

Chain saw Sanctification!

Matt 5:27-30

Scripture reading:

Preamble:

Mention benevolence fund

Dismiss children

This is the final sermon in our series.

Recommend the book "Finally Free"

Prayer for illumination: please join me in prayer....

Sermon intro:

A UVA professor writes,

Porn is a 90 billion dollar a year worldwide industry. In 2006, porn revenue in America was over 13 billion dollars. This is more money than Americans spend annually on pro baseball, basketball, and football combined. America's favorite pastime is no longer baseball or football, it is porn.

In 2006, twice as much money was spent in America on porn (\$13 billion) then the revenues of CBS, ABC, and NBC combined (6.2 billion). (from a sermon by Mark Driscoll)

"A 2003 survey reported that 47 percent of Christians admit pornography is a major problem in their homes."

“Another survey found that 50 percent of Christian men and 20 percent of Christian women are addicted to porn.”
(Chester, 9)

“A 2002 study by London School Economics found 9 out of 10 children between the ages of 8-16 had viewed internet pornography.”

Porn is rampant!

Furthermore, porn is incredibly destructive.

It destroys-

Marriages

Careers

Childhoods

Trust

Relationships

Intimacy with God

And sexual satisfaction...

And it is never ever, ever, ever satisfied.

Some of you feel enslaved to porn.

You want to quit in the worst way, but you don't know how.

You feel constantly ashamed.

You feel constantly defeated.

You feel constantly condemned.

Porn seems to define you.

Is there hope for those enslaved to porn? Yes. This brings us to the words of Christ in Matthew 5:27-30. If these verses are properly applied, one can live porn free!

Three points to help us understand these verses...

Committing lust
Combatting lust
Condemning lust

First, committing lust

Who commits the sin of lust? Pretty much everyone!

Matthew 5:27-28 (ESV) – 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.

In verse 27, Jesus quotes directly from the 7th commandment found in Deut. 5 and Exodus 20. He proclaims, “You shall not commit adultery.” At this point, many of the scribes and Pharisees probably thought they were off the hook. Maybe you are thinking the same thing.

But in verse 28 Jesus says that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Jesus is not only concerned with the outward activity of adultery, but he is equally concerned with the inward activity of the heart.

In the Greek “lustful intent” literally reads “for the purpose of lusting for her”. In other words, if you have looked

at someone lustfully you have committed adultery with him or her in your heart.

One author writes, "The look is not casual but persistent, the desire not involuntary or momentary, but cherished." (A.B. Bruce)

It is not sinful to notice a beautiful person. But it is sinful to take a second look or stare to gratify one's sensual imagination.

Porn magnifies this temptation a thousand-fold. One commits adultery every time one views porn!

Application:

Here is the scary thing.

There was virtually no porn when Jesus spoke the words of Matthew 5:27-30. He is simply saying that looking at someone with lustful intent is adultery. So even if you don't have a porn problem you may still be an adulterer. Porn just makes the problem worse.

With that in mind, why else is porn sinful?

One scholar argues that when you look at porn you are committing several sins.

You commit the sin of idolatry (finding joy in something that God forbids, not God himself).

You commit the sin of adultery (Matt. 5:27-30).

You commit the sin of deceit (porn users often hide their sin from others).

You commit the sin of theft (you are stealing pleasure that belongs to someone else's spouse).

You commit the sin of greed (you are greedily grasping at something that is not yours).

You commit the sin of covetousness or jealousy (you want something that does not belong to you).

You commit the sin of sloth (you are not redeeming the time).

You commit the sin of sexual assault. How is that?

"A person who drives a getaway car for a band of bank robbers will rightly be charged with murder for anyone who is killed because of that crime. The person who voluntarily watches sexual assault for purposes of titillation is rightly guilty of that sexual assault. And a nauseating quantity of pornography is violent in nature, displaying men taking advantage of women." (challies.com)

Furthermore, you are guilty of grieving the Holy Spirit. You are sinning against your spouse or future spouse. You are sinning against your children by giving them a bad example.

One of the biggest lies foisted on us is that porn does not harm anyone! Wow, what a lie!!!

It hurts you, your spouse, or future spouse, your children, potentially your career, all women, and you are supporting an incredibly wicked and dehumanizing industry. According to the excellent book "Closing the Window" the vast majority of porn stars are drug addicts. They take drugs to numb the pain and deal with the guilt and shame. Many of them take their own lives.

On the other hand, God's plan for sex is wonderful. God loves sex, it was his idea. He created it for his glory and our enjoyment, but it must be enjoyed in the context of marriage. And, as I argued a few weeks ago, those who follow the Bible's instructions for sex have the best sex and the most frequent sex.

Why do some give into the sin of sexual lust?

They are trying to escape!
They want a refuge!
They want pleasure!

Giving into lust may provide pleasure for a few fleeting seconds but then it ruins your life. Lust abides by the law of diminishing returns.

Proverbs 27:20 (ESV) — 20 Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied, and never satisfied are the eyes of man.

Porn never satisfies lust; it only inflames lust for more perversity.

People often go from lingerie catalogues to pornographic images, to porn videos, to strip clubs, to prostitution, to pedophilia, to orgies, to rape, and to worse...

The lie is that you can control things. According to one author, "you can't control porn, porn controls you." (Driscoll)

William J. Struthers, an expert on this subject said,

"Each time that an unhealthy sexual pattern is repeated, a neurological, emotional and spiritual erosion carves out a channel that will eventually develop into a canyon from which there is no escape." (Quoted by Driscoll, Real Marriage, 154)

Porn never delivers on its promise. Instead, it destroys pleasure. Which explains the growing problem of ED among young men. Men look at porn so much that a normal woman (i.e., their spouse or future spouse) can't arouse them.

This is called "porn impotence."

It is a real thing!

Here is the incredible irony, people look at porn for pleasure, but porn destroys real pleasure and great sex.

It is like rat poison, it smells and tastes good, but it kills the rat.

Isn't lust primarily a guy problem?

No, women struggle with lust too. One survey found that 28 percent of porn users are women although they use porn

differently. Women are often more tempted by erotic romance novels. This is also lust. (Chester, 11)

Again, I don't want us to think lust and then think that porn is the only application. Jesus says that anyone who looks at a woman (or man) with lustful intent has committed adultery in his heart. Guys who don't look at porn, are often more tempted to take that second glance at the lady in the yoga pants, because they are not jaded by all the fake females in porn.

Is there any hope for us? Yes, this brings us to the next point!

First, committing lust.

Second, combating lust.

Matthew 5:29–30 (ESV) — 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.

How do we combat the sin of lust, which leads to adultery? We take radical action. This passage says that if our eye causes us to lust, we must cut it out and if our hand causes us to lust, we must cut it off. In other words, it is better to go through life maimed and lust free than go to hell forever, since life is very short, and eternity is forever.

We combat lust by taking radical action.

Illustration:

Andrew Ralston was hiking in the desert, all by himself, miles away from civilization. As he was exploring some caverns fifty feet below the desert floor, a large boulder above him fell, crushing his arm and trapping him to a rock wall. He was stuck. No matter what he tried he could not pry himself loose. He screamed for help, but it was useless since he was in the middle of the desert. One day turned into two days and two days turned into three days.

His water supply ran dangerously low as the symptoms of dehydration sank in. He started to hallucinate about water and popsicles. He never wanted liquid so bad in his whole life. As the fourth day turned into the fifth day, he was convinced that death was imminent.

He knew that the only way to save his life was to do something radical. He had to cut off his arm. He knew that losing his arm would be costly, but it would save his life. So, he pulled out his knife and started to saw through his own skin and then muscles. His knife would not cut through the bone, so he snapped his bones in half with leverage from his body. Once his arm was free, he hiked to safety.

He took radical action by sawing off his arm, thus saving his life.

Application:

Are you willing to escape death by doing something radical? Jesus tells us to cut out our eye and lop off our hand.

Clearly, Jesus is speaking in hyperbolic language.

The early church Father **Origen** took Jesus words literally and emasculated himself.

In fact, this was such a problem in the early church, that the council of Nicaea specifically forbade men from emasculating themselves.

Christ's point is that we must take radical action to combat lust.

What radical action are you willing to take to combat lust?

If you are enslaved to internet porn, are you willing get rid of your computer, but I need it for school, drop out of school (I only know one enslaved guy who was willing to do this).

Are you willing to talk to a parent, a pastor, or a D-group or C-group leader about your struggles.

Ladies are you willing to talk to your C-Group leaders wife or a female member of the counseling team.

Are you willing to get a filter (I recommend "Covenant Eyes")

Are you willing to read a book like "Finally Free" by Heath Lambert

Are you willing to install Vidangel... Christians should never, ever watch sex in movies!!! Ever!

Are you willing to get rid of Netflix or Amazon prime or YouTube if this is how you are accessing porn!

Dads, are you willing to take control of your kids phones... I recommend iPhones.

Dads, are you willing to install filters on your routers (I recommend Gryphon).

Are you willing to get rid of your credit card and put your wife in charge of all the money, thus destroying your ability to buy porn online or at stores. I read a story about a guy who did this. This is way too radical!!! More radical than cutting out your eye?

Are you willing to consistently rehearse the cost of being enslaved to porn (Alcorn article). What does this look like?

You must remind yourself that porn does horrible things.

It literally rewires your brain and destroys your ability to have a normal relationship with a real member of the opposite sex.

Porn objectifies woman

Porn destroys your sex life.

Porn may lead to the embarrassment and shame of church discipline...

Porn destroys careers.

Porn sends people to jail.

Porn never ultimately satisfies; it gets more and more perverse.

Women are you willing to dress modestly for the sake of your brothers? It is good to dress stylishly but it is sinful to dress seductively. What seduces most men? Really tight pants, low cut tops, tight shirts, and shirts that reveal the midsection, etc... but this is what everyone wears! You are called to live differently.

Are you willing to practice contentment! Thank God every day for the way God has made your spouse. Contentment is the opposite of lust.

Husbands if your wife is 5:4, 140 you need to be into 5:4, 140. If she is 5:9, 200, you need to be into 5:9, 200. If he is...

Most importantly, we must exercise a radical dependence on Christ.

John 15:5-7 (ESV) — 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. **6** If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. **7** If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

What happens to those who don't take radical action to combat lust? This brings us to the last point...

Committing lust
Combatting lust

Third, condemning lust

What happens to lustful people? They are condemned to hell—forever!

Matthew 5:29–30 (ESV) — 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.

Jesus is saying that if you don't get a grip on the sin of lust you will go to hell. Wait a minute, what about once saved always saved? I wholeheartedly believe in once saved always saved but I also believe that if one does not persevere in Godliness, they were never saved.

Many evangelicals have an unbiblical and simplistic view of saving faith.

Galatians 5:19–21 (ESV) — 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, **20** idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, **21** envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Ephesians 5:5–7 (ESV) — 5 For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. **6** Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God

comes upon the sons of disobedience. **7** Therefore do not become partners with them;

One is justified, forgiven, and cleansed by faith alone. But if one continues in a pattern of lust, they prove with their actions that they don't possess saving faith.

What is real repentance?

You must not dabble with lust... you can't handle it. None of us can handle it. Ted Bundy thought he could.

One author writes,

"Former Seattleite and graduate of UW Ted Bundy became one of the nation's most notorious and feared serial killers for beating, raping, and then murdering at least thirty girls... Shortly before he was executed, Bundy was interviewed by Christian leader James Dobson. Shockingly, Bundy admitted that he possessed none of the normal triggers for such sinful behavior, as he was raised in a loving Christian home with five siblings and did not experience any sexual abuse growing up. Rather he confessed in clear detail how as a young boy he began, as most boys do, viewing common pornography, which grew into increasingly harder and more deviant forms of pornography that eventually led to his acting out his evil fantasies." (Driscoll)

Sadly, I think we will see more Ted Bundy's as porn becomes more and more mainstream.

Lust unchecked leads to pain and misery in this life and the life to come.

But here is the good news.

Jesus died for us...

The penalty for adultery in the OT was death. Jesus never committed adultery, but he died in the place of all of us who have committed adultery in our hearts and minds.

Therefore, Christians can be forgiven!

And the power of sin was broken in us.

And Jesus also lived for us...

During the course of Jesus life, he never lusted. And this was not because he lived in a monastery and never saw women.

Think of the women at the well in John 4 (she had five husbands).

Think of the sinful women in Luke 7 (probably a prostitute) who anoints Jesus feet with perfume.

Think of the number of women that followed him.

Satan knew that if he could get Jesus to have one lustful thought it would be game over for all humanity. Therefore, it is probable that Satan threw stuff at Jesus all the time.

Yet, Jesus never lusted. He never sinned!

Describe the benefits of Christ's alien righteousness imputed to us... wow!

Jesus rose from the dead for us...

Jesus rose from the grave and poured out the spirit on us so that we could have new hearts and resurrection power to say no to the sin of lust.

Conclusion:

The whole world seems enslaved to lust, but Christians don't have to be.

You don't have to be enslaved to lust.

Jesus Christ has given you everything you need to kill the sin of lust.

But you must be willing to take radical action.

What radical step can you take this week to kill lust, the whole time relying on the power of the Spirit?

Let's pray...