

Unbridled Lust

Genesis 39:4-21

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Joseph's career was going very well until sex came, even though he was not looking for it. When everything is going well in your life, sex will come. How we deal with the powerful force of sex will either make you or break you. We can learn from the 3 key characters (Potiphar's wife, Joseph and God) in the text (Genesis 39:4-21) on lust.

Lust:

1. How to understand it (Potiphar's wife)

Lust is a good desire that is out of order. Potiphar's wife had looked at Joseph repeatedly and contemplated his beauty (Gen. 39:7). She craved and weighed in on her lust for Joseph; she would do anything to get him. This kind of lust is not sexual desire. Sexual desire is not condemned in the Bible.

How does sexual desire become lust?

#1 Lust is *desire out of control* – it is wanting something even though you are well aware of the consequences that will follow.

#2 Lust is *desiring pleasure without a commitment* – sex is designed only between one man and woman in a complete, exclusive and permanent commitment called marriage. The God who invented sex intended it to be a sign of unity between two people covenanted to one another. *Sex without being married is like trying to taste and eat food, and then vomiting it out.* – C.S. Lewis. It is unnatural to want to have sex without commitment. This goes against the natural order of how God meant things to be.

#3 Lust is desiring pleasure *without a person* – Lust is the opposite of love. In love, it is the person that you want, with or without sex. The person is non-negotiable. In lust, you just want pleasure and the person is just a necessary commodity to get it. Pleasure is non-negotiable. Lust is the end in itself.

2. How to handle lust (Joseph)

2 Things:

1) He controls his actions

Joseph took action and not just refused to be with (sleep) Potiphar's wife, but also to not be around her. He stayed away from temptation.

2. He cultivated his heart

Gen. 39:9 - Joseph's motivation behind not wanting to sin is because he did not want to sin against God. He saw God as far more beautiful and honourable than the temptation of sinning. You can never turn away from temptation unless you see your God as far more beautiful. The power to control your action against temptation comes from ravishing your soul with the beauty of the gospel and Jesus, and being in awe of it.

3. How to heal lust (God)

Gen. 39:21 - Joseph honouring God meant that he would be in trouble - he was sent to prison by Potiphar. Despite being wronged for doing something right before God, the Lord was with him and His steadfast love and favour upon him. Joseph was experiencing the beauty of God in his life.

While we usually understand to stop sinning to avoid being condemned, Jesus says the opposite: you are no longer condemned, therefore sin no more (John 8:11). The condemnation that was supposed to fall on the adulterous woman, fell on Jesus so that she could be without condemnation. This is displayed fully on the cross: Jesus took upon Himself our sins and condemnation that we deserve, so that we could be set free and be condemned no more. Ravish your heart in the gospel and find healing and salvation in the beauty of Christ!