

Sunday School
Mortification of Sin
Lesson 5 Part 2

Lust

- ❖ “Every lust is a depraved habit or disposition, continually inclining the heart to evil. Thence is that description of him who hath no lust truly mortified, Gen. 6:5, “Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually.” He is always under the power of a strong bent and inclination to sin. And the reason why a natural man is not always perpetually in the pursuit of some one lust, night and day, is because he hath many to serve, every one crying to be satisfied; thence he is carried on with great variety, but still in general he lies towards the satisfaction of self” (Owen).
- ❖ The faculty which is most important to this discussion is the one that desires. Lust is the continual inclination of the desires.
- ❖ Owen uses Proverbs 23:31-32 to paint a vivid picture of the inner workings of lust.
 - “*Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper.*” (Proverbs 23:31–32, NKJV)
 - The lust of the flesh says, “Oh, look how desirable!” Owen calls this laying the bait.
 - “A bait”, says Owen, “is desirable and suitable, that is proposed to the hungry creature for its satisfaction; and it is by all artifices rendered desirable and suitable. Thus is sin presented by the help of the imagination unto the soul; that is, sinful and inordinate objects, which the affections cleave unto, are so presented.
 - Owen furthers his case by emphasizing “pleasures of sin.”
 - The apostle tells us that there are “pleasures of sin,” Heb. 11:25; which, unless they are despised, as they were by Moses, there is no escaping of sin itself.
 - They that live in sin are said to “live in pleasure,” James 5:5.

- Listen to Owen’s use of the above Scriptures:
 - “Now, this pleasure of sin consists in its suitability to give satisfaction to the flesh, to lust, to corrupt affections. Hence is that caution, Rom. 13:14, “Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof;” that is, “Do not suffer your minds, thoughts, or affections to fix upon sinful objects, suited to give satisfaction to the lusts of the flesh, to nourish and cherish them thereby.” To which purpose he speaks again, Gal. 5:16, “Fulfil ye not the lust of the flesh;”—“Bring not in the pleasures of sin, to give them satisfaction.” When men are under the power of sin, they are said to “fulfil the desires of the flesh and of the mind,” Eph. 2:3.
- Here is the end game: “Thus, therefore, the deceit of sin endeavors to entangle the affections by proposing unto them, through the assistance of the imagination, that suitability which is in it to the satisfaction of its corrupt lusts, now set at some liberty by the inadvertency of the mind. It presents its **“wine sparkling in the cup,”** the beauty of the adulteress, the riches of the world, unto sensual and covetous persons; and somewhat in the like kind, in some degrees, to believers themselves. When, therefore, I say, sin would entangle the soul, it prevails with the imagination to solicit the heart, by representing this false-painted beauty or pretended satisfactoriness of sin;”
- ❖ Some examples:
 - Woman wanting out of her marriage.
 - Lusts use of her imagination
 - Lusts control of the narrative
- ❖ Lusts can have an unlawful object. This is divided into that which is forbidden, and that which is neglected—sins of commission and omission.
 - You can fulfill your lust by murder.
 - You can fulfill your lust by not protecting the innocent.
- ❖ Lusts can have lawful objects that are too highly valued—inordinate lusts.
 - The chief end of our lives is to glorify and enjoy God. Enjoying God means:

- Valuing God above all creation including self
 - “*You have put gladness in my heart, More than in the season that their grain and wine increased.*” (Psalm 4:7, NKJV)
 - “*Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You.*” (Psalm 63:3, NKJV)
- The world offers security through finances. Inordinate lust places all its hope in finances.
- The Christian would look on financial security as foolish. I pity someone who doesn't have God as their security. He exceeds and makes false all other pretending securities.
- When an inordinate lust takes central place and dominance, all of life is built upon it. You can see this in life patterns. Here is the question, why do people do what they do? Most of the time, the answer is= inordinate lust.
 - What do they spend their time doing?
 - What are their concerns and cares?
 - When do they become depressed or angry or anxious?
- Extended Quote worth your time!
 - But even among these also there is oftentimes that inordinate love unto present things, that esteem and valuation of them, that concernment in them, as are not consistent with their being **spiritually minded**. With some *their relations*, with some *their enjoyments*, with most *both in conjunction*, are an idol which they set up in their hearts and secretly bow down unto. About these are their hopes and fears exercised, on them is their love, in them is their delight. They are wholly taken up with their own concerns, count all lost that is not spent on them, and all time misspent that is not engaged about them. Yet the things which they do they judge to be good in themselves; their hearts do not condemn them as to the matter of them. The valuation they have of their relations and enjoyments they suppose to be lawful, within the bounds which they have assigned

unto it. Their care about them is, in their own minds, but their duty. It is no easy matter, it requires much spiritual wisdom, to fix right boundaries unto our affections and their actings about earthly things. But let men plead and pretend what they please, I shall offer one rule in this case, which will not fail; and this is, that when men are so confident in the good state and measure of their affections and their actings towards earthly things as that they will oppose their engagements into them unto known duties of religion, piety, and charity, they are gone into a sinful excess. Is there a state of the poor that requires their liberality and bounty?—you must excuse them, they have *families to provide for*; when what is expected from them signifies nothing at all as unto a due provision for their families, nor is what would lessen their inheritances or portions one penny in the issue. Are they called to an attendance on seasons of religious duties?—*they are so full of business* that it is impossible for them to have leisure for any such occasions. So by all ways declaring that they are under the power of a prevalent, predominant affection unto earthly things. This fills all places with lifeless, sapless, useless professors, who approve themselves in their condition, whilst it is visibly unspiritual and withering. (Owen)

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❖ Let's try a case study:

- **Fact 1:** emotions: Teen age girl is **resentful** toward dad who won't let her have snapchat.
- **Fact 2:** goal oriented behavior: What goal is she trying to meet by having snapchat? She wants to be on the inside of the group. Everyone else has it. If she doesn't she is left out of all the conversation. A pattern forms that confirms this hypothesis. Her every move is guided by seeking acceptance and approval from her friends. If anxiety is present, (a newly revealed emotion) then a future fear is

now part of the picture. The fear is the opposite of the hope—hope of approval=fear of rejection.

- **Fact 3- belief:** What belief must she have that makes sense of all her actions? She must believe that her significance and security comes from be accepted and avoiding any rejection from her peers. This becomes a “guiding fiction.”
 - With this analysis, what is the predominate lust and how is it controlling? Is the desire for meaningful relationships lawful? How would you minister to this teenager?