

The truth: Pornography destroys young men, older men, youth pastors and teaching/preaching pastors. It is a struggle for many, and God's Word gives truth and strategies to fight against sexual immorality. It is a fight that can be fought with definite confidence if you know Jesus.

Sexual immorality is any lust or desire of a sexual nature that is not shared within the confines of marriage between one man and one woman.

(4) Truths and (8) Applications Against Sexual Immorality: The Thessalonian church was commended for their radical repentance (1 Thess. 1:9) and their heavenly perspective (1 Thess. 1:10, 2:13). They were given comfort by the future rapture of the church (1 Thess. 4). Sanctification and purity for believers in regard to sexual immorality was taught to the church.

1. **Sexual Immorality is a favorite attack against believers:** V3, God's will for our lives is sanctification. It is the work of God to conform us to the image of His Son, Rom. 8:29.
 - a. Hebrews 10:14, "For by one offering He has perfected for all time (positional sanctification) those who are being sanctified (progressive sanctification)."
 - i. It is a permanent work of grace *and* daily growth in the truth and grace of Christ.
 - ii. V1-2, Paul delivered to the Thessalonians how to walk to please the Lord.
 - iii. V3, we are to abstain from sexual immorality, it is the will of God.
 - b. **App. (1): Fight Sexual Immorality with Humility:** humble yourself. Admit a problem, get help from others, seek help from books (*Finally Free*, Heath Lambert; *Passions of the Heart*, John Street). Don't trust yourself, humble yourself.
 - c. **App. (2): Fight with Thankfulness:** Eph. 5:3-4, sexual immortality and impurity is greediness. It is wanting something that isn't yours and not being thankful for what has been to you by God, Eph. 5:4, but "giving of thanks."
2. **Sexual immorality is a distinctive Christian struggle:** V3, Christians struggle with it because they desire to do the will of God. God has defined marriage and sex for the believer within the confines of marriage. God's word is truth as found throughout Psalm 119. David desires to learn God's truth so that He would keep them until the end, Psalm 119:33.
 - a. God gives us strength and grace to then receive strength and grace as we grow in truth.
 - b. God gives us the power to obey His commands. V4, "each of you know how to possess his vessel," knowledge has been given to us to keep ourselves pure. We control ourselves through the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, V4, 8.
 - c. Unbelievers do not know God and can't keep from sexual immorality, but believers have and are being sanctified, V5.
 - d. **App. (3): Fight with the right kind of accountability:** Gal. 6:1-2, a) good examples are the spiritually mature in your life who have fought this fight and have learned to overcome it. b) The fear of church discipline is also present knowing those practicing sexual immorality are acting as unbelievers.
 - e. **App. (4): Fight with true sorrow:** 2 Cor. 7:10-11. True sorrow is not the sorrow of losing a pleasure of the world, but it is sorrow that you have sinned against God and your relationship with God is hindered and are grieved over your sin(s) against Him.

3. **Sexual Immorality is a devastating failure for the Christian:** V6, God warned us not to defraud our brother in these acts. It is always taking something that is another's.
 - a. The Lord is the one who brings discipline to a wayward child or judgement to the unbeliever whose life practices this lifestyle. God defends those who are afflicted and avenges those who afflict others, Ps. 12:5, 94, Proverbs 22:22-23, Matt. 18:6.
 - b. 2 Thess. 1:5-8 is clear that God is the avenger on those who do not know God and do not obey the Gospel of Jesus.
 - c. Trust only in the words and commands of God, not on our own understanding, Prov. 3:5, 1 Cor. 4:5.
 - d. **App. (5): Fight with imagination:** understand and list the devastation to yourself and others if you sin in this way. Who would be hurt by your actions? What would be ruined forever if you commit sexual immorality? Prov. 7:24-27.
 - i. God has given us all good things for life and godliness. We should be satisfied with what He has given, Psalm 84:11, Prov. 5:15-17, 27:7, 2 Pet. 1:3-4.
 - e. **App. (6): Fight with lameness:** these are radical measures. Be lame to protect yourself from sin that would easily tempt you. Rom. 13:14, make no provision for the flesh.

4. **Sexual Immorality does not have to dominate you (me):** do not minimize the guilt of sin and the pursuit of the glory of God in our lives. Jesus died to take away your sin and give you confidence in your salvation through His words in Scripture. We are no longer slaves of sin (Romans 6). 1 Thess. 4:7, God called us to sanctification **not** impurity.
 - a. God has given us His Holy Spirit, Rom. 8:11, 15,
 - b. The will to do His good pleasure and work, Phil. 2:12-13,
 - c. And to appear before Him without spot and blameless, Col. 1:22, 2 Peter 3:14.
 - d. **App. (7): Fight with grace and a bold confession:** 1 John 1:9, Using the acronym CAR: **Confess** your sin, you have access to this grace in Jesus Christ. **Affirm:** forgiveness for all of your sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us. **Request:** God's grace to change.
 - i. We walk in newness of life, Rom. 6:4 and are dead to sin, Rom. 6:11.
 - e. **App. (8): Fight with superiority:** Heb. 11:24-27, Moses' heart and focus was on pleasing Yahweh and obeying Him. Fight sexual immorality and all sins with your eyes focused on Christ, His return, and our day of appearing before Him. We will give an account of our works, Rom. 14:10-12, 1 Cor. 3:10-15, 2 Cor. 5:1-11.
 - i. Set our minds on things above, Colossians. 3:1-4.

Further Discussion and Application

Proverbs 27:7 gives us a key to fighting temptation, what is a satisfied soul? What should we be content with? What has God given us that causes us to rejoice and not complain? What do we complain about that shows we don't appreciate what we have received?

There are 8 applications from this sermon. Review them and determine how you might continue the fight against sexual immorality in your life and sins of the flesh that you war against. What steps can you take today in pursuit of purity?