



## SEVEN • Lust

### Introduction

Well, perhaps you can't identify with either the sin of sloth or greed, but I think most breathing adults have wrestled, in some form, with our fourth deadly sin: lust.

This story is funny.

Theonion.com

“Study: Children of divorce twice as likely to write bad poetry”:

*DURHAM, NC – A study released Monday by Duke University’s Center For The American Family confirmed what many child-development experts have asserted for years: Children whose parents are divorced are twice as likely to compose bad poetry as those whose parents are married.*

*“Because of the terrible trauma divorce can inflict, we’re seeing a correlation between kids from broken homes and embarrassing, god-awful verse,” said Dr. Ruth Wyler-Feldman, director of the Center For The American Family. “Devastated by the break-up of the family unit, these children are responding with poems awash in bathos, forced rhymes and mixed metaphors comparing their souls to rainstorms.”*

These stories aren’t.

Washtimes.com

“Sex scandals leave Catholics confused, defiant.” by Larry Witham:

*U.S. Catholics are taking in the daily news headlines about sexual abuse in the church with stoic patience, waiting to see what action the hierarchy takes and worrying about the reputation of good priests.*

*In dioceses where the scandal is bubbling, some Catholics are calling for resignations. In others, they are marching in support.*

*“Many Catholics are feeling they have to answer the embarrassing questions of friends and neighbors, and they don’t want to,” said James Davidson of Perdue University, a researcher on Catholic demographics and opinion. “There are dioceses that have had no sexual-abuse episodes. There are others that have had many.”*

*Pope John Paul II yesterday told Nigerian bishops that priests must lead celibate lives and avoid scandalous behavior. The pope’s message comes before a summit with American cardinals on Tuesday and Wednesday to discuss the sex-abuse scandal in the U.S. church. “Bishops,” he said, “must investigate such behavior and take action to end it.”*

*“In my own experience, we view this with deep sorrow and shame,” said Rebecca Teti, who with her husband, Dennis, and three children attend St. Jerome parish in Hyattsville, and whose anguish may be typical of Catholics in the Washington area. “Every day, practically, there’s another headline and more people asking questions. The onslaught feels perpetual.”*



Accessatlanta.com

“R. Kelly sex scandal provokes strong reactions.” by Sonia Murray:

*R&B star R. Kelly is being investigated after reportedly having sex with an underage girl. And at the same time, “Honey,” one of the R&B singer-songwriter’s new club hits, is about something that can’t be even hinted at in a daily newspaper.*

*No surprise then that Atlantans’ response to reports of a tape showing him having sex with an underage girl -- his latest, possibly career-ending scandal – is just as wide-ranging. Kelly’s attorneys have said the tape was bogus, but the singer has issued no statement. A Vibe magazine cover story out this week claims that Kelly finally “faces the music about his scandalous sexual behavior.”*

*The real in-demand merchandise, it turns out, are bootleg copies of the purported sex tape, plus still photos of another alleged encounter between Kelly and an underage girl.*

The Book of Proverbs is a collection of general wisdom and truisms. In chapter 5, the teacher instructs his pupil seeking wisdom on the dangers of lust and adultery.

#### Proverbs 5:1-6

*My son, pay attention to my wisdom, listen well to my words of insight, that you may maintain discretion and your lips may preserve knowledge. For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil; but in the end she is bitter as gall, sharp as a double-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave. She gives no thought to the way of life; her paths are crooked, but she knows it not.*

1. What do the poetic phrases “drip honey” and “smoother than oil” describe? Have you ever fallen prey to this?

Read this, from chron.com

Houston Chronicle: “Out of Bounds, Sexual misconduct by educators in Texas.”

Chronicle investigation reveals relationship of coaches and students rife with abuse:

*On Aug. 6, 1999, Jason Murphy stood in a Corpus Christi courtroom and read a speech he had prepared about his life – and his transgressions.*

*“My name is Jason Thomas Murphy,” he began, “and, for those of you who do not know me, I was a teacher at Carroll High School for the past three years.*

*“I am a registered sex offender in the state of Texas for the rest of my life.”*

*And on it went, for nearly 30 minutes. A failing marriage. A tendency to bring his problems to school. A series of sexual encounters with a female student, 16 years old at the time. And the end of his greatest ambition, a career as a high school football coach.*

2. What is the worst consequence of lust or adultery you’ve seen or heard about?

3. Involvement in pornography is obviously lust. Is it also a form of adultery?



From Sermons.org:

*The woman who made a new life for herself after starring under the name Linda Lovelace in the pornographic movie Deep Throat needs a transplant to survive a liver disease, her book collaborator said yesterday.*

*The writer, Mike McGrady, said that if Linda Marchiano succeeded in getting the life-saving operation, she later would have to have her breasts removed for problems caused by silicone injections she had when she was in the porn business.*

*Reached by telephone last night at her Long Island home, Mrs. Marchiano, 37, said she was too ill to speak.*

*“She needs a liver transplant pretty quickly,” Mr. McGrady said. “It’s for some form of hepatitis – not cancer.” Mr. Grady said the liver ailment was discovered by doctors examining Mrs. Marchiano to see if she could undergo a double mastectomy to treat problems caused by the breast-enlarging injections she had in the early 1970’s.*

4. What does it mean in the Proverb when it says, “Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave.”?

#### Proverb 5: 6-14

*Now then, my sons, listen to me; do not turn aside from what I say. Keep to a path far from her, do not go near the door of her house, lest you give your best strength to others and your years to one who is cruel, lest strangers feast on your wealth and your toil enrich another man’s house. At the end of your life you will groan, when your flesh and body are spent. You will say, “How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction! I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors. I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of the whole assembly.*

5. The teacher cautions his student to turn aside and keep away from lust. Can you think of a situation where you were able to steer clear of a compromising situation? What did you do?

From Lovematters.com:

*REGRETTING YOUR PAST: Many people experience deep remorse after having sex before marriage. There is often the feeling of being used. A feeling that you’ve given up something precious, and all for nothing. Premarital sex often produces regret and remorse which lasts for years. Here’s the testimony of a psychiatrist, now in her 30’s:*

*“From 17 to 18, I was very promiscuous. That sick, used feeling of having given a precious part of myself – my soul – to so many and for nothing, still aches. I never imagined I’d pay so dearly and for so long.”*

*And one young husband says, “I would do anything, ANYTHING, to forget the sexual experiences I had before I met my wife...the pictures of the past and the other women go through my head, and it’s killing any intimacy. The truth is, I’ve been married to this wonderful woman for eight years and I have never been ‘alone’ in the bedroom with her.”*

6. The Proverb says, “At the end of your life you will groan, when your flesh and body are spent.” It is speaking of regret. From what relationship, lust, or other sexual involvement do you still carry regrets or scars?



7. The final verse says, “I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of the whole assembly.” Has something you (or someone you know) have done in the sexual area ever caused you to lose the respect of others, or led to embarrassment?

#### Proverbs 5:14-23

*Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well. Should your springs overflow in the streets, your streams of water in the public squares? Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers. May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer – may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love. Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress? Why embrace the bosom of another man’s wife? For a man’s ways are in full view of the LORD, and he examines all his paths. The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast. He will die for lack of discipline, led astray by his own great folly.*

8. What prescriptions for sexual sin are found here?
9. God’s design for sex and marriage was apparently meant to be beautiful. What has gone wrong? Do you think a marriage can still be this way?
10. Do you think premarital sex is “drinking from another’s cistern”? Why or why not?

From [news6.thdo.bbc.co.uk](http://news6.thdo.bbc.co.uk):

*Gennifer Flowers: Ms Flowers is a former nightclub singer who became the focus of attention during Mr. Clinton’s 1992 election campaign. She alleged at the time that she had an affair with Bill Clinton for 12 years while he was governor of Arkansas.*

*She sold tapes of their telephone conversations and said that he offered her a job in local government in exchange for sexual favours. These accusations prompted Mr and Mrs Clinton to admit on national television that they had experienced problems in their marriage.*

11. Can you think of a more recent incident, where someone’s streams have “overflowed into the streets” and the “public square”?



12. How does God expect us to keep from sexual sin, before we have our own “cistern”? Is it possible? What has been your experience?
13. The teacher of the Proverb says, “For a man’s ways are in full view of the LORD, and he examines all his paths.” Why do you think he mentions this?

#### The Corrective Virtue

The final verse states, “He will die for lack of discipline.” The medieval theologians who conceived of the “Deadly Sins” also noted their corresponding virtue. As the Proverb states, it is self-control, or discipline.

14. On a scale from 1 to 10 how would you rate your self-control?

15. What are some ways to strengthen and develop your self-control?

#### Conclusion

Having read through this age-old wisdom on the dangers of adultery and lust, think through, on your own, one application point you would like to make in your life.

End

The Compass is the discipleship curriculum for Campus Crusade for Christ’s Campus Ministry. It was created by Centerfield Productions, the field based division of CruPress. We’d love to hear your feedback on this lesson. Please write us at [centerfield@uscm.org](mailto:centerfield@uscm.org)