

Grace Transformed Sexuality

How Grace Changes a Man's Heart and
His Battle With Lust



Group Bible Study for Men and Young Men

By Gary Yagel

*"We can only change permanently as we take the gospel more deeply
into our understanding and hearts." – Tim Keller*

Free Sample

Grace is the only antidote strong enough to overcome men's toxic shame over their sexual lust.

Grace is the only motivation compelling enough to pick fallen men up, when lust has bloodied them, and send them back into the arena to fight again.

Grace is the only force potent enough to change the heart desires that lead us into sexual sin.

About the Author

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The Power of Sexual Desire

Chapter 1

Creation

Strong, urgent, forceful, and impatient, the sex drive dominates the mind and body of every healthy male. Like it or not, that's the way it is. Strong sexual feelings are common to all normal men. They are determined more by hormones than by evil desire. Archibald Hart, The Sexual Man

Why do you think God created the sex drive in men to be so strong?

Do you think this is a good thing or bad thing?

Read Gen. 2:24-25. ²⁴For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. ²⁵The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

- Notice that the sexual union described in the first sentence is linked with the intimacy described in the second sentence.
- Sexual union is the celebration of the loving intimacy for which God designed marriage.
- It is similar to the sacrament of communion. We physically eat the bread and drink the wine to celebrate a spiritual reality—our heart's need to feed on Christ.
- Sexual union is the outward, physical, joining of two bodies, that celebrates the inner spiritual reality of joining two hearts.
- God has hardwired men with a sexual appetite that is strong enough to overcome their natural independence and drive them to a woman, where their human need for intimacy and love is met.
- This intimacy of body and soul is so powerful and so risky that God protects it by placing it in the context of the covenant of marriage, which requires public vows of a life-long commitment to each other.
- Joining bodies without joining lives in marriage is condemned by God as wrong. Joining lives in marriage without, joining bodies in sex is also condemned as wrong. In Christianity, body and soul belong together.

The Fall

I Thes. 4:3-5. ³It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; ⁴that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, ⁵not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God.

Contrast the Christian approach to sexual desire with the pagan approach.

Why would not knowing God lead to passionate lust?

Notice the contrast between, “*control his own body*” and “*passionate lust,*” (which means, literally, “over-desire.”) The result of the fall is that our sexual desires are out of control.

For many men the sex drive feels like a volcano. Explosive and unpredictable, it continues to burn deep down in the groin, even when there is no reason for it. It may be dormant for a while, only grumbling occasionally. But it awakens sooner or later, and when it erupts it can lay waste to everything in its path including honor, reputation, families, virginity, fidelity, chastity, good intentions, life-long promises, and spiritual commitments. Archibald Hart, The Sexual Man

In what ways do you think a volcano is or is not a good metaphor for our sex drive?

Read Matt. 5:27-29. ²⁷"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' ²⁸But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

What was Jesus' view of lust?

Why do you think he took lust so seriously?

4 Ways Sin Has Polluted Our Sexual Nature

A. Fallen man takes *nakedness* outside the confines of marriage.

- Only doctors, morticians, and husbands have any business looking at a woman's naked body.
- A woman has no business revealing her body in public.
- Our bodies are not dirty or shameful; they are private.

B. Fallen man takes *sex* outside the confines of marriage.

- The Greek word, “*porneia,*” which is translated, “*sexual immorality,*” refers to sex with anyone other than one's spouse.
- Some rationalize that intimate touching, oral sex, anything short of intercourse--is permissible. But that is not God's view.
- Sexual touching is part of the sexual intimacy reserved for marriage and is intended to awaken the desire for full intercourse.

Read Song of Songs 2:7. ⁷Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field: Do not arouse or awaken love before its time.

Read Ezekiel 23:3. ³They became prostitutes in Egypt, engaging in prostitution from their youth. In that land their breasts were fondled and their virgin bosoms caressed.

C. Our sinful nature also damages the sexual relationship within monogamous marriage.

- Christian couples often feel rejected, used, misunderstood, and sexually unsatisfied in their marriage. Few Christian couples are given any help working through their sexual misunderstandings and differences.

83% of women feel their husbands don't even know the basic needs of a woman for oneness or how to provide intimacy for them.

A large majority of female divorcees say that their married years were the loneliest years of their lives. Steve Arterburn & Fred Stoeker, Every Woman's Desire.

Two thirds of married men, therefore, complained of insufficient sex because their partner wasn't ready (interested), and my clinical work supports this.

When a survey of men were asked, "Do you feel that women understand a man's sex drive," over 4 out of 5 (83%) answered, "no." Hart, The Sexual Man

D. Fallen men want *sexual pleasure* without the hard work of *emotional intimacy* with a real woman.

- The sinful nature of both single and married men easily defaults to wanting the benefits of femininity—sexual pleasure, but without the risk and work of real involvement with a real woman.
- Married men who feel distant from their wives find self-sex easier than taking the risk of initiating love-making with their wives.

*The Playboy mansion was built on the proceeds of men's desire to have sex with themselves while looking at pictures of perfected nude women. Compulsive masturbation, built on fantasy and pornography is a quick **escape from intimacy**. The compulsive masturbator is without the ability to develop genuine intimacy skills. Sex becomes a one-sided process of self-gratification. **The addict would rather masturbate than take the time to develop a relationship.** Expecting marriage to eliminate the drive to masturbate, the addict soon finds that intimate sex is too much trouble and returns to the compulsion. Stephen Arterburn, "When Sex Becomes an Addiction"*

- Wives are designed to be sexually responsive to a real man, who takes the risk of pursuing and loving her.
- The Internet and cable provide easy access to sexual pleasure without any emotional connection to a real woman required.

What was new to you, or stands out in the material you've read so far?

Someone has said that the root issue with lust is that we want to be our own god—determining for ourselves when, where, and how we will get sexual pleasure for ourselves. Would you agree or disagree? What would you add to this assessment?

Read Gal.6:7-8. ⁷Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

What do you think Paul means by, “God cannot be mocked?”

Even though forgiven, if Christians sow to please their sinful nature, what does Paul tell us will be the certain result?

How does this principle apply to our battle with lust?

The Price Tag of Sexual Sin

You should know by now that sexual sin ravages everyone connected with it. If you're entertaining lust, you're dancing on a cliff. Take concrete action now while you can. "Lust, when it is conceived, brings forth sin, and sin brings forth death" (James 1:15.) Joe Dallas, Every Man's Battle Seminar

A. Sexual sin's shame drives us away from God, who is the answer to our deepest longings.

- Shame makes us want to hide from God.

Read Gen. 3:8. ⁸Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

- Shame breaks our fellowship with God.
- This break in our life-line to God's love cuts us off from the love our hearts need to function properly.

Read 1 Cor. 6:13. ¹³But you cannot say that our physical body was made for sexual promiscuity; it was made for God and God is the answer to our deepest longings. (J. B Phillips)

- Paul's advice to those struggling with sexual sin at Corinth was not, “*Stop it!*” It was, “*the false intimacy of illicit sex doesn't satisfy your deepest intimacy needs; these are met through intimacy with God.*”
- The more the well of our intimacy needs is filled through fellowship with Christ, the less thirsty we will be for the polluted waters of illicit sexual pleasure.

Read John 15:9. ⁹Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. (NASB)

How do you think sexual sin gets in the way of “abiding” in Christ's love?

B. Surrendering to lust inflames our sexual desire, making it harder to resist temptation next time.

- The more we indulge our lustful appetite the stronger that appetite becomes.

At the University of California, Irvine, Dr. James L. McGaugh has conducted research suggesting that memories of experiences that occurred at times of emotional arousal (including sexual arousal) are difficult to erase. Dr. McGaugh's findings suggest that a person's memories of sexually arousing experiences get locked into the brain by the chemical epinephrine. And once there, the memories are difficult to forget. Thus powerful, sexual memories keep reappearing on his mind's memory screen—stimulating and arousing him. Every time he masturbates to those fantasies, he is like one of Pavlov's dogs, rewarded by his orgasm, which reinforces the memory. Jerrv Kirk. "How Pornography Harms"

- Every experience of sexual sin adds another picture to the memory gallery drawn upon for sinful sexual fantasies in the future.

C. Sexual involvement before marriage damages future marriage.

Yale sociologist Neil Bennett finds that cohabiting women are 80% more likely to separate or divorce than those who did not live with a man before marriage. Glen T. Stanton, 1995

D. The use of pornography trains us to separate sexual pleasure from heart connection with a real woman.

- Most single men believe the myth that marriage will cure their pornography habit. It does not.
- 100% of the time, those with a pornography habit find that the craving for pornography returns sometime after they get married.
- Self-sex, which indulges in lustful fantasies builds the neuro-pathways in the brain that cause us to bond with an impersonal object—the image of our lust.
- To understand this truth, we need to understand the sexual bonding that God intended sexual release to accomplish.

*When a man ejaculates, his brain receives its maximum chemical reward. Whatever he looks at while having an ejaculation is what he will sexually "glue" to. **Whatever his eyes focus on when he sexually releases—a person, image or object—will become etched in his brain as a photographic attachment towards that person, image, or object.** I call it 'sex glue.' After a period of time having sex with the same person, when he sees her, he is going to feel attached to her.*

Isn't it just like God to design something that would make you totally happy with the wife he designed for you? This is the original thought God had in mind with this process—that as a man, you would obey his command and not have sex until marriage. Then, after marriage, you would start having sexual releases just with her. And when you look at her during sexual experience, WHAM! You are glued to her. Over a short period of time she becomes your only chemical reinforcement for your sexual experience, and you are totally happy with her regardless of her height, weight, or proportions. Dr. Doug Weiss, Sex, Men, and God

- God’s wonderful design has been corrupted by our sinful nature.
- Instead of sexually bonding to our wife because we’ve only had sex with her, the sexual release we experience through masturbation and pornography bonds us to an impersonal image.
- Such behavior trains us to experience impersonal sex that is just physical.
- Our wives, however, are designed by God in a way that makes detached, impersonal, one-dimensional sex unfulfilling for them.
- Men who are losing the battle with porn prior to marriage or during marriage are thus training themselves to make sex unfulfilling for their present or future wives.

E. Repeated exposure to pornographic images deadens the heart.

- Like a computer virus that has the ability to hide its presence from the user while it systematically destroys the hard drive, sexual sin dulls the conscience, while it systematically ravages the heart.
- A deadened heart leads to boredom, emptiness, and loneliness.
- It cools our passion for Christ and his purpose for our lives.
- We start to lose the feeling of closeness to God that we’ve had in the past.
- Our desensitized heart hinders our ability to connect emotionally with our girlfriend or wife, which is what she wants most.

As addiction continues, it dulls the deeper passions of our hearts for other people and other things. Addiction opposes love. It nails the energy of our longings to someone or something—a person, place, substance, behavior or belief. And the addictive object or central activity works; it provides relief from living in the midst of messy relationships, so we want more and more of it. Dr. Sharon Hersh, The Last Addiction

Read Eph. 4:17-19. ¹⁷So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. ¹⁹Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

What does Paul say is the relationship between the hardening of our hearts, losing sensitivity, and surrendering to sensuality?

F. Every return to sexual sin takes us closer to sexual addiction.

- Paul says sexual sin is a sin “against the body.”
- Sexual release produces unparalleled chemical reactions in the body.

During sex, chemicals called endorphins and encephalins rush to the excitement center (preoptic neuron) of a man’s brain, filling it to the highest possible level... Men who take risks such as sky diving, bungee jumping, or deep sea diving utilize the same part of the brain as sex does. However, sex, by far, produces the greatest chemical release, making his brain and body feel their absolute best. Dr. Doug Weiss, Sex, Men, and God.

- Over time, Illicit sex creates a craving that the body can't do without.
- The brain is actually reprogrammed to crave sexual pleasure.
- Once stimulation occurs, the body DEMANDS sexual fulfillment.
- However, It takes more erotic images to get the same result. A bloated sexual appetite demands more and more to be satiated.
- The body is hooked.
- Slavery is in sight.

Some idols hook our bodily passions and desires. This group of addictions include drugs (legal and illegal), alcohol, sexual sin and food. These idolatries can provide physical pleasure, relieve physical tension, and soothe physical desires. Such payoffs can be difficult to resist. Ed Welch, Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave

What would you say to a Christian guy who dismisses the danger of looking at porn with the statement, "Yeah, I struggle some with the Internet, but doesn't everybody?"

There are many Christian men surrendering to the lure of pornography who have lost so many battles that they have given up trying to fight. But there is hope for us all!

Read Rom. 7:21-25. ²¹So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²²For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. ²⁴What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Escaping the slavery of lust does not happen by just trying harder, beating ourselves up more when we fail, or finding the three secret steps to sexual purity forever. The only force powerful enough to rescue us is the **Gospel of Jesus Christ** transforming our hearts. That is the subject of the rest of our studies.

Additional Resources

"Moral Purity Toolbox," CD by David Delk, www.maninthemirror.com

"Sex, Men, and God," Doug Weiss, MP3 along with many other resources, www.sexaddict.com
The Sexual Man, Archibald Hart, book, www.cepbookstore.com.

How The Gospel Changes Our Hearts

Chapters 2-9

Grace Is The Only Antidote Powerful Enough To Overcome Toxic Shame

Chapter 2

Pete had been a Christian nearly all his life, but since his teen years he had been losing the battle with pornography. Desperately he fought his lust, but every new solution was temporary. Praying harder didn't work. Feeling worse afterwards didn't work. Getting married didn't even work. Feeling alone and ashamed, Pete struggled for years; but his bondage only increased.

One weekend, he attended a seminar on sexual purity with his friend. On the way home Pete was even more overwhelmed with feelings of condemnation, and hypocrisy. He knew he had to bring his sin into the light to get help; but the thought of his wife and kids finding out about his secret life was too humiliating to consider. Pete's friend listened compassionately. But it was the last conversation he would have with Pete. The next weekend, Pete committed suicide.

Pete was a troubled man. The problems that drove him to end his life included more than lust. Yet, his shame over his pornography addiction seemed, outwardly, to push him over the edge. Gary Yagel, Allegiance: Building A Foundation of Loyalty to God

What do you think is the relationship between guilt and shame?

How does a man's shame over his sexual sin affect his walk with God?

If the secret sexual thoughts of our mind were flashed up on a screen for everyone to see, we would bury our heads in shame. How would we ever look our children, our wives, our friends in the eye again? How could any human want anything to do with us, much less a holy God? Ibid

Why do we feel this way, when the Bible says that in Christ our sins are forgiven?

Shame Poisons The Heart

A. Shame convinces us that God tolerates us but doesn't like us.

- Satan, the "accuser of the brethren," wants to destroy our relationship with God by mercilessly loading guilt onto our sagging backs.
- He knows that our feelings of shame over our sexual sin can either convince us that we are so dirty that a holy God wants nothing to do with us, or make us obsessed with trying to earn his love by being good. In both cases, we believe God's fundamental attitude towards us is rejection.

Which of the above two responses to shame do you tend towards?

If you believe a person's fundamental attitude towards you is rejection, how will that affect your relationship with him?

Why is Satan's shame strategy so successful in turning Christian men away from seeking God and his love?

- Apart from the gospel of grace, we default to our self-savior theology, "I obey, therefore, I am accepted by God. Since I don't obey, a holy God loathes me."
- Hanging our heads in shame takes us away from Christ, in the opposite direction of what we need for our hearts to be changed.

But if we remember that God is the lifter of our heads (Ps 3:3) then we will raise our eyes to see the affection in his own. When we see that his regard for us does not waver, then his grace will quicken our steps, strengthen our hearts, and delight our souls to carry on. Bryan Chapell, Holiness By Grace

B. Shame erodes our willingness to fight.

- You can only beat your head against the wall and lose so many times before you give up.
- Unable to defeat sexual sin, we can make peace with it. We just stuff it into a private closet of our lives that no one knows about.
- Making peace with a little illicit sexual pleasure once in a while is the opposite of hungering and thirsting for righteousness, which our Lord commands of us as his followers.
- Since sexual sin dulls our conscience anyway, we begin to excuse our sexual sin.

C. Shame drives us into isolation because we fear being found out.

- Before Adam and Eve sinned, they were naked and unashamed.
- After they sinned, they hid from God.
- God made coverings for Adam and Eve to hide their nakedness.
- We've been covering the private things we're ashamed of ever since.
- We may admit struggling with lust like all guys do, but not let anyone close enough to discover the real extent of our involvement with porn.

We are hiding, every last one of us. Well aware that we, too (like Adam), are not what we were meant to be, desperately afraid of exposure, terrified of being seen for what we are and are not, we have run off into the bushes. We hide at the office, in the gym, behind the newspaper, and mostly behind our personality. Most of what you encounter when you meet a man is a façade, an elaborate fig leaf, a brilliant disguise." John Eldredge, Wild at Heart

Do you think most men are aware that they are hiding?

Why do we do it?

- The masks we wear to hide our shameful struggles prevent us from authentic, strength-building, connection to other believers.
- We stay shallow and superficial with our brothers in Christ.
- We lose countless battles because God never intended us to fight our spiritual battles alone.

The Only Power Great Enough To Overcome Shame Is the Gospel

“Only those who know that God will love them even if they don’t get better will ever get any better.” Steve Brown, Lecture, DMin Class

A. The Gospel is that you are more sinful and flawed than your lust proves, yet more accepted, and loved than you can imagine.

- When our sin leaves us feeling dirty and ashamed we need to stand under the shower of God’s truth and let grace wash over us. We need to daily preach the gospel to ourselves.
- Believers are doubly declared to be legally righteous. First, we are justified through Christ’s death. He atoned for our sins. He paid the penalty. There is no more wrath of God left for us. He spent it on Christ at the cross!
- Second, through Christ’s life, his perfect record is imputed to us. The Spirit of God has erased Jesus’ name at the top of his straight A moral report card, written our name in with permanent ink, and thrown our old report card away. Christ’s straight A report card is not so inadequate that we have to earn a few A’s of our own!

Read Rom. 3:21-25. ²¹But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²²This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ²⁵God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood.

Read Rom. 8:1-4. ¹Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ²because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. ³For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, ⁴in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

What do these verses teach about a believer’s ability to exhaust God’s willingness to forgive him? What about the thousandth time we masturbated after telling God we were sorry?

What do these verses teach about overcoming the shame of our sin?

In your own life, what have you learned about overcoming shame by the truth of the gospel?

The gospel is not a gate but a path. It is an epicenter, not a milestone. Steve Childers, "Spiritual Dynamics for Leaders," DMin Syllabus," RTS.

If you were asked, "How do I get the gospel from my head to my heart," what would you say?

"We can only change permanently as we take the gospel more deeply into our understanding and hearts." Tim Keller, The Prodigal God

B. Through the Gospel we are redeemed from seeking to be our own savior

- Overcoming lust does not happen by just trying harder. The gospel is that I cannot be my own savior. The gospel is that righteousness is not FROM me but FROM God.

Read Rom. 1: 16-17. ¹⁶I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹⁷For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Biblically understood, the word, "righteousness," does not refer only to our justification, the act by which God declares us legally righteous. It also refers to our sanctification—our growth in holiness. Who is the source of both kinds of righteousness?

- Grace empowers us to say, *"The righteousness I need to please God and feel good about myself ain't coming from me!"* The good news is that righteousness is from God.
- The Gospel is that in recognizing our spiritual poverty we receive the riches of the kingdom.

Read Matt. 5:3. ³"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Read James 4:6. ⁶"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

How would you summarize the message of these 2 verses?

Why is it so hard for men to admit our weaknesses?

C. The Gospel frees us to repeatedly take our sinful hearts to Christ for cleansing and renewal.

Read Psalm 32:1-5. ¹Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. ²Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in

whose spirit is no deceit. ³When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.

⁵Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"—and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

What are some of the blessings of the one whose sin is covered?

What is the cost of ignoring our sin?

D. The Gospel's assurance of God's unconditional love gives us the courage to have authentic friendships with Christian brothers

Read Heb. 10:19-25. ¹⁹Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, ²¹and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²²let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ²³Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. ²⁵Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

This text starts out with having confidence to draw near to God and ends with encouraging one another. What do you think is the relationship between these two?

- You do not have to know the details of a brother's struggles with lust to be an encouragement and support to him.
- *"I've been struggling with lust" is enough to be able to respond, "I'm struggling too. Let's pray for each other. By the way, don't forget Christ loves you, brother, more than you can ever know-- even when you fail him!"*

How can we help each other preach the gospel to ourselves (remind each other of God's unconditional love) every day?

What else can we do to encourage each other?

Next week, we begin to discuss how the gospel of grace changes our hearts.

Additional Resources

Allegiance: Building A Foundation of Loyalty to God, Gary Yagel, 30 day men's devotional to help men take grace from their head to their heart, www.forgingbonds.org

"Dangerous Freedom" Pete Alwinson, men's seminar sponsor by Key Life, www.keylife.org

"Gospel Man Conferences," Harvey Kirkpatrick, regional conferences, www.thegospelman.com
Holiness By Grace, Bryan Chapel, book, www.cepbookstore.com

Summary of the Remaining Seven Chapters

Chapter 3: Grace Persuades Me God Likes Me

Satan uses shame to convince us that even if God loves us, we're too dirty for him to like us very much. But if we believe that God's fundamental attitude towards us is rejection, we will never pursue him for the love our heart needs. In contrast, Scotty Smith asks: *"What would it feel like in your heart to know that God not only accepts you, but that he richly enjoys you? To know that your company is his pleasure, your fellowship his joy, your face his delight? What effect would that have on how you think about God, yourself, others."* Objects of His Affection

Chapter 4: Grace Gives Me the Courage to Face The Heart Issues Beneath Lust

Lasting victory over sexual sin is not possible until the heart's idolatry is addressed. *"To Paul, mankind's root problem is not merely an external, behavioral problem—it is an internal problem of the heart. Paul believed that one of the primary reasons human hearts are not more transformed is because the affections of people's hearts have been captured by idols that grip them and steal their hearts' affection away from God."* Steve Childers, Spiritual Dynamics

Chapter 5: Grace Empowers Me To Bring My Struggles Into The Light

- Grace changes my view of failure
- Grace redeems me from my independence and self-reliance
- Grace changes my view of the church

"The church is actually a place for people who are needy, afraid, confused, and quite sinful. But even more important than that, the church is a place for people who have been loved...and have no idea why. Each congregation is, as it were, a local chapter of 'Sinners Anonymous.'" Steve Brown, What Was I Thinking

Chapter 6: Grace Helps Me Trust My Sexual Appetite to God

Sexual purity is the result of trusting God to satisfy my sexual desires in his timing and in his way, instead of being my own God and demanding the right to satisfaction on my terms. This chapter helps men deepen their trust in God's willingness to satisfy the hungers of their heart, so they can better trust him when their desires crave satisfaction.

Chapter 7: Grace Restores Me To Authentic Manhood

This chapter examines two aspects of our masculine calling--*to impact the world, and to pursue a woman with love*. These are viewed through the lens of creation, fall, redemption. Grace enables men to overcome their feelings of inadequacy and fear of relationship, empowering them to risk failure and rejection to pursue Christ's calling.

Chapter 8: Grace Inspires Me To Fight For My Heart

Grace creates a humility that realizes we must watch over our heart with all diligence; for from it flow the issues of life. Recognizing how easily our heart is enticed by sinful desire causes us to be vigilant to protect it. This chapter provides the practical wisdom for how to do that.

Chapter 9: Always Let Failure Drive You Back to Christ

Grace-transformed men don't expect the battle with lust to ever be easy. "It isn't the sinless man who makes it to the end; rather, it's the man who's learned to pick himself up after he stumbles. If you're struggle seems relentless, remember this; when you commit yourself to sexual integrity, you commit yourself to a DIRECTION, not to PERFECTION." Joe Dallas, EMB Workshop

The Complete Bible Study Is Only Available In Downloadable Form At www.forgingbonds.org