



PURIFYING THE HEART OF SEXUAL IDOLATRY

Dr. John D. Street

Important Questions

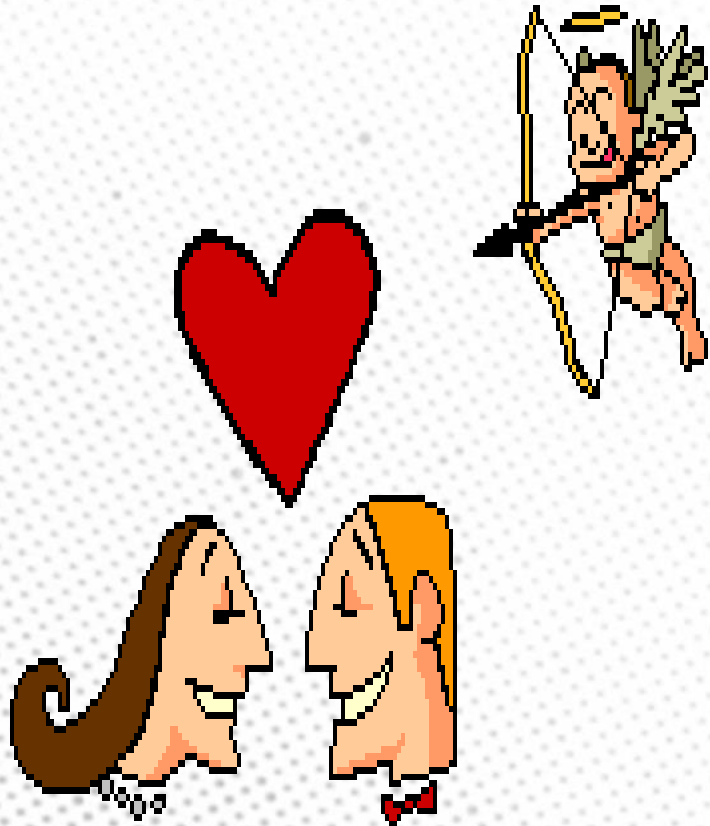
- Is thinking about sex sinful?
- Is thinking about sinful sex sinful?
- **Is it possible for me to appreciate the beauty of the female form without committing sin?**



Important Questions

- When does a thought become sinful?
- Are some sexual thoughts innately sinful?
- If it is possible to have holy thoughts about sex, when do these thoughts become unholy?

Important Questions



In a world seething with the steam of sexual overtones, how can a person who loves the Lord ensure purity of the inner man as well as the outer man?

Important Texts

- “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” (Matthew 22:37)
- “Blessed are the pure in heart.” (Matthew 5:8)
- “Whatever is pure...let your mind dwell on these things.” (Philippians 4:8)
- Paul instructs Timothy, to view “the younger women as sisters, in all purity.” (1 Timothy 5:2)

Seven Principles of Purity

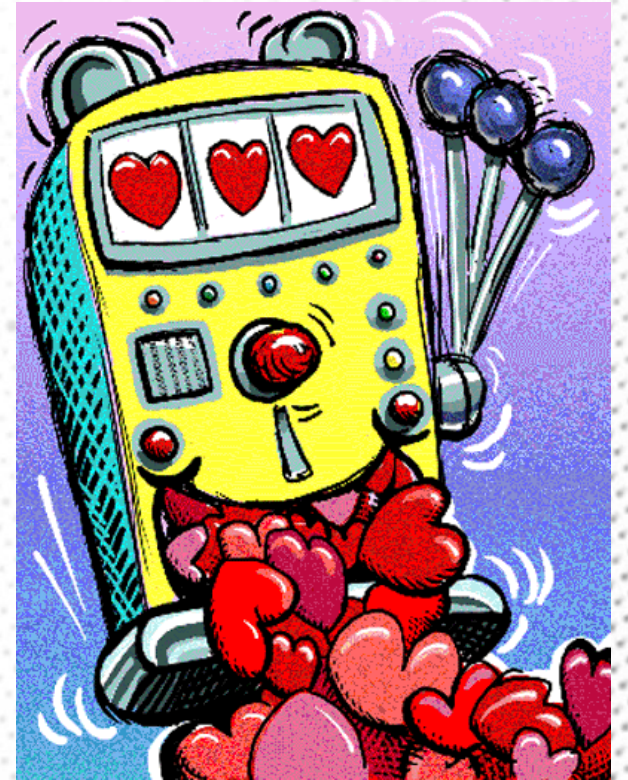
1. Your mental conception of the idea of sex is not impure or sinful!

- The Bible is full of examples of sexual sin as improper examples.
- Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke on several occasions concerning sex and its associated sins.
- To think of sex, or even sexual sin, in the mind is not wrong.

Seven Principles of Purity

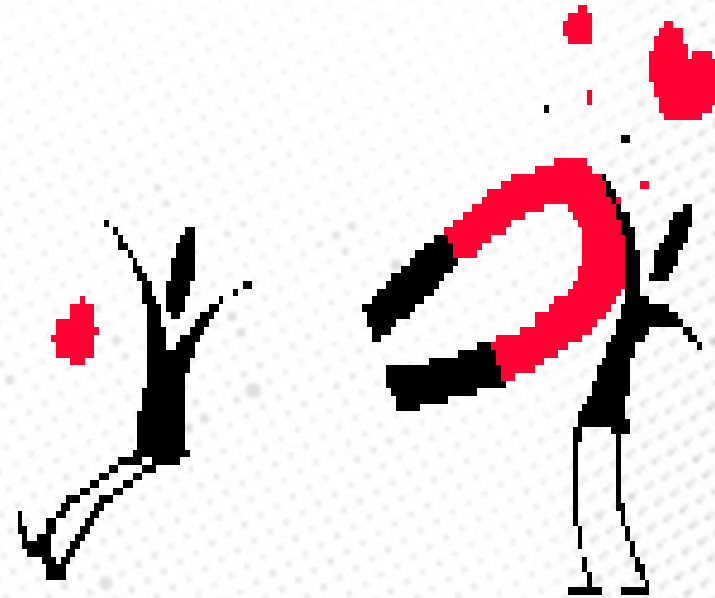
2. Sexual thoughts become impure the moment self-gratification becomes your agenda.

- “Desire” or “lust” in the Bible has carried a *dynamic* and *reflexive* sense.
- There is an appreciation of beauty that is not sinful (reflexive).



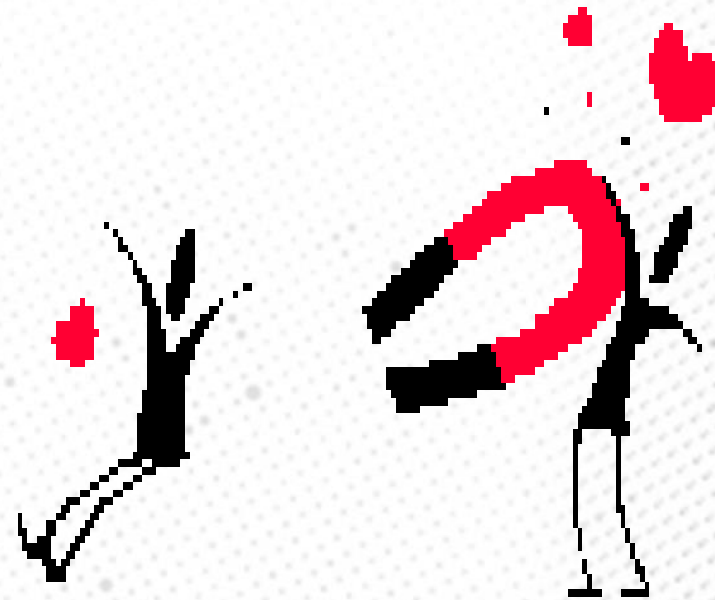
Self-gratifying Desire

- This is the more *dynamic* or active form that captivates the depraved heart with covetousness.
- Exodus 20:17
- Proverbs 6:25



Self-gratifying Desire

- In Galatians 5:16 this desire (ἐπιθυμία) seeks gratification.
- In Ephesians 4:22 Paul equates this tendency with the flesh and passions.



Seven Principles of Purity

3. Sexual lust has an enslaving dynamic that is irresistible to the depraved heart.

- Slavery, not addiction, is a biblical way to think about this problem.
- It is a form of paying homage to a master (e.g. worship).
- Two types of slavery in biblical times: *home-born slaves* and *forced laborers*.
- Like the home-born slave, the unbeliever is perfectly at home with his or her sexual obsessions.

The Unwilling Slave

- The unwilling slave is the true believer who has become a prisoner of war.
- You have been tricked into a treaty of peace (discontinuing resistance) with the powerful enemy of sensuality.
- As a slave you have been captured and you are under the tyrannical rule of this principle of sexual bondage.

Seven Principles of Purity

4. The Christian is still susceptible to this enslaving dynamic.

- You are enslaved when you indulge every desire or twinge of sexual sensation and habitually seek some form of mental or physical satisfaction.
- It is this residue of feelings from your previous state as an unbeliever that is naturally responsive to the call of sensual gratification.
- The degree that you surrender to these old desires is the degree that you are allowing the flesh to have dominion.

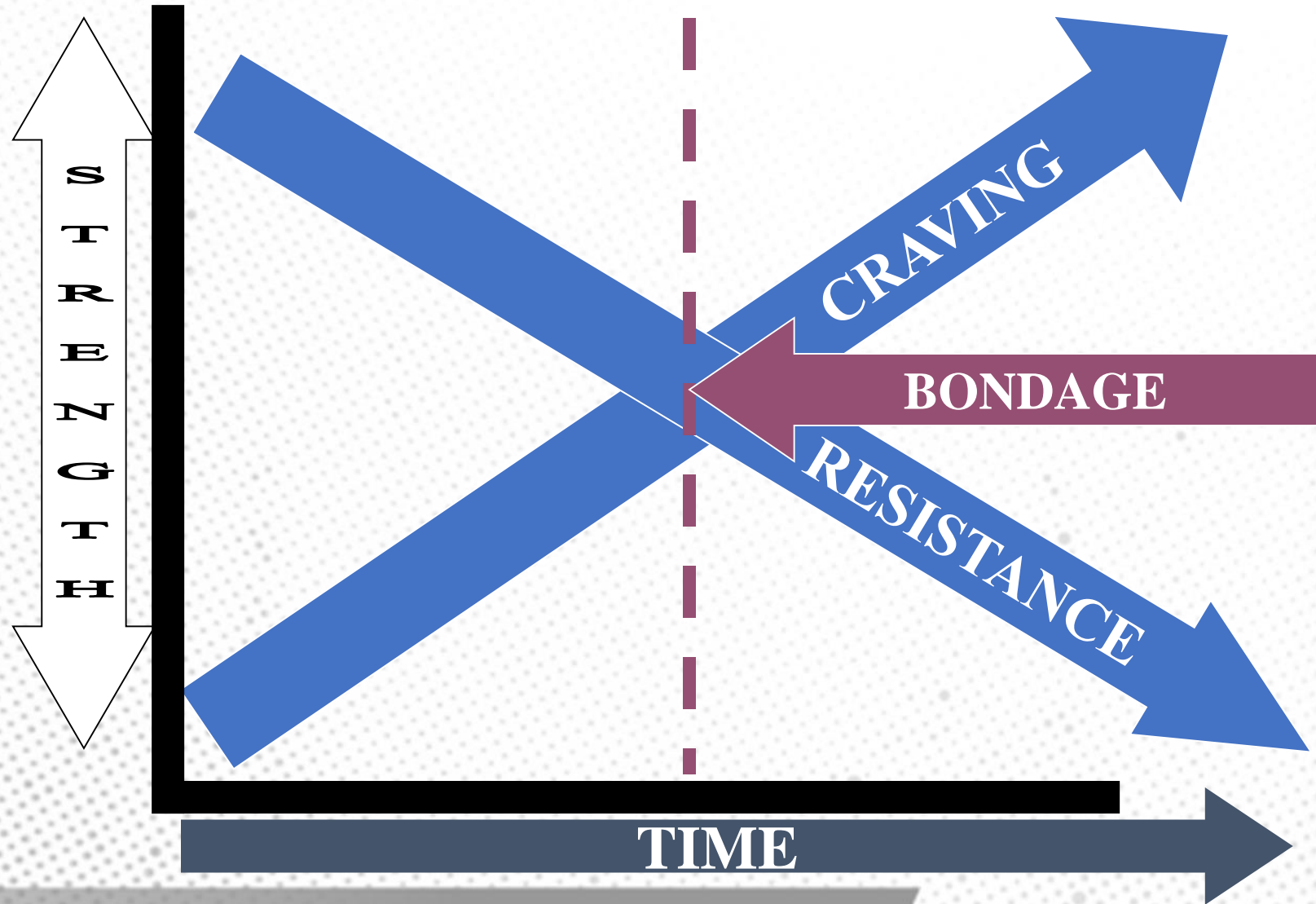
Signs of Sexual Slavery

1. Deceit & excuses
2. Marriage problems
3. Irresponsibility
4. Attitudinal extremes
5. Unusual sex expectations
6. Pornographic indulgences
7. Attacking people close to them
8. Secretive behavior
9. Persistent defensiveness
10. Less time with Christians

The Enslaving Dynamic

- Being sexually tempted to sin is not the same thing as being enslaved to sex.
- Sensual desires become functional gods when you have given up the fight and they assume operative, but not absolute, rule over the inner man.
- Your will becomes increasingly weakened, having begun with the thrill of simple surrender, but now finding sex's appeal demanding and irresistible.

The Point of Sexual Bondage



Seven Principles of Purity

5. When your sexual cravings habitually exceed your resistance, then you are enslaved.

- This is when you become a prisoner of war to your own appetites.
- Eventually you have a deep craving for one particular sexual experience.
- It takes an ever-increasing quantity and quality of ecstasy to achieve real satisfaction.
- As frequency increases, so does the despair.

Seven Principles of Purity

6. Your master, sexual desire, will lie to you.

- It will tell you that it is irresistible, uncontrollable and to deny satisfaction will cause you immeasurable suffering and pain.
- Proverbs 5:15-23



Seven Principles of Purity

7. Purifying your heart involves repenting of its sexual covetousness and all of its associated rationalizations.

- You were not created as a distinctive gender for personal gratification.
- 1 Corinthians 7:3
- Ephesians 5:3
- Matthew 5:28
- There seem to be specific rationalizations of the heart that comprise the excuses for sexual sin.



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