

5 Practical Steps to Beat the Lust in Your Heart

In a book I wrote several years ago called *101 Freedom Exercises: A Christian Guide for Sexual Addiction Recovery*, I outline several exercises to help men get and stay free from lust. The following is a summarization of some of these exercises, as well as a few more I have learned along the way.

1. Pray for Them: When a person becomes an object of lust for you, you can turn them back into a person by giving them a relational context to God and others. Here is a sample prayer:

God I know You love and died for this woman and that You desire a relationship with her. I pray that if she doesn't know You, that You will reveal Yourself to her so she can know You for eternity. I pray for her husband (or future husband) that he will be a man of God, full of Your Spirit and wisdom. I pray for her children (or future children) that they will know and serve You all their days. I pray for her parents, that You would encourage them and bless their daughter.

Now how many women do you think the enemy is going to present to you to lust after if all you do is pray them into the kingdom? The self-defense arts teach one early on how to block a punch. If the enemy throws you a temptation, or your flesh just happens to kick up, pray, and you will walk away feeling successful instead of guilty.

2. Look Them in the Eyes: If you start to lust after women when you gaze into their eyes, avoid their eyes! If you lust below the neck or waist, then keep your eyes above the neck so they don't travel over her body scanning her.

3. The One-Second Rule: In sex addiction recovery, there is a one-second policy: Don't look at a woman longer than one second. Living in the television and computer age, men can

learn to scan a woman in less time than that. Regardless, keep your gaze very short. And remember, you aren't under any obligation to check out each woman that walks by.

4. Accountability: I find that if a man walks in the light in the area of lust, he is less likely to struggle. James 5:16a says, "Confess your faults to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed." It's great to confess your sin of lust to Jesus (1 John 1:9) but that will only get you forgiveness. Most of us who struggle with lust need healing. You'll only attain healing if you humble yourself to another man.

Something powerful happens when you humble yourself to another man. I purposely say "man." Don't wimp out and try to do this only with your wife. Man to man, be honest with a brother in the Lord, and you will see lust decrease tremendously. If you have an accountability partner like this, it can scourge the seed of lust that would otherwise bring a future harvest of sin and death. Accountability works! (See Eccl. 4:10.)

5. Lust Log: Some men in an accountability relationship keep a "lust log." This is simply a piece of paper you keep in your pocket. Each time you lust or objectify a woman, put a mark on the paper. Check in daily for 100 days with your accountability partner as to how you are doing.

Some competitive friends even make the man with the highest score pay for the lunch of the low-scoring man each week. You'll be amazed at how quickly you can stop lusting when there is free food on the line!

Lust is a learned intentional behavior. You can unlearn lust. You can follow several admonitions of the Word of God to battle this lust. You can walk in the Spirit (Gal: 5:16) and not gratify the desire of sinful nature. You can use Romans 12:2 and transform your mind with Scripture. God's Word is a great tool to have at your disposal in this battle.

Moreover, we can fill ourselves with God's divine power, given to us in salvation, so that we don't follow evil desires, according to 1 Peter 1: 3-4. I also like the verse in Colossians 3:5: "Put to death (or mortify) the parts of your earthly nature: sexual immorality, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desire."

Doug Weiss, Ph.D., is a nationally known author, speaker and licensed psychologist. He is the executive director of Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the author of several books including, *Sex Men and God*. You may contact Dr. Weiss via his website, or on his Facebook, by phone at 719-278-3708 or through email at heart2heart@.