

The Christian Man

Lust: The Right Way to Deal with this Powerful Drive

Rough Transcript

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All right. Good morning guys. Hey, let's do some shout outs as we get started. The first shout out, I want to tell you is one of our newer area directors, John Camerer. Now I know it says Camerer, but he pronounces it "Cam-er". John Camerer is in Renton, Washington, which is a great place to have an area director. The fight is intense for the gospel out there, and he's a great guy. He's actually been leading a different ministry for many years and really felt God's call to come and join Man in the Mirror and reaching disciple men through the churches of Washington.

So, we're excited to have John, he's had a 15 year career working for the department of corrections and then he started a ministry called Vision House that has met the housing counseling and spiritual needs for over 1300 homeless men, women and children. And John and his wife successfully led that ministry for 25 years. He's been a lay leader in the ministry of his church using Man in the Mirror's, No Man Left Behind model. So, after using that model for a while and really feeling their ministry at Vision House, being ready to transition, he came to work with us. So, we're really excited to have him.

And then we've also got a group of guys in Howard City, Michigan. They have a Bible study group called "Fight Club". There's a bunch of Bible studies out there called Fight Clubs, sometimes I wonder if they've actually seen the movie, but six to eight guys meeting with us. They've been meeting for four months now, every Saturday morning at eight o'clock at Pine Grove church. They use the video Bible study. So, guys, if you're watching this, hey, glad to have you with us today. Welcome to your Saturday morning. And, their motto is to "wrestle with God's word and apply it in our daily lives". So, let's give John and Ed Kentgen and the guys at "Fight Club", a big warm Man in the Mirror welcome.

All right. So, if you have a Bible turn to second Samuel chapter 11, second Samuel chapter 11 and let me introduce our topic. So, we're in the eighth session now, we're going through *The Christian Man, The Christian Man* and we're on the eighth session, and our topic today is LUST: the right way to deal with this powerful drive. And, Pat and Kyrie and I all share teaching duties and when I walked in this morning somebody said, "So did you get the short straw or what?" And I said, no, no, I actually didn't get the short straw. I asked for this topic, I really wanted to talk about this topic and it's an important topic. I think it's probably one of the things that affects men more than just about any other issue today, Christian man and secular men and nonbelievers. I think this is a topic that affects us all.

When I was a young teenager, 13, 14 years old, I had a company. I had a business that I started and I did landscaping and home repair that you would trust to a 14 year old. So, like painting and this is in Lexington, Massachusetts. And so, there was a gentleman that hired me and he said, "Hey, can you

meet me over at this house? I have some work for you to do." And so we met over at this house, there was a big beautiful, like these Boston ... The Boston area has these like three story, huge Victorian houses that have living room, dining room, kitchen, parlor, bathroom on the first floor. And then another whole floor that might be two or three bedrooms and another whole floor above that, that might be another two or three bedrooms and an old, old house, plaster walls. Not wallboard, but actually plaster. They put the wood in and then they actually mud the entire wall.

And so the house was empty. And I said, well, what do you need me to do? He said, well, I need you to renovate the house. I said, I'm 14, and he said, no, no, I want you to do all the painting. But then you tell me what repairs the house needs. And then I'll tell you who to call. I have guys that work for me. He owned a lot of properties and then you bring them in. So basically, don't tell the state of Massachusetts, because they'd probably still come after me, but I was a 14 year old general contractor, and doing this house. So, it was great.

So, I had a lot of painting to do. I started painting and I'd been there about a week, mostly pretty much working by myself. And I was on the third floor and I had been painting the bedrooms on the third floor. I'd start at the top and I was working my way down. And so, it's a guy's Bible story. I went into the bathroom, had a seat on the toilet and I opened the ... I was looking around and I opened the cabinet, and there was a stack of porn magazines, and I'm 14 it's like jackpot, right? I'm like, this is the best job ever. And it was like a drug. I mean, I would eat stuff to make me poop just so I could go hang out in the bathroom.

Now, I want you to understand something. I'm 14 years old, I'm super involved in my church. I got godly parents who, my dad quoted the Bible to me ad nauseam. I mean, I've talked about my dad. He was awesome. I was engaged at church and youth group. I was a leader in my youth group and even helped in other places in the church, and none of that changed. I got up most mornings and read my Bible and none of that changed. But I had this little compartment of my life, this little box of my life where I could go and live a fantasy world and look at other people, at naked women and imagine myself having sex with those naked women. And they looked good. I mean, they don't put women in those magazines that don't look great, right?

A couple of weeks went by, and then God's grace intervened, the magazines disappeared. They just disappeared. I was so ticked off at the electricians that I was pretty sure stole those magazines. It was the owner of the house. He found them, the house had been rented. They weren't his, he found them. And so, he asked me about it, and I lied through my teeth. What are you talking about? I mean, not very many 14 year olds find a stack of magazines in a house they're renovating, right? But a lot of 14 year olds or 12 year olds or nine year olds find something. They have an experience like that, right?

Probably most of you in this room can remember, or even if you can't remember, you know there was a time where you had that first interaction. Maybe it was a buddy that snuck a magazine onto a school bus and you would sit in the back and page through. When you're a kid, your imagination, you only have to see a picture for a few seconds or a minute, and you own it, right? You can go back there in your mind whenever you want to, and you can pull that picture back up. And because we have such good imaginations, the girl gets better looking every time we think about it, right? I mean.

And we imagine ourselves having sex, we masturbate, sometimes we even obsess about it. And for some guys that becomes an addiction. It becomes something that they just are constantly looking for the next thing, the next thing, the next thing. We know that there's guys out there that goes from

pictures to actually watching people having sex, to different ways it can go to wanting things that are more and more weird and crazy, sometimes violent, or to wanting to go and do those things yourselves. And so going to strip joints and that might graduate you to prostitutes and it might graduate you to whoever.

I was in a fraternity in college, in a liberal college. And so, there were always, there were women that were just as addicted to pornography as the guys were. There were women who were just as addicted to trying to find people to have sex with as guys were. Now, there were more guys than girls. Trust me. But if you wanted it, you could find it. I mean you look around society today and I think you see the ramifications of the 60s and the free love culture, '60s and '70s which led to my generation, the '80s and '90s who were taught that sex was no big deal and now you have it to the guys that are in their 20s and 30s who are so screwed up about sex that they don't know which way is up.

Let me tell you, our attitudes about sex and lust are coming home to roost. They're coming home to roost in things like the Me Too movement, which you don't ... Look, you can find the woman that lied about it and it's not true. But for every one woman that lied about it, there are hundreds and hundreds and hundreds that their experience is legitimate. And many, many of those women are unwilling or unable to talk about it. So, don't get all self righteous about, well we caught this woman, this woman that wrote this rolling stone article lied. So what? There are hundreds and thousands and tens of thousands of women who have been victimized by men who have forsaken their God given role to provide and protect for the women around us and use them instead for our own gratification, for our own purposes, to make us feel pleasure and power.

How's that for an introduction to a Bible study? So, it's a new problem, right? Second Samuel chapter 11:1, in the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab and his servants with them and all Israel, and they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. So you see what happened here, right? David is a successful king. He's been king for a while. Apparently there's a war season, right? So when in the spring time they go out to war, what's a leader do? Leads. What does David do? Sends. Go get them guys, we're so good at this, you don't even need me, right?

And so he stays in Jerusalem and what happens to him in Jerusalem? He gets bored, honestly. He's lonely, he's got nothing to do. He's supposed to be out at war. He's supposed to be at work doing the thing that kings are supposed to do, and he's back in Jerusalem all by himself. So, what happened late one afternoon, verse three. It happened late one afternoon when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house from the king's house that he saw from the roof a woman bathing, and the woman was hot. That's my translation. The woman was very beautiful and David sent and inquired about the woman, and one said, is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?

So, David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him and he lay with her. Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness. That's a way of saying that she was at a fertile part of her cycle, right? She's cleansing herself from her uncleanness, her period was over. Then she returned to her house and the woman conceived and she went and told David, I am pregnant. That's the end of verse five. There's a verse between verse five and verse six that, I don't know how you translate it in Hebrew, but I'm pretty sure I know what the two words that David said next in English. I'm not going to repeat them here.

But this sets David down a path that devastated him. If you read the Psalms, if you read the Psalms, David wrote many of the Psalms. If you read the Psalms where the writers just like, I'm terrible, I'm horrible. God, how can you leave me feeling like this? Please forgive me please. I don't deserve you, but you're so far from me. It's right after this. This devastates David's life. He has Uriah murdered. He's a commander in his army, who he's supposed to be with. How's that for irony? And so he puts him on the front lines and he can't get him to come home on leave and have sex with his wife, so he could blame the pregnancy on ... Give him responsibility for it. He won't do it. He's so committed to his men, he's like, I can't have sex with my wife and all my guys are out there in the field separated from their families.

That's odd. Honestly, that's more noble than I would've been, right? And so, his life is devastated. David's life is devastated. So, let me tell you a couple of real quick things about the story. First of all, David was not where he ... He should have been out with his men in battle. Secondly, he was bored and lonely. He's restless. Third, he went walking on a rooftop at dusk. It was late in the afternoon. He went walking on the rooftop at dusk. Now, little cultural lesson here. The bathtubs where people would bathe were on the roof. Why were they on the roof? Because you couldn't see the roof from the ground, right? You'd have a home and you'd have a little half wall, maybe around the top of the wall and then you'd have a bathtub there, but you didn't want to get ... I mean, nobody wants to be naked on the roof in the middle of the day, right? But you can't be naked on the roof at night. You can't see what you're doing. There's no electricity.

So dusk when the lights low, you can't really see very well. You guys know that time of day. And so, that's when women would go on the roof and they would take their baths. And so, David is on the roof of the palace. Now, where do you think the palace is going to be? The highest point, right? Jerusalem is hilly. It's on the highest point. So David, late in the afternoon is up on the rooftop, and it doesn't say this, but it implies this. He knew what he was going to see or he hoped anyway. I mean it was the equivalent of the internet. I'll start clicking around and see what I can see. I'm not going to actually do a Google search for naked women having sex. I'm not that bad. I'm going to use a search term that's vaguely might be related to that and see if I can't get a couple of links and then act surprised when I see two people having sex on the screen in front of me.

Right? He's fooling himself, we do. It's not a new thing. It's not a new thing. So, when we're talking about lust and we're talking about the right way to deal with this powerful drive, I want to talk about these three things. First, sex is a big deal. Sex is a big deal, and lust is too. And then finally we're going to talk about a practical and biblical approach to sexual purity. So let's talk about sex is a big deal.

SEX IS A BIG DEAL

So, turn to first Corinthians. Now, by the way, this topic is not a ... It's not like the Bible is quiet in any way about this topic. Just go search. Literally go to Google and search, Bible verses about purity and you're going to get hundreds of articles and you're going to get tons of Bible verses that talk about purity in a man's life. So, sex is a big deal. Now, the world tells you that sex is not a big deal. I don't want to sound like a boomer, okay? But, let me use Friends for an example, okay? The six friends in the sitcom Friends over the course of the show had 86 sexual partners.

Now, I'm not trying to be a prude, okay? But, when you put that out there and it's just a part of the fabric of the lives of these people, what you're basically saying is, yeah, it's no big deal. It's no big deal. Sex is a big deal. First Corinthians 6:12 says, all things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful. All things are lawful for me, but listen to this, I will not be dominated by anything. Food is meant for the

stomach and the stomach for food and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. 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.

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, but he who is joined to the Lord, becomes one spirit with him. Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. 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. You were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

When we as men engage in multiple sexual partners, guys, I'm just going to tell you, it harms your soul. It numbs you to something that is absolutely unbelievable. I mean, look, sex rocks, right? And I've got not one amen. Seriously, look, I love having sex. It's awesome. I mean, I'm pretty sure there's things I feel there that I don't feel any other place in my life. Emotionally, physically, mentally, even spiritually, there are things that I feel when I'm with my wife and we have sex that I don't feel anywhere else in my life. It's fantastic. So, I'm going to dilute that and my mom's not on the internet and my dad passed away, so now I feel free to say stuff like this. I have diluted it with women before I met my wife, before I got married and I regret it.

I don't regret it like, oh, I'm such a terrible person. No, I regret it because it stole something from me, and it stole something from my wife that was just for that. There is a harm to your soul that will never get repaired until we're restored, when Jesus returns. It's part of the fall. Now, Jesus brings us salvation. Jesus saves us, but we still suffer and we still bear the consequences of sin in our lives. And that's a consequence that I suffer from that I'm just honest about. And yes, my wife knows just. So, sex is a big deal.

Lust is a big deal too. Turnover in your Bibles to Colossians 3:5, and listen to this. Listen to Paul's response to lust. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you, sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire and covetousness, which is idolatry. So this is a pretty big deal, right? Put to death, that seems to make it a big deal, what is earthly in you. Not that you do, but actually in you. So, sex is the physical act, but lust is the sinful desire to do the physical act. When I say sinful desire, I mean like when you look at your wife and you have sexual feelings towards your wife, the Bible says that that's within the bounds of what's right, but when you look at another woman and you have sexual feelings, and imagine yourself having sex with her and desire to have sex with her, that's outside of the bounds of what's good for you, all right? And so that's lust.

And go to Matthew 5:27, this is part of the sermon on the Mount. Jesus says this, you've heard what it was said, you shall not commit adultery, sex, right? But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. So Jesus raises the bar. He says, look don't kid yourself by thinking that well, if I just look and I can go wherever I want to in my thought life, it's fine because I'm not actually having sex with a woman that's not my wife. He's saying, no, no, no, that's adultery too. And he says this about other things too like, well I didn't kill him, I just hated him. Jesus is like, well no if you hate them, that's just as bad in my eyes as killing them, because the Lord looks on the heart. Out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks.

And so Jesus wants our hearts, not just our behavior. He wants our identity. He wants our souls to be committed to him. And that includes our thought life as well. So sex is a big deal.

LUST IS TOO

Lust is too. Now, I want to introduce this idea of what is lust then? When is looking a sin? There's this continuum, right? There's noticing. If a beautiful woman walked through this room, I hope you would all notice. Notice. Now, where do we get to the sin of lust? It's somewhere in this continuum, right? Do I have to actually imagine myself having sex and really think about specifics? If I just notice her, is that sinning? Here's the deal, I have the answer for you. You know, you know. Right?

I notice pretty women, you notice pretty women. That's how we're wired. I take a second look sometimes, you take a second look sometimes. For some of you that's a sin. If you know that, if I take the second look, my mind is just going to go, I can't control it from that point on. Then the second look is a sin for you. If you can look at a woman once and notice her and then go, yeah, wow, objectively, that woman is very pretty and then you don't give it another thought after that, you're fine. But you know.

Here's what I want to say, lust is not just imagining yourself having sex with a woman, that's not the only thing that lust is. Here's what I would say, if your thought life goes to a place that objectifies another person, that imagines that person as somebody whose purpose is to please you, to make you feel something, to meet your needs and you've just objectified them, you've gone into sin, you have sinned against that person. And, you've sinned against God. Because, where are we supposed to find our needs met ultimately? We're supposed to find our needs met ultimately in our relationship with Christ.

So whenever we look for something else to meet a need that we have instead of Christ, that's idolatry. That's what the Bible calls it, idolatry. You're looking for something else to meet your need. So, you've got to decide where this noticing and where lust becomes a sin versus just noticing. I can't answer that question for you. I'm going to tell you for me, as I've gotten older, I have pushed that thing to the left. I've pushed it more towards noticing because I want to protect myself, because I don't want to give myself license to like, well, I can look three times, three times and I'm fine. Three times and she's naked in my mind, all right? So why even look twice? Why even look twice? Because, I want to protect myself.

If you're an alcoholic and there's two ways to go home and one goes by the bar that you used to stop at and get drunk all the time and the other doesn't go by the bar, take the way home that doesn't go by the bar, right? It's just common sense. So, you got to decide. But, sex is important, sex is a big deal. Lust is a big deal too because it affects our soul and it affects our relationship with God.

So here, I want to give you this concept; **Because God loves us, the guidelines that the Bible gives us about sex and lust, they're not arbitrary. They're actually are what's best for us.** How many of you are parents? How many of you have said to your kid, because I said so? Right? When you were a kid, didn't you hate hearing that? But then you become a grownup, then you become an adult and you're like, actually that's a valid reason. But it doesn't mean that, what it means is, look, I'm a ... I used to actually say this to my kids, "I'm a grown up, you are a child. I know a lot more than you do. I don't have time to explain it. So for right now it is because I said so. I will be happy to explain it when the time comes and when there's time to do that. But right now you just got to trust me. Okay?"

The Bible says very specific things about sex because God said so. Are they arbitrary? They're no more arbitrary than when you tell your kid, don't do that because I know more than you do and it's going to

hurt you in the long run. And this is exactly what the rules in the Bible, the guidelines in the Bible are about. They're about protecting us, about helping us have the best life we can have, not just us having the best life we can have, but all the people around us having the best life that we can have. I have a 25 year old daughter. I do not want my daughter walking down the street and having some guy take a third look at her ass. That's not for them to do, that's hers. And if I catch it, I'm not timid, like eyes up buddy. In fact, just go away.

And if you've got daughters, this is maybe even easier for you to grasp how important it is that we as men treat women like they're God's creatures. Like they're God's daughters because they are, and recognize that our job is to protect them, not to use them for our own purposes, mentally or physically.

A PRACTICAL AND BIBLICAL APPROACH TO SEXUAL PURITY

So let's talk really quick about a practical and biblical approach to sexual purity. Now in the coaching guide, this is *The Christian Man* coaching guide. There are a ton of these practical suggestions for how you can deal with sexual purity, and these are some of the things from the coaching guide. So the first thing is, remember who you are. If you are a follower of Christ, you are Christ's. You don't join your body to something that is immoral because you are Christ. That's where your identity comes from. You don't need a woman to make you feel better about yourself, that's idolatry. When you are feeling like you need to feel better about yourself, then that's the time where you go to your brothers and you go to the Lord and you say, I'm not feeling good about myself and remind me of who I am.

The next thing is to have some insight. What are your triggers? And you can remember this thing, SALT. SALT, stands for STRESS, when you're stressed, when you're sad, when you're ANGRY, when you're LONELY, and when you're TIRED. A lot of guys use sexual, their thought life, masturbation, fantasy because they're trying to assuage some emptiness that's going on in their life. They're stressed out, so they need some relief. They're angry, so they need something to calm them down. They're lonely, so they need something to make them feel better. You're tired and so your guard is down. And these can be triggers for you.

And so, for me, like there's times when I struggle, like last week, okay? And when I'm struggling, I remember, okay, this is what's going on, I'm tired. Holidays were long. Had my mom with us for a month. It was great, but it's still, it's your mom with you for a month. Mom left, son came, 22 year old adult son came. Had lots of great conversations with him. I'm tired and I'm just thinking, you know what would make me feel better right now? Well, no actually, but my brain goes there. My mind goes there because I'm tired. So, I remember that, then I can take these next steps, right?

So, have some interaction, confess. I had to have some difficult conversations with my wife earlier in our marriage. I had to say, look, I like other naked women too. I mean, I like you naked, but I like other naked women too. And so, I need you to know that and I need you to know that I'm going to do my best to stay faithful to you, not just physically faithful to you, but emotionally and mentally faithful to you. But I want you to know that it's a struggle for me, and so pray for me, and then if you ever want to ask me a question, you can ask me a question and I will always be honest with you and answer that question. And praise God, she doesn't ask questions very often, but we talk about it. You need to have a guy, at least one guy that can look you in the eye or smack you in the back of the head, whichever is appropriate at the moment. And that you can say, hey, I screwed up. Or hey, I'm really struggling and they can come alongside you.

And then I had a group. One of the best things that ever happened to me was when is the time, and I'm honestly, I'm looking for another one now, where I was in a group of guys and we talked about this stuff. We talked about it very upfront, very open because sin hates the darkness, excuse me, sin hates the lights. Sin loves to live in darkness. And so when you're by yourself, sin has its greatest power. When you expose your sin to the light, you confess it to people, you have a group of people that are holding you accountable, it loses its power. It's easier than when you're trying to bear it by yourself. All right?

And then the fourth thing is just look at your lifestyle. Do you need to get rid of some things? I know guys that carry flip phones around. I'm like, dude, it's a flip phone, that's like so 2002 right? They're like, yeah, but I can't get on the internet on it and I can't get pictures on it. And I go, okay, no problem. I get it. That's the decision they've made. If you need filters on your computer, put filters on your computer, right? I'm going to tell you something, no, there's no filter you can't get around. What a filter does, it does not prevent you. It just protects you. It slows you down, hopefully enough for your brain to catch up with your ... And you make a better decision. But that's when you need to have the guys that you can call, your buddy you can call and say, dude, I'm really struggling right now. And he can say, get out of your house and come over to my place or meet me at the Starbucks or whatever, and you can get out of that situation.

And then finally, don't walk on rooftops at dusk, right? Don't go to the places that you know you're going to see the things that you're going to see. Don't drive. Take the way home that doesn't go by the bar. And then finally, this is the interesting thing, a way that will help you with this. And that is to get outside of yourself, to serve someplace, to have a place where you're giving yourself away. I think for most of us, when we feel like somebody is benefiting from things that we're doing when we're serving others, maybe it's in your church, maybe it's a volunteer thing in the community, we're less likely to get sad, stressed, angry, lonely and tired. And we're doing good. So, serving can really be a great thing to add into your lifestyle that will help you in this area.

So what do you do if you fail? Or maybe I should say, what do you do when you fail? Right? We all fail. It's 2020, we're taping this about eight or 10 days into 2020, and I'm guessing the failure rate in this room's about, I don't know, 94%, right? We've got some wise men over here, and that's the only reason it's not 98 and a half percent, right? Because of these guys, right? So what do you do when you fail? Well here's the answer. Run but don't hide. The Bible says flee from sexual immorality, not stand there and set your jaw and have that porn magazine in front of you. You can say, I am not going to look at that, right? No. Throw the stupid thing in the fire, okay? Flee. Run, but don't hide, because that's just a place to go for guilt, right? And shame. Go to your friends, go to your buddy, go to your wife, go to whoever you have that you can talk to you and say, man, I'm struggling today, and that will help you.

All right, last thing I'm going to talk about and I'm over, but I just, I really want to talk to you. First of all, here's the big idea, one practical solution to lust, especially for some young guys is getting married and have sex. I'm going to tell you having sex is a good way to not be obsessed with having sex, right? But do it with your wife. Do it with your wife. All right, so remember I said this before because God loves us, the guidelines the Bible gives about sex and lust are not arbitrary. They are actually what's best for us. So, I just want to share some quick facts with you. Okay?

So, I've coached climbing at a climbing gym now for probably a dozen years. And one of the things I love about the climbing, I started when my kids climbed and now they're older, but I still love to do it. And so, one of the things I love about the climbing gym is I'm surrounded by 18 to 30 year olds. That's probably on the bell curve of people in the gym. It's a huge amount of college and early career men and women.

And I love hanging out with people that age, and I've had several conversations where somebody will say, "Oh yeah, my boyfriend's moving to North Carolina and so we're looking for an apartment." And I'll go, I literally, I walk up to them and I'll go, is there a ring on that finger? And she'll be like, no, no, it's fine. It's fine. So you're going to live together, right? She's like, yeah. I said, well, do you want to get divorced? I mean, are you going to get married? Oh yeah, we're going to get married, we're going to get married. It's just it doesn't make sense right now. Do you want to get divorced? Oh, I know you're one of those religious guys.

No, no, no, I'm a practical guy. I believe in science. Okay. And so I've had guys, same thing. Yeah, I'm really excited, I'm going to ask her to ... I had a guy literally come to me saying, I'm going to ask so and so to marry me. I'm like, that's fantastic, man. When are you going to do it and he tells me all about it and I'm like, where, and I said, when? He said, well, we're going to move in together, and I'm thinking after four or five months after I'm sure everything's going to work, then I'll ask her. I'm like, well, there's a good chance it's not going to work out. He said, what are you talking about? She's awesome. I'm like, yeah, she is awesome and you're awesome, but science. Science, all right?

So, here's some of the things that I hear people say, should we live together? "Living together allows us to smooth out the kinks and we'll make our marriage stronger in the long run". That's what I hear. False. In the United States and in the UK, couples who live together are at a greater risk for divorce once they do get married than non-cohabitating couples. Interestingly, they actually get divorced less than the first year, but way more as time goes on, all right? Secondly, "we're definitely going to get married. It just doesn't make sense financially right now, but we're committed", right? Except that no, barely more than half a couples who live together ever get married. So, if you're living together to prepare for getting married, it's the worst way. It's not a reliable way to do that.

"People who rush into marriage are never happy, living together will strengthen our relationship and help us prepare better for marriage". Living together is considered to be even all the study's more stressful than getting married. Working out the kinks, are you kidding me? Here's the problem with moving in together and not being married, how many of you have had difficulties in your marriage? Right, If you weren't married, would you have stayed together through the difficulties? Probably not. Why should you? Seriously, in this culture, why should you stay with somebody when you're having trouble, when there's so many other people out there, you could go try it out with them.

Marriage makes you committed and let me tell you, living together, I'm just going to tell you, living together it's great for the guys. All the benefits, none of the responsibilities, it's perfect. Going gets tough, I'll walk out the door, right? I don't have to make it work. I don't have to work it out. We don't need a piece of paper to be committed to each other. Yes, you do. Cohabiting couples are more likely to experiencing infidelity, and they have a separation rate that's five times that of married couples and a reconciliation rate that's only one third that of married couples. So, cohabiting is a great way to have a temporary relationship.

So I just want to debunk this idea that living together first will help your marriage. It's like, well, you're just a religious guy. No, science, okay? Science says. This is what the study say and you can download this video and you'll see the website where you can go find the research out there that's like this. This is from a non-religious study that it's actually a study of studies, all right? So. And there's more here, but we don't need to talk about them, they're just more of the same thing. So I just want to leave you with this; **Because God loves us the guidelines the Bible gives about sex and lust are not arbitrary. They really are what's best for us.**

Let's pray. Father, thank you so much for the way that women look. Thank you so much for the pleasure that it gives us to be with that woman that we've committed our lives to. Father, thank you for the oneness that we can feel, and the experience that we can have with our wife that we really can't have with any other person. And except for our relationship with you Lord, we know that a marriage can be one of the most satisfying relationships there is. Father I know also that there are guys who are not married, who may never get married or whose marriage just fell apart, and they are hurting. They're longing for that. And so, Lord, I pray that it would be your will, that those men would find the woman, a godly woman to come into their lives and that in your will they would enter that covenant of marriage together and experience that.

And Lord, if there's guys that you've called and never have that father, I pray that you would be enough, that they would feel your closeness in a way that is better than the best friend they've ever had. Closer than the best dad they could have had, wiser than the best counselor that they could have ever had. And they could feel that closeness. But father for all of us Lord, would you give us a dependence on you for control of this area of our lives that we would live for your glory, Lord, that we would not undermine your reputation or our own and that we would bring you glory in Jesus name, Amen.