent
 - i. Jokes that single sex is frequent and more fulfilling than married sex – most effective birth control is marriage
 - ii. Sitcoms – man is bumbling idiot who only wants one thing and the woman patiently endures living with him and trying to meet his sexual appetite by throwing him a bone every once in a while and conditioning him to live like an evolved woman who does not need sex like men.
 - iii. Seinfeld – women are sex camels
 - iv. Everybody Loves Raymond –
 - v. King of Queens
 - vi. According to Jim
- d. CHURCH !!!!! – we must not be quiet on this topic, we must no allow the world to teach our children and church members about sexual practice or else we will surrender the foundation of marriage and family to a world that will destroy it!
 - i. To be silent on the issue of sex or to simply teach “Just say no” is tantamount to pushing people headlong into destruction and diminishes the beauty of what God created to be enjoyed!
 - ii. FBI, let's look at the ground level here.
 - iii. Disclaimer – what I am about to share is not intended to heap judgment on anyone who has failed in the area of sexual sin; instead it is designed to show how we cannot as a church simply surrender the topic to the world any longer.

1. Teenage pregnancies out of wedlock – many of whom stood with their parents in a true love waits pledge
2. Then there are those youth associated with our body who are engaging in sexual activity but simply haven't been caught by pregnancy – physical issues maybe, STD, UTI's, anxiety, depression, etc
3. What about the marriages within the body or close to our body who have been affected by adultery? Our friends have had their lives gutted both the offender and the offended by the lure of sexual pleasure as the filler of an emptiness inside. By God's grace some have been restored but others have suffered divorce and broken families.
4. Less known and maybe more prevalent is the number of people in the body using pornography (explicit or otherwise) and who are hopelessly trapped in it with no way out.
5. This is what is at stake from the ground level, FBI. We cannot surrender to the world what is the church's to teach on behalf of the one who created it!
6. CS Lewis – Screwtape – “we have won many to the kingdom of darkness by pleasure but we must be careful. When we are talking about pleasure we are on the enemy's (God's) territory. For pleasure was created by God for good.”

That is what they understood, but what did God really mean to begin with?

2) Lustful thinking is heart **ADULTERY** and real **SIN**. V 28

- a. But I tell you – remember that this is the authoritative Word of God spoken by the Messiah himself
 - i. ESV | [Heb 1:1](#) Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, [2](#) but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. [3](#) He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
- b. A man looking at a woman with lustful thoughts has committed adultery with her in his heart.
 - i. Looks – **βλέπω** present tense participle – ongoing action, not just a glance

1. ESV | [Ac 1:11](#) and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”
- ii. At a woman – γυνή – woman or wife – Matthew 5:31
- iii. Lustful thoughts – ἐπιθυμέω (*epithymeō*): - to greatly desire or long for, covet, crave
 1. ESV | [Lk 15:16](#) And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.
 2. ESV | [Ga 5:17](#) For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.
 3. Looking at a woman and allowing oneself to be sexually aroused and desiring sexual release with her
- iv. Adultery – μοιχεύω (*moicheuō*): – commit adultery, become an adulterer
 1. Comes from two latin words meaning “to” and “another” – so the image is to give to another what is reserved for your spouse.
 - a. Definition throws open wide what constitutes as marital infidelity
 - i. Emotional cheating
 - ii. Confiding in others rather than spouse
 - iii. Sexual desires, fantasies etc, that you keep for yourself or share with others.
- v. In his heart – the center of the will and core of the being
 1. Most precious part of our lives – protect it from evil –
 - a. ESV | [Pr 4:23](#) Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.
 2. Thought leads to action
 - a. NASB95 | [Pr 23:7](#) a For as he thinks within himself, so he is.”
 - b. ESV | [Jas 1:14](#) But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. [15](#) Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.
- vi. VIOLATES ONE FLESH UNION – Genesis 2 and 1 COR 6:**
 1. NOTICE THE ONE FLESH UNION – husband and wife are one and anything that violates that, assaults God’s intention of marriage!
- vii. CREATES GUILT SHAME AND BROKEN INTIMACY – Genesis 2:**
 1. NOTICE THE UNASHAMED INTIMACY – come back to this later but for now, notice that anything that causes guilt between husband and wife assaults God’s intention for marriage!
- viii. REJECTS GOD’S PLAN AS BEST – 1 COR 6**
 1. NOTICE THAT SEXUAL SIN IS AGAINST GOD – “the body is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord” – members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute?

ix. HURTS ONE'S OWN SELF – 1 COR 6 – **THE GROUND VIEW**

1. NOTICE THAT SEXUAL SIN IS AGAINST ONE'S OWN BODY - Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.
2. The effects of lust (adapted from an article by Mike Genung on www.blazinggrace.org)
 - a. **Lust is his master. With mouth he says “Lord, Lord” but with his heart he worships self, sex, and whatever he gets from lusting.**
 - i. ESV | [2 Pe 2:19](#) They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved.
 - b. **He's isolated and empty** – shame from sexual acts and fear of being exposed and rejected keep one isolated. Nothing satisfies and the addict's emptiness only intensifies, keeping him in a cycle of misery
 - i. ESV | [Pr 27:20](#) Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied, and never satisfied are the eyes of man.
 - c. **He becomes increasingly self-centered** - In his isolated state the sex addict becomes the center of his world. He obsesses about acting out, (or not acting out), his wants, his problems, how he is feeling at the moment, looking successful and what others think about him. All of this self-obsession causes ego buildup – and a critical judging heart. He's blind to the needs of others, especially those of his wife and children.

His wife is neglected and ignored and he makes little effort to do the things she likes. His kids, who need their Dad's love, strength and affection are treated as little more than noisy distractions. He's harsh and critical to his family, and little things set him off easily. Although he doesn't know it, the stench of his self-obsession is painfully evident to the ones he loves.

His prayer and devotional times become short, infrequent, shallow and about him. “Lord forgive me, help me, give me, me me...”.

Intercession is an afterthought and praise is a duty. He stops enjoying God and forgets how to listen and be still.
 - d. **His character rots** - This sensitive place deep in the man's soul, where his strength and character are forged, is corrupted, distorted and hardened by the shame, selfishness and isolation of lust. He loses his moral authority and the courage to do what's right. Instead of being a fighter he becomes a passive weakling who hides from the challenges of life. He makes compromises he would never have dreamed of taking before in financial and other areas.

His work ethic suffers, and he doesn't give his employer his best effort. He steals by using company time for acting out or other personal activities.

- e. **His perceptions, values and decision making processes are distorted**
- f. **If he is single, he corrupts his future marriage** - Single men buy into the delusion that once they can have "moral sex" their problems with sex addiction will stop. What they don't understand is their empty heart can't be filled or healed by another broken person and getting married is not the answer to their problem. He doesn't realize that what he does now will destroy his marriage later...
- g. **He gets physically sick more often** - The stress sex addiction puts on his immune system drags it down. Sex addicts get more colds and other respiratory infections, with longer recovery times.
- h. **He becomes a mess chemically** - Sexual addiction alters the shape of the brain and drains natural serotonin levels. The nervous system gets messed up. Deep sleep through the night is elusive and he often feels run down. Clinical depression, anxiety attacks and blood pressure problems start to creep in. Many sex addicts wind up on antidepressants or other medication to cope. Sadly, because they "feel a little better" on the medication they are deluded into thinking they're not as bad off as they really are, and the journey of insanity continues until...
- i. **All joy in life is gone** -
- j. **He deeply hurts his wife and children**
- k. **Ministry opportunities are lost** -
- l. **He ruptures his family** - unplanned pregnancies, abortion, money problems, STD's, the financing of the porn industries, the corruption of the church and the moral disintegration of our nation.
- m. **He rejects the lord** - Jesus, the One Who loves the sex addict, died for him, and is waiting to help him is grieved as the addict says that "I want porn instead of You God."
- x. **THIS UNDERESTIMATES THE POWER OF SEXUAL DESIRE – 1 Corinthians 7**
 - 1. NOTICE THE EMPAHSIS ON THE POWER OF SEXUAL DESIRE – context – burn with passion, let them marry – do not withhold sex so that you may not be tempted
- xi. **THIS VIOLATES THE AUTHORITY OF HUSBAND / WIFE OVER EACH OTHER'S BODIES – 1 COR 7**
 - 1. NOTICE THAT HUSBAND AND WIFE HAVE AUTHORITY OVER EACH OTHER'S BODIES – so, what I look at or do with my hands outside of that authority is an assault on God's intent for marriage.

xii. THIS DISRESPECTS THE MARRIAGE BED

1. EVERYONE RESPECT THE MARRIAGE BED – Hebrews 13:4

So, this is real sin, how do we fight it?

3) Fighting sexual sin requires **RADICAL ACTION** V 29-30

- a. If your right eye causes you to sin, if your right hand causes you to sin
 - i. Eye – the window to the soul – 66% of world population is right eye dominant meaning that the brain decodes the information coming from the right eye with priority
 1. ESV | [Mt 6:22](#) “The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light,
 - ii. Hand - χεῖρ (*cheir*), - an agent of activity – Christ sat down at the right hand of God – 90% of population is right handed meaning the usual member of your body to engage in an activity
 - iii. Sin - σκανδαλίζομαι (*skandalizomai*), - cease believing, to cause offense in another, take offense from another
 1. ESV | [Jn 6:61](#) But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this?
 2. Idea is that something causes you to demonstrate your unbelief, distrust, lack of faith in God by acting in a way contrary to his ways.
- b. Gouge it out, cut it off
 - i. Gouge – literally tear it out – also used to mean rescue, snatch from certain harm or demise –
 1. ESV | [Ac 12:11](#) When Peter came to himself, he said, “Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting.”
 - ii. Cut it off - ἐκκόπτω (*ekkoptō*) – do away with it
 - iii. While some in church history have advocated physical mutilation, the irony is that in trying to rightly understand the heart of the seventh commandment, they have failed to rightly understand that the heart is the ultimate issue with regard to sin and that the eyes and hands are secondary and tertiary (respectively).
 - iv. Thus, it is possible to mutilate the body and never extinguish the sexual sin of the heart!
 - v. What is clearly being said in the use of Jesus hyperbole is that sexual sin is so serious that it must be met with equal urgency for repentance, correction and protection.
 - vi. Illustrate – danger warrants the response
 1. “GIVE ME THAT! DON’T YOU KNOW THAT SPILLED WATER ON CARPET COULD CAUSE MOLD WHICH LEADS TO RESPIRATORY ISSUES AND DEATH. YOU ARE GROUNDED FOR 3 YEARS!”

2. “NOW HONEY ONE COULD GET HURT REACHING THROUGH THE LION’S CAGE WITH FOOD. IF YOU DON’T STOP, YOU ARE IN FOR A TIME OUT MISTER.”

vii. RADICAL RESPONSES

1. Buy internet filtering and accountability software
2. Cut off your internet
3. Never travel alone, remove tv from hotel room etc.
4. Get rid of cable tv., block “adult or questionable channels”
5. Never be alone with anyone of opposite sex other than wife ever, under any circumstance.
6. End wife’s lingerie catalogs

c. Why – we are dealing with life and death, heaven and hell.

4) Practical thoughts on the topic:

- a. What about masturbation – 68% of Christian men surveyed said they masturbated at least once a week
 - i. Masturbation is not only self-sex it is self-worship (you are the center of every fantasy you masturbate to!)
 - ii. Masturbation is invariably linked to fantasy, lust and usually pornography.
 - iii. Masturbation violates the ONE FLESH principle:
 1. self – sex separates sexual expression for union and intimacy
 - iv. Masturbation violates the MUTUAL AUTHORITY principle:
 1. No spouse wants their spouse masturbation to fantasies of other people and would never give permission for it.
 - v. The jokes about masturbation suggest that sexual purity is an impossible ideal – glorify God with your body. 1 Cor 6
- b. What about couples viewing pornography together?
 - i. Violates ONE FLESH principle and INTIMACY PRINCIPLE of Genesis 2
 - ii. Couples watching pornography together are endorsing sexual sin with their money and they are allowing others into a place that should only be reserved for each other.
- c. How far is too far sexually before marriage? If you are still asking this, you are not hearing the heart of what Jesus is saying!
 - i. Boys – keep your hands off girls.
 1. Your hands do not belong up her shirt or down her pants. Be careful touching her at all. Why do you want to tempt yourself when you are not going to have Scriptural freedom to go “further” until marriage (which for most of you is a long time from now.
 2. Would it not be better for me to masturbate to alleviate sexual urges - doesn’t work – behaviorists tell us that it actually creates a greater need for sexual release and you set yourself up for failure in marriage
 3. Cherish women as gifts from God not objects of your sexual pleasure. Serve them now by protecting their virtue

- ii. Girls don't inflame the boys around you
 1. Protect your virtue and keep yourself for your future husband – let him see what is only his on your wedding night
 2. Don't underestimate the sexual passion of males – it is quite different for men and women. Men are easily aroused by sight while women are usually more aroused by emotional connection and intimacy.
 3. Don't suppose that you both agree where the line is!

Conclusion

If you are struggling with masturbation, lust, adultery or sexual addiction. You cannot overcome this by yourself. First, the only victory over sin is found in Christ! You cannot will yourself out of this. Your hope is only found in the Way, the Truth and the Life. Your sin might be considered more taboo, guilt and shame – producing but it is not outside of the power of Christ to pay for and forgive. God created, man fell, God redeemed, God will receive the one redeemed. (God, man, Christ, response)

Commitment – will you church respond with obedience to God in sexual purity? Church will we protect the body by rightly teaching about God's design and purpose for sex? Parents? Married folk will we protect against sexual immorality at all costs? Single folks will we also glorify God with our bodies?

ESV | [Eph 1:16](#) I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, [17](#) that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, [18](#) having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, [19](#) and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might [20](#) that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, -

ESV | [1 Ti 2:8](#) I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling;