

DEADLY SE7EN

Week 4: Lust

Focus Scripture

Proverbs 5:15-20; Proverbs 6:24-35

Main Point

Only by recognizing our weaknesses and depending on the tools God gives us can we resist lust.

Introduction

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

As a kid, what was most influential in your understanding of the “birds and the bees”? How influential were your parents and the church in these early conversations?

Martin Luther said of sexual temptation, “We can’t do anything about the birds flying over our head, but we can prevent them building a nest in our hair.” What do you understand Luther’s metaphor to mean? How does this relate to our world today?

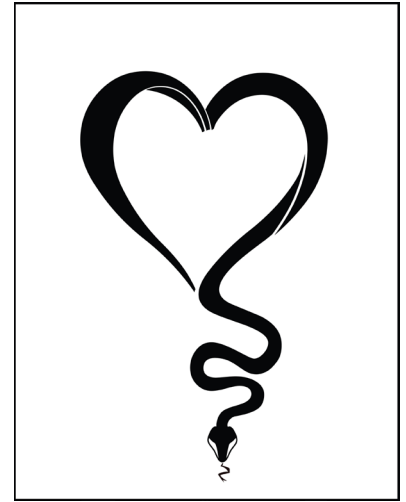
How do you define lust? How have people’s opinions of lust changed throughout the years, both individually and as a society?

The Greek word translated “lust” refers to a strong desire or an intense longing. The word was used only a few times in the New Testament to describe a positive longing. Most of the time, the word denoted a negative desire. Paul used the word in this way when he reminded Titus to avoid worldly desires (Titus 2:12). John used this word to describe things opposed to God such as “lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes” (1 John 2:16). The word lust can also be translated as “cravings of the flesh” or “desire for something forbidden.” Today we will discuss two proverbs from Solomon that warn against lust and encourage sexual purity. Then we will look at an illustration from the Old Testament and a brief teaching from Jesus.

Understanding

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

As Solomon led Israel to greatness as a kingdom, he developed quite a reputation for himself in terms of marriage. Along with guiding God’s people to construct the ornate temple in Jerusalem, he had 700 wives and 300 concubines (1 Kings 11:3). In Proverbs, however, he didn’t encourage his son to follow his example when it came to marriage relationships. He instructed his son to remain devoted to one woman alone—the wife of his youth.



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Have a volunteer read Proverbs 5:15-20.

What is the message of this passage about sexual purity?

Why was the analogy of drawing water from your own well powerful in that society? What would be a comparable metaphor for sexual purity today?

The main idea in verses 15-20 is clear, but the way it is expressed comes from a culture that is foreign to most of us. We usually take for granted a ready and healthy source of water, but water was far more precious to the people who first read the Book of Proverbs. People in Bible times often provided water for their families by digging wells or devising cisterns to catch and hold rain water. Ideally, each house had its own cistern (2 Kings 18:31). Therefore, the metaphor of drinking water from one's own cistern or well was especially appropriate for a husband's satisfying his sexual thirst with his own spouse.

What distractions can undermine finding fulfillment in our spouses?

For those of us who are single, what lessons can we take away from this proverb?

What boundaries has God set for His children in regards to sexual purity?

How do the boundaries God has set for sexual purity protect you?

Have a volunteer read Proverbs 6:24-35.

What specific warnings did Solomon give concerning adulterous affairs in marriage?

What are some dangerous consequences Solomon pointed out in these verses?

What are contributing factors to the common occurrence of adultery in marriages?

How can we be aware of the cost and become proactive in protecting our marriages from being torn apart by lust and the actions that follow?

Again, what is the takeaway from this proverb for those of us who are single?

Application

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What are some ways you can combat lust? Where do you turn?

How is Christ our only hope in regard to lust and sexual purity?

What role does personal accountability play when it comes to sexual purity?

How can we as a group encourage one another to live lives of purity and self-control?

Pray

Close your time in prayer by asking God to help you be vigilant and aware of the temptation and lusts of the world. Pray that God would keep your group far from lust and that you would rely on the power of the Spirit to fight against lust. Pray for the people in your church and in your community who are struggling with lust—that they would find freedom in Christ.