

5 Firewalls Needed to Resist Sexual Sin

The Bible teaches us to “resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7), and in another place it tells us to flee lusts (1 Tim. 6).

Many great people in God have fallen into various fleshly temptations and potentially ruined their lives and ministries. One person has said, “It takes a lifetime to build integrity and a minute to lose it.” This is a true saying!

I believe one of the most important reasons is because most have never intentionally set up mental and emotional firewalls—by *firewall*, I mean something that acts as a barrier so that the temptation does not easily penetrate the heart. Proverbs 4:23 instructs us to guard our heart because out of it flows the issues of life.

Most people have no firewalls set up; thus, as soon as a strong temptation comes their way, the only thing stopping them from sinning is their own will power, which is based upon the spiritual and emotional condition they are in during the moment of said test. However, in order for the enemy to trip me up and get me to fall into adultery, he would have to get through not only my will power but five layers of firewalls I have set up to protect my soul. (I would include pornography in this category of adultery because it can eventually lead to full-blown experiential adultery if there is no repentance.)

No firewall is foolproof; of course, the only primary way to resist temptation is to be in the strength of the Lord, as Ephesians 6:10-13 teaches. However, there are times we may not be at a high level of spiritual and emotional strength or times when we are caught off guard; thus, firewalls are something the Holy Spirit can use to further strengthen our

resolve.

The following are some of the firewalls I have set up:

1. Not losing my intimate fellowship with the Lord. By far, the most important relationship I have in my life is my friendship and covenant with the Lord. I told the Lord when I first started in the ministry that I will never allow the ministry to be so consuming that I do not have time to pray and walk in His manifest presence. Growing and knowing the presence and person of the Lord is the main reason we were born, and I never want to exchange this walk with the Lord for any earthly pleasure. (Read Eph. 4:30.)

2. Not destroying the trust my spouse and children have in me. Besides the Lord, the greatest call and joy of my life is the family God has entrusted to me. Before I fall into temptation, I will think about the commitment I have to my wife and how I would not want to devastate her. Worse yet, I would never want to do anything that would destroy the way my children view me and possibly hurt their own view of the Lord and His church. Our greatest legacy will be the life we lead, which is the inheritance we pass on to our children's children. (Read Prov. 13:22.)

I want my legacy to include leaving a generational blessing to my biological family that will continue to speak after I am long gone. (Read Heb. 11:4.)

3. Not compromising the purpose and call of God upon my life. I believe a person can derail their purpose and call of God upon their life with the choices they make. I have worked more than 35 years to fulfill the call of God upon my life, and I do not want to blow it for momentary pleasure.

4. Not discouraging my spiritual sons and daughters. I have only five biological children, but I have many close spiritual sons and daughters. I have seen and read about the faith of many church members and/or spiritual children of leaders

disillusioned with the things of God because of leadership failure. Of course, I have also seen incredible restoration and transformation in the lives of fallen leaders because they repented and climbed back up the mountain of their great calling for God.

The bottom line is people need to put their eyes upon Jesus more than their leader. But, I do not want to allow foolishness in fleshly pursuit to place a stumbling block in their life.

5. Not bringing shame to the gospel before the world. The last (but not least) firewall in my life is not wanting to bring shame to the gospel before the world. The more influence I have, the more temptation and tests I will experience, so I need to always have these firewalls up and continually inspect them to make sure there are no cracks in them. The flesh-driven scandals of the 1980s set back the reputation of the evangelical church in this nation for many decades, and I do not want to set back the gospel in my family, community or city.

In conclusion, I speak about the need to have these five firewalls in my life because I know that, like all other humans, I am fragile, born with a wicked, sinful nature, and have to watch and pray lest I fall into temptations (Matt. 26:41). Part of way I “watch” is the construction and maintenance of these firewalls. But unless I pray and walk in the presence and power of the Spirit, no amount of firewalls will be able to protect me from my wicked flesh.

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