

‘Real Men Stay Out of the Noose’ Matt. 5:27-30

Series title: What does it mean to live a good life?

I. Beware of the ‘second look.’

A. Ours is a day of unbridled indulgence in sexual passion. It seems to be the uninterrupted theme in all of our entertainment. It’s like you can restrict a lot of things but whatever you do, don’t try to restrict people’s sexual activity.

B. Both the NT and OT have been crystal clear on staying away from _____ immorality, which includes any sexual activity outside of marriage. The word ‘looks’ here means not an accidental or incidental glance, that happens all the time; but it refers to a continuous and intentional gazing, or what we could call the second look. It is looking with the purpose of lusting.

Notice carefully what Jesus is saying here: looking at a woman lustfully does not cause a man to commit adultery in his thoughts. But rather he has already committed adultery in his heart. This lustful looking also applies equally to men and women.

C. Just as in murder, the solution to sexual impurity cannot be just external restraints because the cause is not external. It starts in the heart and mind. The solution must start there.

When Jesus says to cut off the right hand or tear out the right eye, He is not talking about literal mutilation. Cutting off a hand won’t cleanse the heart. Even if a man loses both hands, he can still lust in his heart. What Jesus is saying here, with this hyperbole, is that sin must be radically dealt with. Don’t play with it. Be willing to give up anything if that object is leading you to sin.

II. An escape from reality. Prov. 5:1-6

A. Dennis Rainey, of the Family Life ministry, defines an affair as ‘*an escape from reality*’ or ‘*a search for meaning outside of marriage.*’

B. What does the Bible say to do? Paul tells us in 1 Cor. 6 to ‘flee immorality.’ Don’t toy with it, run! It means ‘back off.’ Cool your jets. Quit having lunch with her. Some might say: ‘ah, what’s the harm?’ Or it’s fun to flirt a little or ‘we’re only talking.’ Most men don’t realize they’re being set up by the enemy. Like every alcoholic I’ve talked with, it started with just one harmless drink. Prov. 6:32,33

III. God will honor those who honor Him. 1 Sam. 2:30

If you give God a chance, in often surprising ways, He can strengthen your marriage and give you more fulfillment and excitement than you thought possible. But please, don’t ever think an affair couldn’t happen to you. _____ always goes before a fall.

I know that struggles in this area are real and people face these things constantly. That is why we need to help each other, encourage each other, and if needed to help them get back on their feet again and not to condemn one another. Too many Christians are so quick to point the finger. God majors on new beginnings, fresh starts. If you’re still alive, it’s not too late.

IV. Practical applications

1. Flee immorality. Paul says to run! And don’t leave your forwarding address! 1 Cor. 6:18
2. Pray. For God’s help, strength, wisdom. If you see someone who tempts you, pray for them.
3. If you have fallen in this area of lust, pray for _____. 1 Jn. 1:9
4. If you’re single, draw a line, ahead of time, saying that you will go this far but no further.
5. Be alert to the areas that cause you problems and stay away from them.
6. Have a daily devotional time and keep seeking to grow in the grace and knowledge of God.
7. If married, actively seek to strengthen your marriage. This simply won’t happen by accident. It takes work and commitment from both partners, but God can honor that commitment.