

On Lust

*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
Matthew 5:8*

What we fix our eyes on today is quietly deciding what (or whom) we'll be able to see tomorrow. Lust, then, is not merely a private itch or a passing impulse, but a way of seeing that trains the soul to prefer impressions over persons and sensation over communion. Left unchecked, it'll blunt our sight of God and our neighbor at the same time.

Covenant Eyes

Presently, many men, young and old, live with a low, constant state of sensual lust. We've normalized this corrosion in a secular age. Boys learn early to click past an "I'm over 18" gate and binge explicit, deforming content; men swap stories about body counts and treat conquest as achievement. The result is predictable: the gaze learns to see women not as precious to honor, but as some instrument for self-relief. It's common, but it isn't benign.

*but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
Matthew 5:28*

The entertainment industry catechizes the eye. Feeds are engineered to monetize arousal as algorithms amplify what keeps you staring, and sexualized self-display yields the highest dwell times and ad revenue. Supply follows your clicks. In economic terms, you're the market and your demand is a twisted, disfigured form of love. When you subscribe, tip, linger, or "engage", you're not just a neutral spectator: you're a patron of commodification, financing an industry that trains you to treat persons as products and teaches them to perform as products. This is complicity, not curiosity.

Moreso, this isn't only about explicit sites and apps. Truth be told, it may already be waiting for you on your social media page because the same feeds that deliver "news" can also slip soft-core temptation to our hearts as we habitually scroll through pages of half-naked bodies.

Yes, sexual desire is engraved into our nature. But biblically, sex has three goods held together inside the sacrament of matrimony: reproduction, intimacy, and pleasure. We

see that God commands Abraham to multiply, insofar as illustrating sexual intercourse as an event participating in the gift of life. He joins man and woman in a one-flesh covenant, so sex becomes a seal and deepening of lifelong fidelity. And He delights to gladden spouses with embodied joy, so pleasure is not a guilty add-on but a covenantal good.

But doesn't Scripture show that God calls bodies "very good" (Genesis 1:31; 1 Corinthians 6:19)? Indeed, we are beautiful creatures made in the image of God, so a reverent appreciation of one another's bodies matters. Lust, then, is the vandalism of that goodness.

The social cost is real: lust breaks trust. When men habitually treat women as objects for their own pleasure, it raises the question, "Why should women trust men?" Suspicion becomes survival. Sin metastasizes in the other direction equally: for the love of money and approval, some learn to monetize this desire by leveraging allure, gaming algorithms, performing to capture attention. Meanwhile many men, burned by betrayal or numbed by pornography, grow cynical about marriage, delaying or refusing covenant marriage altogether. The cycle tightens: male lust reduces women to experiences; female cynicism and monetization answer exploitation with exploitation; men withdraw from covenant, fatherhood, and responsibility; families fracture; communities and the church absorb the damage; and children inherit instability as legacy. None of this excuses anyone. Each person is accountable before God.

A woman is not responsible for a man's sin nor a man responsible for a woman's sin, yet, all Christians are invited to modesty as solidarity, helping one another toward holiness. So yes, there is a biblical way to dress and act around one another; not causing each other to stumble but edifying towards the likeness of Christ.

If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that person so as not to associate with him, so that he will be put to shame.

2 Thessalonians 3:14

Sin should lead to consequence and shame that elicits repentance. We're forbidden to the condemning posture that usurps God's throne through judgement (Matthew 7:1-5). That warning targets a spirit that exalts the self, assigns final verdicts, and ignores one's own sins. Because if we ever gain the ego to say that we could judge someone for their own sins, we might as well be God. Yet the same Scripture authorizes a restorative sting—a measured, communal disapproval meant to awaken a brother or sister to repentance. The final aim is not to damn but to restore.

Brothers and sisters, even if a person is caught in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual are to restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you are not tempted as well.

Galatians 6:1

The Lord gives a process for this: begin privately, then—only if hardness persists—bring witnesses, and finally the church (Matthew 18:15-17). Public rebuke is perfectly necessary (1 Timothy 5:20). Let us not think that we need to keep quiet and let sin run past our eyes because Jesus told the crowd that only *non-sinners* were allowed to cast stones at the adulterous woman. Throughout the Old Testament, the grievous weight of sin is everywhere made manifest, for its wages are shown to be severe—even unto death—according to the righteous judgments of God; indeed, such punishments were not merely permitted, but expressly commanded under the Law delivered through Moses. The reverence for God should remain the same, but we should inflict punishment to the degree in which the sinner can rewire themselves away from their sin. Even then, the posture is surgical, not sadistic, as we should restore each person with a *spirit of gentleness*. Let us remember that we were never licensed to humiliate.

Lust for Life

When boys say they struggle with lust, it most commonly touches on their addiction to pornography or their relationship with their girlfriend being premature, but lust isn't always limited to such. You may be more lustful than you think. The "lust of life" divulged by John calls the over-desire for this present age's security, status, and ease (1 John 2:16). It's not hedonism but settling to choose comfort and career over costly fidelity.

Note: I quote secular authors and philosophers in order to give voice to the forms of disordered desire as they manifest in the world. These witnesses are not invoked as guides, but as confessions, whose clarity only strengthens the theological claim that such desires, when left unchecked, turn the soul inward upon itself.

Applause

The lust for praise is the hunger to be seen as good rather than to be good. It turns virtue into performance and neighbors into an audience. Jesus names the dynamic with unnerving precision: acts of piety "to be seen by others" already carry their entire reward, but the pattern is not confined to religious life. In secular registers it appears as philanthropic theater, corporate "purpose" campaigns engineered for brand lift, or the personal ritual of posting beneficence so that goodness is notarized by attention.

*Why do you take pleasure in being praised by men whom you yourself cannot praise?
Seneca and Marcus Aurelius*

Aurelius called fame “a clacking of tongues,” no more substantial than wind. Closer to our moment, the “reward loop” plays public affirmation and delivers a quick dopamine dividend that soon requires a stronger dose. Metrics ([views](#), [mentions](#), [applause breaks](#)) replace the substance they were meant to celebrate. So our ‘charitable’ volunteer hour begins to feel thin if it isn’t noticed.

Insofar as vainglory ([cf. On Egotism](#)), men are found observing that even something as ultimate as martyrdom, if sought for reputation, becomes theater rather than testimony. The spiritual writers add only this: when appearance displaces reality, the good that might have deepened the soul is spent at the surface. The haunting possibility is that praise-rich lives can still be attention-poor before the only audience that matters.

Preeminence

The lust for control doesn’t seek order, but supremacy. Saul’s impatience in offering sacrifice is a paradigm. Rather than waiting for the word from Samuel that he cannot command, he manufactures one he can (1 Samuel 13). Preeminence can feel prudent, even pastoral, but in practice, it mutes candor hence the room shrinks to the size of one’s self leading teams to comply while they don’t commit. Some things are in our control and others not. There is no reason to mistake dominance for care. We are obliged to hallow our leadership thereupon surviving each day to its fullest.

Avarice

The lust for wealth is the conviction that “enough” lives just beyond the next acquisition. We stockpile as if there will ever be a ledger large enough to secure our lives. Our pleonexia fuels the hunger that lustrates anxiety as prudence. It’s not only love of money, but a mistrust of God. In like manner, Judas proudly kept the bag and priced the Lord at thirty silver pieces.

*The bread you keep belongs to the hungry; the cloak in your closet belongs to the
naked*

St. Basil the Great

What we withhold is withheld from someone to whom it would have been mercy. Let’s learn to weigh people by cost and time by yield, until even piety asks for “return on investment.” In the end, treasures tether the heart (Matthew 6:21), and the life we meant to secure is spent circling what cannot keep us.

Stimulation

The lust for novelty cannot abide the ordinary, but it needs the constant next hit of new. The Athenians could be written for our feeds: they “spent their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new” (Acts 17:21). Doomscroll, trailer-drop, itinerary—we feed an economy of perpetual elsewhere.

All of humanity’s problems stem from man’s inability to sit quietly in a room alone.
Blaise Pascal

As much as we bristle at it, attention must be trained. Without disciplined presence, friendship becomes episodic and vows are felt as boredom. The cure is not ascetic theatrics but ordinary fidelity: to sit still and finish a task without switching. And even in strict practice, remember that self-control is cultivated, not presumed. It’s received through repetition, not seized by a single surge of will. Train the gaze to stay, and desire will learn to abide.

We need to start with the basics. And with discipline, we can add on to improve little by little. *The small steps.*

Curiositas

The lust of knowledge is not the love of truth, but being the *know-it-all*. When knowing detaches from loving, the mind swells while the soul thins. We become informed and untransformed, able to parse doctrines we don’t practice and to diagnose others with ailments we refuse to treat in ourselves.

“not for the sake of charity, but to feed a diseased desire to know.”
St. Augustine of Hippo

When we dysfunction curiosity, we’re never learning, never arriving at the knowledge that yields repentance. We keep everything we know as headknowledge but not practice. Our aim is not more opinions, but a truer love of God. Knowledge serves love, ergo where love is absent, knowledge must kneel.

Aestheticism

The lust for beauty is not the enjoyment of the lovely, however, it’s more of the conscription of beauty to burnish the self. We naturally choose what our eyes enjoy the appearance of and not the concealed truth of things. Our aesthetics without sycophancy

will create the attraction to unimportant matters. Maybe being carried away by church music—delighting in the sound rather than in the truth it carried. Beauty is an amazing gift meant to lift the soul toward God ([cf. On Beauty](#)).

Resolve

What is often called our “lust for life” can also be described as an intense desire to embrace every moment and savor the beauty and complexity of existence, and is therefore assumed to be pleasing to God. This assumption is mistaken. Such desire, however refined or aestheticized, remains fundamentally egocentric: it draws the self toward its own pleasure and enjoyment of the world rather than toward God. In this way, even seemingly noble forms of desire can function as a turning away from God rather than a movement toward Him.

Yet the Bible also names a covetousness that God approves. This is the holy longing that desires God and His promises above all else. Far from being rebuked, such desire is rewarded, and the fullness of the inheritance is given to those whose longing is fixed entirely on Him. Here, desire is not disordered but rightly ordered, and thus becomes the very means by which blessing is received.

*Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew; and he ate and drank, and got up and went on his way. So Esau despised his birthright.
Genesis 25:34*

Jacob sought his brother’s inheritance with an unsettling intensity. Though his methods were flawed and his conduct blameworthy, his desire was fixed upon the birthright—the sign and substance of God’s promise. Esau desired the present world and forfeited the future; Jacob coveted the future and endured loss in the present. Thus Scripture reveals that it is not covetousness itself that is condemned, but covetousness misdirected.

Charity’s Dethronement

*For God has not called us for impurity, but in sanctification. Therefore, the one who rejects this is not rejecting man, but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.
1 Thessalonians 4:7-8*

We know that Christ is the embodiment of love. Everything He does is love, as we see not only what He gives, but how He gives: freely, truthfully, without grasping. In Him, love is not a mood but a mode of being, a steady will of the other’s good, even at cost to

Himself. Therefore, to ask what love is, we need not begin in abstraction, but we may begin by contemplating Christ, for He is love made visible (Colossians 1:15, 1 John 4:8).

From this it follows that love is cruciform. It bears, it waits, it purifies, it refuses the shortcut. Christ's love does not hurry to possess; moreover it lingers to heal. Love, then, is communion: a union that safeguards the person, honors the image of God, and binds desire to truth.

Lust, then, is the complete opposite. Thus lust breaks everything love is: love seeks the good of the other even when it wounds the self; lust seeks the good of one's self even when it wounds the other. Love enlarges freedom, lust tightens the chain; Love says, "become," and labors for the beloved's flourishing, lust says, "perform," and measures the beloved by gratification; Love is Eucharistic, self-offering that makes life, lust is predatory, self-seeking that forms emptiness. And because Christ is the measure of love, lust is finally not only opposite to love, but opposite to Christ. Meaning that the acceptance of lust is a direct refusal of Christ's love. Therefore being the renunciation of such wonderful gifts such as the Cross, His Blood, the Incarnation, sanctifying works, etc.

Bluntly, lust is not simply an indulgence, but an anti-cruciform posture. Christ says, "deny yourself," and we choose to indulge in ourselves. Christ gives Himself for His beloved, and we take the beloved for ourselves. And so, to make peace with lust is to make peace with the rival lord—to enthrone concupiscence where Christ demands the throne, and to treat His sanctifying grace as optional ornament rather than necessary medicine.

Chastity

Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

2 Timothy 2:22

Sin is centrifugal and captivating. Yet is it not known that the love of Christ is greater—greater not merely in degree, but in kind? For sin spreads by taking; Christ heals by giving. Sin is multiplied by concealment as Christ abounds in disclosure.

It is my desire, therefore, that lust be abolished—extirpated at the root—among the entire world: that hearts may be made single, eyes made chaste, and desire returned to its rightful end. And even where failure persists, let there remain no despair, as though mercy were exhausted. For the wounded may still come before a merciful Lord, not to

negotiate with sin, but to confess it; not to plead merit, but to plead His Blood—the Blood that cleanses, the Blood that breaks bondage, the Blood that purchases freedom for love. Let the prayer of the penitent be the prayer of David: a clean heart, a right spirit, truth in the inward parts (Psalm 51).

So would you join the life conformed to Christ? For such conformity is not a moment, but a manner of being: repentance as a habit, prayer as a returning, custody of the eyes as a discipline, and chastity as desire made honest.

Closing

Unfortunately, many statistics show that Christians and non-Christians often mirror each other in behaviors tied to lust—divorce rate, pornographic consumption, and premarital sexual entertainment differ only by a few percentage points. This sobering resemblance exposes not only cultural weakness but our spiritual anemia. The line between the Church and the world blurs when those redeemed by grace live as though grace has no transforming power.

Let us therefore not be paralyzed by shame nor stigmatized by lust, but converted all over. The purpose of conviction is not humiliation, but restoration—to become a people whose purity is not performance but participation in Christ's own life. When believers embody chastity, fidelity, and mercy, the contrast itself becomes evangelism: the broken outside may finally see a difference worth crossing toward. Holiness is not separation for pride's sake, but communion ever so radiant insofar that others would be drawn to its light.

I hope this has provoked you to action, or has, [at least](#), challenged you to change some parts of your life. Let me know what you thought about this blog, whether it was correct or not. Regardless, it's always a joy to hear back from you all. Have a wonderful Valentine's Day to all my single brothers and sisters <3

Hopeful wishes,
In clarity,
Ray

PostScript: I also acknowledge that many readers give up on reading due to the girthy length or complex vocabulary so I did put minimum effort into making this blog easier to read accordingly. Thank you!



Genesis 39:7-19

7 And it came about after these events that his master's wife had her eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Sleep with me." **8** But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, with me here, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house, and he has put me in charge of all that he owns. **9** There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil, and sin against God?" **10** Though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he did not listen to her to lie beside her or be with her. **11** Now it happened one day that he went into the house to do his work, and none of the people of the household was there inside. **12** So she grabbed him by his garment, saying, "Sleep with me!" But he left his garment in her hand and fled, and went outside. **13** When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled outside, **14** she called to the men of her household and said to them, "See, he has brought in a Hebrew to us to make fun of us; he came in to me to sleep with me, and I screamed. **15** When he heard that I raised my voice and screamed, he left his garment beside me and fled and went outside." **16** So she left his garment beside her until his master came home. **17** Then she spoke to him with these words: "The Hebrew slave, whom you brought to us, came in to me to make fun of me; **18** but when I raised my voice and screamed, he left his garment beside me and fled outside."

19 Now when his master heard the words of his wife which she spoke to him, saying, "This is what your slave did to me," his anger burned. **20** So Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined; and he was there in the prison.