



**Lust:  
Guard Your Heart,  
Guard Your Mind**

**CICERO CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

1715 Stringtown Pike / Cicero, Indiana 46034 / 317.984.4653

[reachteachserve.org](http://reachteachserve.org)



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sermon notes and this booklet are available online*

# Lust: Guard Your Heart, Guard Your Mind

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Lust. This word brings many images to your mind when you say it, think it, or even hear it uttered from the lips of others. Lust is the silent sin that many believe they can control or they can simply hide it from others but the Bible declares that ultimately Lust will make itself known in your life in subtle ways. Lust is given birth by the second look at the attractive person in the walking down the street. Lust is given birth in the casual smile and the flirting glances given to a friend. Lust is given birth when you share intimate details about the struggles you are having in marriage as you sit with a co-worker over a cup of coffee.

Few Christians today want to wage battle against this great sin because it brings so much pleasure in their heart but ultimately will bring pain to the heart as it destroys your relationships with others: wife, husband, children, friends, and family.

**Matthew 5:28** – But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Jesus reminds us that Lust will come to tempt every person that lives but will you be ready for it when it comes. This booklet is designed to help you guard your heart and mind in order to ultimately guard your life!

**2 Timothy 2:22 (NASB)** – Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

## Warning Signs

We understand that there is temptation around us twenty-four hours a day and sometimes the temptation is so common that we become use to it being present, ultimately desensitizing us to the temptation. If we are not on our guard then soon we gradually give in to the temptation in little ways. Maybe a thought here or there, then a testing of the waters, finally we take the plunge. The same is true when it comes to Lust. If we want to avoid lusting after others and ultimately committing adultery then we need to

be aware of some the signs that lead us down this path of sin. Dennis Rainey gives us several signs to look for in his article, “Emotional Adultery: Unfaithfulness of the Heart.”

- You’ve got a need you feel your mate isn’t meeting—a need for attention, approval, or affection.
- You find it easier to unwind with someone other than your spouse by dissecting the day’s difficulties over lunch, coffee, a ride home...or through E-mail correspondence on the Internet.
- You begin to talk about problems you’re having with your spouse.
- You rationalize the “rightness” of this relationship by saying that surely it must be God’s will to talk openly and honestly with a fellow Christian.
- You look forward to being with this person.
- You wonder what you’d do if you didn’t have this friend to talk with.
- You hide the relationship from your mate.

Be careful my dear friends and guard your heart and mind. What we focus on is what we will fall in love with, what we fall in love with is ultimately what we will become!

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### Questions to Consider

What are you focusing most of your time on through the week?  
Family, Work, Television, Internet, Co-Workers, God

What are others signs of lust that you need to be aware of?

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## Remove the Threat

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I learned many years ago that it is not wrong to run from temptation. Sometimes it is exactly what is needed but what if the temptation is one that you cannot run from. What if the temptation is always there in front of your very eyes and has embedded itself in your hearts? What do you do?

**Romans 6:12-14** – Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

As Christians we must be ready and willing to remove sin from our lives. It is difficult to do but we must be ready to remove the sin, turn our backs on the sin, never to look back again, and ultimately to walk away from the sin moving toward God. You will never conquer sin on your own. You will never conquer temptation by your own strength but God is ready to help and will supply the strength you need.

Dennis Rainey gives us these considerations to help us remove the temptation of lust in our own lives as we continue reading his article “Emotional Adultery: Unfaithfulness of the Heart.”

When you find yourself connecting with another person as a substitute for your spouse or lusting after another person, you’ve started traveling a road that ends too often in adultery and divorce. But how do you protect yourself to keep this from occurring?

- **First, know your boundaries.** Put fences around your heart to protect sacred ground, reserved only for your spouse. Barbara and I are careful to share our deepest feelings, needs, and difficulties only with each other.
- **Second, realize the power of your eyes.** As it has been said, your eyes are the windows to your soul. Pull the shades down if you sense someone is pausing a little too long in front of your windows.

I realize that good eye contact is necessary for effective conversation, but there’s a deep type of look that must be reserved for your spouse. Frankly, I don’t trust myself.

Some women may think I’m insecure because I don’t hold eye contact very long, but I don’t trust my sinful nature. I’ve seen what has happened to others, and I know it could happen to me.

- **Third, extinguish chemical reactions that have already begun.** If a friendship with the opposite sex meets needs that only your mate should be meeting, end it quickly. To stop a chemical reaction, one of the elements must be removed. It may be a painful loss at first, but it isn’t nearly as painful as temptation that has given birth to sin.

Years ago, Ruth Senter wrote an incredibly candid article about her friendship with a Christian man she met in a graduate school class. Her struggle and godly response to this

temptation were graphically etched in a letter that ended the relationship: “Friendship is always going somewhere unless it’s dead,” she wrote. “You and I both know where ours is going. When a relationship threatens the stability of commitments we’ve made to the people we value the most, it can no longer be.”

- **Fourth, beware of isolation in your marriage.** One strategy of the enemy is to isolate you from your spouse, especially by tempting you to keep secrets from your mate. Barbara and I both realize the danger of isolation to our marriage. We work hard at bringing things out into the open and discussing them.
- **Finally, never stop courting your mate.** One of the most liberating thoughts I’ve ever had in my marriage relationship is that I will never stop competing for Barbara’s love. As a result of that commitment, I stay much more creative in how I communicate with her emotionally and sexually.

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### Question to Consider

What ways would you remove the temptation of lust if you experienced it in your own life? Explain.

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## Guard the Heart, Guard the Mind

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It is important for us to remember that simply removing sin from our lives is not the full plan God has in mind for our lives. Let us reflect on this passage from Acts 3:19.

**Acts 3:19** – Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

God reminds us that as we remove sin from our lives we must ultimately choose to repent of that sin. Upon repenting and turning away from our sin, we need to next make the right steps toward God. Why? The reason is that when we remove sin from our lives, we will have a little void in our life where that sin used to be. That void will be filled with something in the future, the only question is: Will our void be filled with things of this world, or with characteristics of God?

**Proverbs 4:23** – Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

The final suggestions that we leave with you in this booklet are found from an article written by Dennis Rainey entitled, "Guarding Against Adultery."

Adultery is often sparked by emotional unfaithfulness. Two people form an emotional connection, and then sparks began to fly. What was first an emotional affair then becomes a physical affair.

Satan is sly. He takes good gifts of God, such as the intimacy and oneness of spirit that can occur through prayer or Bible study, and interjects some quality into them that is not pleasing to God. We have to be on the alert for the initial warning signs of that, especially in Christian circles. There are several precautions you should take.

1. **Be careful about how much you share with a person of the opposite sex.** You should beware of praying with just one member of the opposite sex, because of the intimacy involved in prayer. Never share with someone of the opposite sex a problem that you are having with your spouse. It is totally inappropriate for a man to share with a woman any negative comment about his wife, or for a woman to share with a man any negative comment about her husband.
2. **Memorize Scripture.** If we are going to be able to resist the temptations that will inevitably come, we must have lives built on the foundation of the word of God.

Memorize verses like 2 Timothy 2:22, which says, "Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart." When you are tempted, the Holy Spirit will bring to your mind those verses that you have committed to memory.

3. **Cultivate intimacy with your spouse.** Make your marriage a priority, and make intimacy such a fun reality in your marriage that you are not even tempted to leave. Learn how to please your spouse, and teach him or her how to please you.
4. **Maintain openness in your relationship with your spouse.** Early in our marriage, Barbara and I were leading a Bible study and one night Barbara told me she was beginning to feel a little uncomfortable with one of the men.

“What do you mean?” I said. She said, “Well, I just sense that he is a little too friendly. You know, I feel foolish for sharing this with you. This is so dumb. There is a voice inside me that says, ‘Don’t share it, don’t let him hear that.’”

But I put my arms around Barbara and I said, “I want you to know, sweetheart, that sharing that with me is the most important thing you could have done.” That is the time when temptation needs to be shared. If you wait until it is full-birthed temptation, it will be too difficult to share. You should discuss it while it still feels “silly.”

5. **Control your thought life.** If you entertain a fantasy, you are allowing your own desires to drag you away.

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### Question to Consider

What ways are you guarding your heart and mind? Explain.

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## Scripture to Memorize

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**Proverbs 4:23** – Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

**Acts 3:19** – Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

**2 Timothy 2:22 (NASB)** – Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

**1 Peter 5:8** – Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

**Philippians 4:8** – Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things.

**Romans 12:2** – Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

# Resources

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All Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version (unless otherwise noted). Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved. NASB refers to New American Standard translation of the Bible.

Articles written by Dennis Rainey (*Emotional Adultery: Unfaithfulness of the Heart* and *Guarding Against Adultery* being just two of many) may also be found on the Family Life website, [www.FamilyLife.com](http://www.FamilyLife.com).