

Resistance

Controlling My Eyes • Message 7

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Prayer Points for Prayer Time:

- Pray for strength to resist temptation.
- Ask God to guard your heart and mind.
- Pray that you will find fulfillment in Christ.

A. Introduction

We continue our spiritual warfare series, *Resistance*.

1 John 2:15-17; C/R: Genesis 3:6; James 1:14-15; 1 John 5:19,21

Part 1: *Understanding Satan's Schemes*; **Part 2:** *Victory over Satan's temptations.*

1. **1 Corinthians 15:57 (NLT)**—*But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.*
2. This world (Greek- *Kosmos*) is controlled by *the evil one* (1 John 5:19) who formulates specific temptations to trip up Christians, causing them to disobey God by seeking to satisfy the desires and drives Satan has aroused.
3. In his first letter, the disciple John points out three patterns of worldly temptations used by Satan's invisible organization to undermine and oppose the work of Jesus on earth by attacking, accusing and tempting His followers.
4. **1 John 2:16 (NLT)**—*For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure [lust of the flesh, includes sexual sins but also selfishly pursuing any natural appetite without regard for God or others; an uncontrolled hunger to satisfy drives], a craving for everything we see [lust of the eyes is wanting what's visually appealing, sexual desire, pornography, also purchase of material goods, greed], and pride in our achievements and possessions [ego, boastfulness, self-aggrandizing, desiring attention and praise for being better than others]. These are not from the Father, but are from this world. [All are narcissistic.]*
5. Satan (as a serpent; Revelation 12:9; 20:2) tempted Eve in the garden (Genesis 3:1-7) and Jesus in the wilderness (Luke 4:1-13) with lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and pride; we are tempted in the same ways.
6. What kind of tests and trials we are most susceptible to originates within each of us.
7. **James 1:14–15 (NLT)**—*Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death. [These are unhealthy and ungodly desires.]*
8. These desires are remnants of our flesh; we don't have two natures (*new creations*; 2 Corinthians 5:17), but we do still possess the capacity to sin, with special areas of vulnerability often caused by painful experiences in the past which leave old wounds and lies.
9. These old wounds cause us to believe things about ourselves, this world, even God, that are not true but make us prone to sinful thoughts and actions that we know are wrong.
10. If we believe we are not good enough, will always fail, are unlovable, not worthy, have no value, are bad, something is wrong with me, we will surrender to temptation which seems to compensate for what is missing in our lives.

My focus will be gaining victory over *Lust of the Eyes*.

1. Lust of the eyes is not merely admiring what is beautiful or briefly seeing something provocative; it is the sinful desire to possess what we see, to *want* what is visually appealing; this can be people, money, or possessions.
2. In the Bible, this is referred to in the Ten Commandments as coveting.
3. **Exodus 20:17 (NLT)**—*“You must not covet [Hebrew: *châmad* (*khaw-mad*’); to strongly desire something because it is beautiful, pleasant or precious] your neighbor’s house. You must not covet your neighbor’s wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey [car, vacation home, clothes, appearance, status], or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.”*
4. *Coveting* money, possessions, other physical items (materialism), people, or even wanting someone else’s position or popularity, is not from God; it’s from the world.
5. Lust of the eyes results from looking for something outside of us that will provide what is missing within us—meet a need, satisfy some insecurity, provide some distraction.
6. Sexually provocative pictures or pornography are perused to satiate inner loneliness, but those images leave us isolated and guilty because what we need are true intimate relationships with a spouse, and friends, but especially with God.
7. We peruse the internet looking for something to buy on Pinterest, Amazon, or a department store website to distract us from inner sadness and supply some positive emotion, but after the excitement of acquisition, we are disappointed when the item arrives, we try it on, and we don’t look like the model we saw wearing it.
8. Lust of the eyes (materialism) promises happiness, fulfillment, and contentment if we possess what is portrayed—that is the purpose of advertising—but it always disappoints.

B. Controlling My Eyes (Exodus 20:17; Matthew 4:8-10)

To control our eyes, first...

1. Reflect on Jesus’ **VICTORY** over sin.

(Romans 6:6-7,11; 1 John 3:8-9; 2 Peter 1:4)

1. Begin by remembering that your situation is not hopeless—and you are not helpless— because Jesus has already defeated sin’s control over you.
2. **Romans 6:6–7,11 (NLT)**—*We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. ... ¹¹ So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus.*
3. This truth should empower our resistance to Satan’s attempts to entrap us by parading images that promise happiness, pleasure, prestige, wealth, and celebrity but cause us to become self-centered instead of God-focused—and leave us dissatisfied.
4. With the help of God’s Spirit, we can overcome the lies we believe that something is lacking within us that this world offers—which sets us up for Satan’s exploitation.
5. Listening to the truth of Jesus’ defeat of the devil, believing that God sees us as worthwhile and valuable—as His chosen, adopted children, deflects Satan’s assaults.
6. **1 John 3:8-9 (NLT)**—*But when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil. Those who have been born into God’s family do not make a practice of sinning, because God’s life is in them. So they can’t keep on sinning, because they are children of God. [2 Peter 1:4] [APP.: Do you know that sin cannot control you?]*

Next,

2. Remember I have a **RELATIONSHIP** with God.

(Psalm 119:37; Matthew 6:33; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 John 3:9)

1. Salvation is by grace; received by God freely as a gift, not because of merit on my part.
2. However, as God’s children, we do have responsibilities for our lives and our behavior.
3. APP.: Anyone have relationships—close ones with spouses, children, parents, friends—that you put *no* effort into? Do you think those relationships are in good shape?

4. We belong to God—and we have responsibilities for growing our relationship with Him.
5. **1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NLT)**—*Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.*
6. You have the ability to avoid the temptation to sin with your body, including your eyes, because Jesus has given us victory over sin, but we must determine to obey God by following His direction in every area of our lives.
7. **Psalm 119:37 (NLT)**—*Turn my eyes from worthless things, and give me life through your word.* [When tempted by lust of the eyes, look to the Bible for direction; follow it!]
8. Lust of the eyes will cause dissatisfaction with what you have, and will cause you to become so focused, so preoccupied, with acquiring *that one thing, that one person, that position*, it will solve all your problems and make your world wonderful, but nothing in this world possesses the power to transform your life—only God does!
9. Our greatest needs are spiritual and emotional; they cannot be filled by material objects.
10. Jesus knows and loves us; He knows our true needs and provides what is best for us.
11. **Matthew 6:33 (NLT)**—*Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.*” [Psalm.37:4]
12. APP.: Will you trust God, not this world, to provide what you need?

Finally,

3. Refuse to sin by **ESCAPING**.

(Romans 6:12-13; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Timothy 2:22; James 4:7)

1. We all have weaknesses and certain susceptibilities to temptation, but God knows our vulnerabilities and provides assistance.
2. **1 Corinthians 10:13 (NLT)**—*The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.* [But you have to take it!]
3. You are not defeated by merely seeing something appetizing or alluring, but you must close your eyes or switch your focus; you must turn to God and away from temptations!
4. **James 4:7 (NLT)**—*So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*
5. We do not have to submit to seductions!
6. **Romans 6:12-13 (NLT)**—*Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires. Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God.*
7. Wishful thinking won't deliver you from the attraction; you must act! Here's how:
8. **2 Timothy 2:22 (NLT)**—1) ^{22a} *Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts.* - Get away from whatever is tempting you visually, whether it be a person, pictures, movies and TV (cancel channels), websites (use filters, blocks and exclusions), avoid bars and clubs, shun shopping malls. (You understand. Avoid the temptation at its source!)
- 2) ^{22b} *Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace.* – Take steps to develop spiritual habits through worship attendance, Bible reading, prayer, service.
- 3) ^{22c} *Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts.* – make Christian friends whose lives encourage you toward spiritual growth. (small group)
9. APP.: Control your eyes by taking the way out that God is showing you!
10. Begin by claiming our Savior's victory over sin! Plead the blood of Jesus!