

Walking with Jesus Through Sinai:
 Seeking Moral Clarity in an Age of Chaos with the 10 Commandments
 CPC Adult Sunday Studies Spring 2025
 25 - Seventh Commandment, part 2

On the Beautiful Calling and its Enemies of Adultery and Lust

Review - having finished the 6th commandment, we moved last week to the 7th, and focused on marriage and sex. This week we'll expand into adultery, lust, and the beautiful call of chastity (which is more than a negative term!)

Exodus 20:14 - "You shall not commit adultery."

Jesus on Adultery

Matt. 5:27-30 - "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell."

Notice:

1. The Understanding of the Law - applies it deeply to our hearts
 1. We are made for holiness and purity!
2. The Severity of Sin - there is no compromise with sin and anything is better than hell!

More on Lust

From *Glittering Vices*, Ch. 7: LUST - Sexuality Stripped Down

- **Degrading to humans and less bodily:** "Sex is sinful to the degree that, instead of drawing you closer to other human beings in their humanness, it unites bodies but leaves the lives inside them hungrier and more alone than before." (189, quoting Buechner)
- "Lust wants an impersonal 'it,' while proper desire turns us, with delight, to a unique, beloved person. . . . Lust doesn't work when the other person is fully human. That's why exotic dancers always have fake stage names. . . . it wants low lights, a haze of alcohol and lots of lies." (197)

- "The **paradox of pleasure** is that you can't get it by seeking it directly." (201)
- **Clouding effect** - "When lust fills our minds and hearts, spiritual goods go dark. As a result, we pursue bodily pleasures with even greater energy, as if they were the sum total of available happiness. . . . Only those who look at the world with pure eyes can experience its beauty." (210)
- **Resisting God's hard road to flourishing: "Surrender, vulnerability, intimacy and dependence** are the hard road we resist taking at all costs. Insisting on independence and creating a false form of happiness for ourselves signal lust's prideful roots." (GV, 200)
 - How often do we self-medicate against loneliness, shame, and guilt instead of leaning into them, discerning what God could be showing us through them!

Beyond Putting to Death to Putting on Life - from Lust to Chastity

The Positive Call of Chastity

- "Countering lust's alienating tendencies, chastity requires intentionally being **willingly engaged in loving, life-giving community**. . . . The best advice, then, for resisting lust is not to get a good internet filter (although you should do that too) but to build good friendships." (GV, 212)
- GK Chesterton on his journey to understanding the moral truths of Christianity, from *Orthodoxy* - "**In fact, the whole theory of the Church on virginity might be symbolized in the statement that white is a colour: not merely the absence of a colour...**[Christianity makes one] more angry with theft than before, and yet much kinder to thieves than before. There was room for wrath and love to run wild. St. Francis, in praising all good, could be a more shouting optimist than Walt Whitman. St. Jerome, in denouncing all evil, could paint the world blacker than Schopenhauer. Sometimes this pure **gentleness** and this pure **fierceness** met and justified their juncture; the lion lay down with the lamb. But remember that this text is [often] too lightly interpreted, that when the lion lies down with the lamb the lion becomes lamb-like. But that is brutal annexation and imperialism on the part of the lamb. That is simply the lamb absorbing the lion instead of the lion eating the lamb. **The real problem is--Can the lion lie down with the lamb and still retain his royal ferocity?**"

- What would it look like to be fiercely gentle? Zealously forgiving?
Passionately self-controlled?
- Apply this to sexuality and chastity, and we can re-frame what appears to be only negative and see it as positive. “Do not commit adultery” implies all that goes into loving God and neighbor with your body. Thus, God calls us to both a holy appreciation of sex in marriage and a holy consecration of the body at all times—to love sex but hate sexual immorality.

The expulsive power of a new affection - "It is seldom that any of our [bad habits or flaws] disappear by a mere process of natural extinction. At least, it is very seldom that this is done through the instrumentality of reasoning... or by the force of mental determination....The only way to dispossess the heart of an old affection is by the expulsive power of a new one... It is only when admitted into the number of God's children, through faith in Jesus Christ, that the spirit of adoption is poured out on us—it is then that the heart, brought under the mastery of **one great and predominant affection**, is delivered from the tyranny of its former desires, and the only way that deliverance is possible." – Thomas Chalmers

- 1Cor. 6 - *"The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14 And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! 16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh." 17 But he who is joined to the Lord **becomes one spirit with him**. 18 Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, 20 for you were bought with a price. So **glorify God in your body**."*

WLC 138 - "Q. 138. What are the duties required in the seventh commandment?

A. The duties required in the seventh commandment are, chastity in body, mind, affections, words, and behavior; and the preservation of it in ourselves and others; watchfulness over the eyes and all the senses; temperance, keeping of chaste company, modesty in apparel; marriage by those that have not the gift of continency, conjugal love, and cohabitation; diligent labor in all our callings; shunning all occasions of uncleanness, and resisting temptations thereunto."

- How does "diligent labor in all our callings" descend from the 7th comm.?

- Ps. 119.36-7 - *"Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain! 37 Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways."*
- "Shunning all occasions of uncleanness" - what do we need to say 'no' to in our daily lives?

On Spiritual Growth and Self-Control

An example of many of these principles: *"The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. 8 Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. 9 Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. 10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace"* (1Peter 4.7-10)

- In a secular perspective, self-control could simply be masked as never being excited, passionate, or angry about anything. This, too, falls far short of biblical self-control. **Self-control is a corollary to zealous faith in expectation of the coming reign of Christ;** it should be expressed in a Christian's life through clear and **undistracted focus on Jesus and our eternal home.** Notice 1Peter 4.7, 1Cor. 9.25, and 2Peter 1.6 - they all relate to the eternal journey.
 - Why is "self-controlled" and "sober-minded" crucial to all this?
 - Notice 2Tim 1.7 - *"God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control."*

"It is God who works in us to will and to act. Our own particular areas of vulnerability must be made the subject of earnest, beseeching prayer for God's grace to work in our will. At the same time we must realize that **the will is strengthened by obedience. The more we say no to sinful desires, the more we will be able to say no.** But to experience this, we must persevere through many failures. A large part of learning self-control is breaking bad habits and replacing them with good ones. And this process always involves a certain amount of **failure**. Finally, as Kehl points out, 'True spiritual self-discipline holds believers in bounds but never in bonds; its effect is to enlarge, expand, and liberate.' James describes the Word of God as 'the perfect law that gives freedom' (Ja. 1.25). As we grow in the grace of self-control, we will experience the liberation of those who, under the guidance and grace of the Holy Spirit, are freed from the shackles of self-indulgence and are brought into the freedom of true spiritual discipline" - Bridges, *Practice of Godliness*, 144-5