

Sexual Integrity for Men - Fall 2009 – class notes

Brian Gardner - [www.briangardner.org](http://www.briangardner.org) - brian@briangardner.org

### **Class Goals**

- To understand the pathology of sexual sin in our lives
- To learn the Biblical perspective on sexual sin and healthy sexuality
- To apply the power of the gospel of God's grace to our lives
- To deal with temptation and failure under grace
- To practice accountability and confession with one another
- To develop a growing conviction and commitment to being obedient to the love of Christ
- To build a vision for walking with God in integrity and building a church of men who can move against the cultural tide of sexual selfishness
- To move us toward developing relationships that meet our need for intimacy and experience the fulfillment of becoming real men

### **Course Structure**

Online course content is available at [www.briangardner.org](http://www.briangardner.org)

- Syllabus
- Class Notes
- Homework
- Discussion Groups

### **Why did you come tonight?**

- Are you concerned with the place that pornography, sex with yourself, lust, and objectification of women is taking in your life?
- Have you tried to stop looking at images and videos but couldn't, even though you were ashamed of it afterward?
- Are you tired of lying to your friends, your wife, and your brothers?

## **What is the outcome?**

There are different levels of involvement...but the effect is the same for all of us

- we mar our relationship with God
- which then trickles down to blighting our relationship with others
- and you have a lot to lose

This is going to take commitment. Sexual sin is one of the most enslaving of all sins

- the world
- the flesh
- the devil

## **Things in your favor**

- The power of the gospel - "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." (Romans 1:16)
- The indwelling Holy Spirit - "that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being," (Ephesians 3:16)
- God's truth, which will set you free - "How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word." (Psalm 119:9)
- Brothers at your side in the fight - "So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart." (2 Timothy 2:22)

## **What is sexual addiction?**

The National Council on Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity has defined sexual addiction as "engaging in persistent and escalating patterns of sexual behavior acted out despite increasing negative consequences to self and others."

"everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin." (John 8:34) sin "easily entangles us." (Heb. 12:1)

"when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey— whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness." (Romans 6:16)

"Addiction is bondage to the rule of a substance, activity, or state of mind, which then becomes the center of life, defending itself from the truth so that even bad consequences don't bring repentance, and leading from further estrangement from God."

Ed Welch, Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave

## **Sexual sin is highly addictive**

- accessibility, anonymity, affordability – the triple-A threat of Internet pornography
- our sexuality is deeply affected by our fallen nature. Romans 1 makes it clear that our rebellion against God is primarily manifested by sexual immorality
- "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body." (1 Corinthians 6:18)

## **New Testament terms for sexual sin**

- πορνεία (porneia) - translated as fornication, or immorality
- ακαθαρσία (akatharsia) - which means "impurity" or "uncleanness"

Assignment: Read - Sexual Sin and the Bible handout

## **What is sexual integrity?**

- It means that you live in accordance with the revealed truth of God
- It means you live what you believe, even when it costs you personally
- It means you live what you say, that is, you tell the truth about yourself to God and to others

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification."

(1 Thessalonians 4:3-7)

In the Bible integrity is contrasted with crookedness, "The man of integrity walks securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out." (Proverbs 10:9)

We are all too well aware of the crooked path: hiding, lying, avoiding

Take heart! The same God who called you into salvation, wants to set you free, not condemn you.

### **So what's the big deal?**

- we don't see this as a serious problem
- "sin is crouching at the door, and its desire is for you."
- sin breaks our fellowship with God (Isa. 59:1-2; 1 John 1:6)
- the effects on family and other relationships
- sexual sin will reduce or altogether hamper your effectiveness in ministry

### **Is there hope for me?**

"He guides me in the paths of [His] righteousness for His names sake"  
(Psalm 23:3)

"your rod and your staff, they comfort me." (Psalm 23:4)

"The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful— for he cannot deny himself." (2 Timothy 2:11-13)

"While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled." (John 17:12)

### **So where do we start?**

- An honest assessment of where you are at
- A commitment to living in the light
- A willingness to suffer while trusting God for our needs
- A commitment to fight isolation by engaging meaningfully with others in relationship
- A commitment to spend daily time in the Word and prayer, waging war against the devil

Phil 1:6 – sanctification is a direction, repentance a lifestyle

### **Homework**

Sexual Sin and the Bible handout

Sexual Addiction Self-Evaluation