

Phil 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Use this rule if there is something good in a thing as God sees it, then meditate on it and let this thing enter your mind and life. But if there is no spiritual, eternal value in a thing (i.e. it is vain or a vanity), then why will you let it enter into your heart? Why will you let it pollute you?

Questions for discussion

1. What are common things for young people to think are bad?
2. Give examples of good things in which God is content for you to think on.
3. If you see a couple having sex like in a movie, TV or a book, is it a sin? If you see people sinning, will it be sin for you?
4. If you see a person kill another person, is it acceptable according to the rule of Philippians 4:8?
5. Explain the spiritual value of popular fashion.
6. Is it necessary that you extremely want something before it is causing spiritual harm to you? With just seeing the same sin time and again, isn't it enough to hurt you? Sear your conscience?
7. What is the danger of constantly putting bad things in front of your eyes?

Keeping your Soul The Visual Door to the Mind

By David Cox © 2012



Sunday School Series 3, Number 2

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Exo. 20:17 *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.*

Many people despise Christian norms, thinking that it is an extremism to restrict the life of "*good things that we all accept.*" In the Ten Commandments, God commands us not to covet things that are ours, be it a woman, a residence, or a possession that another person has. There is a spiritual principle involved in this, and that is that we must work hard, and with the things we achieve through hard honest work, we must conform or be content.

Job 31:1 *I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?*

Job had what the world saw as "bad luck" in the extreme. His friends came to comfort him, but in reality, they wanted to heap on him even more. They accused him that his "bad luck" was because of something he had done. But Job was a man "*a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?*" (**Job 1:8**) in the eyes of God. In **Job 31:1**, Job defended his life because he had made a rule within himself **not to covet what was not his.**

Matt 5:28 *But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

For Jesus, it is sin in coveting a woman, without actually touching her, or even speaking it, just by thinking it in your mind.

Prov. 6:24 *To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. 25 Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. 27 Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? 28 *Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?**

God warns us of the woman who misleads a Christian. She makes herself externally beautiful, for him to covet her. Satan is very astute in always presenting us "something better", "something more desirable than we already have".

Gen 3:1 *Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made...4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

Satan tempted Eve with her sight, to "see." Seeing "in your mind" is a way of saying to conceive of something, to desire something visually. We are very impressionable creatures, and when we see something, we are impressed although many do not notice how much or how strong is this power of an example, to see something. This is why Satan tempts us like Eve to desire bad things, or things by passing them in front of us by somebody bragging or showing off that thing, Satan wanting for us to fall into "greed."

2Pet 2:7 *And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: 8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) 9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:*

Lot was a man which God himself called "righteous." But he says he was overwhelmed by the nefarious conduct of the

wicked. Being "overwhelmed" is gradually lowering one's resistance by being exposed to something repeatedly over time. "Unlawful deeds" means without self-control in regard to sin. Paul mentions in **1Ti 4:2** the apostates that "*having their conscience seared with a hot iron.*" The idea is that by being burned time after time, eventually you do not feel anything. Your conscience is dead to stimulus. By seeing much sin, your conscience no longer reacts to the Holy Spirit telling you that something is wrong.

Jas 1:14 *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*

Lust is the desire, or to desire strongly. We want, or want to experience something that we "see" or visualize, and this causes us to sin. Desire (to personally enjoy something) is the stumbling block through which we fall into sin.

Prov. 4:20 *My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. 21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. 22 For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. 23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*

God instructs us not to take our eyes off of focusing on the Word of God. What you think, what you want, what is in your heart, these are the things that define what you really are. Take care of your mind, your "spiritual" eyesight, what you look at, and what you allow to enter your life visually, mentally. Above all, take care of your heart or your desire, what you always put in your life, and in front of your eyes.

Questions for discussion ---ANSWERS---

1. What are common things for young people to think are bad?

Today people see more things that are sin being acted out on visual products like cell phones, telephones and in movie theaters, than ever before in the history of the world. All of this sin, real or acted out, impresses us by lowering our spiritual defenses. After having the conscience seared, we are more likely to do these things ourselves.

2. Give examples of good things in which God is content for you to think on.

The Psalms are praises that focus on God's good deeds to his people. In the NT, the church services are supposed to "edify" those present, and this is a good example also. Helping others through good works is a way to think on good things and make them come to pass.

3. If you see a couple having sex like in a movie, TV or a book, is it a sin? If you see people sinning, will it be sin for you?

The suggestion (even though you don't actually see two people naked) has the same effect. It makes you think about sinful conduct. If done well by those who created it, you will desire to experience it somehow yourself, even if only in your fantasies and dreams.

4. If you see a person kill another person, is it acceptable according to the rule of Philippians 4:8?

No. The violence and killing of people, which is repeated greatly in Hollywood productions, is an evil that we allow ourselves to constantly meditate on by simply seeing it over and over in an endless variety of the same thing. It is spiritually harmful. Take a small child, and watch him see violence and killing, and he role plays that in his life actually. Eventually, that child will actually do those kinds of things.

Take the military. How do they train their soldiers to kill other people without hesitating? If you hesitate, you may be dead quickly. They train them by making them role play time and time again in practice killing others. Eventually, the military wants these soldiers to make killing to become second nature. This is what Satan does with us as far as role playing sin.

5. Explain the spiritual value of popular fashion.

Popular fashions, such as what girls like so much, have no eternal value. They are vain and hollow spiritually. When you look at glamour, at fashion, at the conduct and practices of the "rich and famous" or Hollywood, you see nothing in their covetous lives that has good eternal value. That point should make Christians shy away from these things. It is pure vanity to be overly worried about your physical appearance. Comb you hair and brush your teeth, but leave excessive grooming alone.

6. Is it necessary that you extremely want something before it is causing spiritual harm to you? With just seeing the same sin time and again, isn't it enough to hurt you? Sear your conscience?

The problem here is people see things that "tickle their fancy" and eventually they end up seeing these things over and over and then make a god, an idol, out of them. Likewise, seeing sinful conduct over and over again drags your spirituality down, or destroys it completely.

7. What is the danger of constantly putting bad things in front of your eyes?

What you watch you will become. We are very impressionable. Although you insist that you will not become like that, you will have your spiritual sensitivity dulled, and eventually, you will accept people who do those sins, and there is a good possibility that you yourself will do those sins. Hollywood wants to put a token homosexual or lesbian in almost every show. By constantly seeing these people and their sinful lifestyle, you eventually will accept them, and then their conduct.